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Contents

Declining Demand: Is Reality Creeping In?

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Neoliberal ideology has dominated world discourse for the first fifteen years of the twenty-first century. The mantra has been that the only viable policy for governments and social movements was to give priority to something called the market. Resistance to this belief became minimal, as even parties and movements that called themselves left or at least left-of-centre abandoned their traditional emphasis on welfare-state measures and accepted the validity of this market-oriented position. They argued that at most one could soften its impact by retaining some small part of the historic safety nets that states had built over more than 150 years.

The resulting policy was one that reduced the level of taxation radically on the wealthiest sectors of the population and thereby increased the income gap between this wealthiest sector and the rest of the population. Firms, especially large firms, were able to increase their profit levels by reducing and/or outsourcing jobs.

The justification offered by its proponents was that this policy would in time recreate the jobs that had been lost and that there would be some trickle-down effect of the increased value that would be created by allowing the "market" to prevail. Of course, allowing the market to prevail in fact necessitated political action at the level of the states. The so-called market was never a force independent of politics. But this elementary truth was sedulously unnoticed or, if ever discussed, ferociously denied.

Is that day over? Is there what a recent article in *Le Monde* called a "timid" return by Establishment institutions to concern about sustaining demand? There are at least two signs of this, both of considerable weight. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) had long been the strongest pillar of neoliberal ideology, imposing its requirements on all governments that sought loans from it. However, in a memo released on 24 February 2016, the IMF worried openly about how

anaemic world demand had become. It urged that finance ministers of the G-20 move beyond monetary policies to encourage investments rather than savings in order to sustain demand by creating jobs. This was quite a turn-around for the IMF.

At about the very same time (18 February), the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a second major pillar of neoliberal ideology, released a memo that announced a similar turn-around. It said that it was urgent to engage "collectively" in actions that would sustain world demand.

So, my question, is reality creeping in? Well, yes, if only timidly. The fact is that, worldwide, the promised "growth" in value-added production has failed to occur. Of course, the decline is uneven. China is still "growing," if at a much reduced pace, one that threatens to decline even further. The United States still seems to be "growing," largely because the dollar still seems the relatively safest place for governments and the wealthy to park their money. But deflation seems to have become the dominant reality of most of Europe and most of the so-called emerging economies of the global South.

We are all now in a waiting game. Will the timid moves recommended by the IMF and the OECD stanch the reality of declining world demand? Will the dollar be able to resist a further loss of confidence in its ability to be a stable repository of value? Or are we moving toward a further, much more severe, wild swing in the so-called market, with all the political consequences this will undoubtedly entail?

Declining world demand is the direct consequence of declining world employment. In the past 200, even 500 years, every time there has been some technological change that did away with jobs in some productive sector, this was resisted by the workers who were losing out. The resistants engaged in so-called Luddite demands to maintain the previous technology.

Politically, Luddite resistance has always proved to be unsuccessful. Establishment forces always said that new jobs would be created to replace those lost, and growth would be renewed. They were right. New jobs were indeed created – but not among so-called blue-collar workers. Rather the new jobs were in so-called white-collar jobs. As a result, over the longer run, the world-economy saw a reduction of worldwide blue-collar jobs and a significant rise in the percentage of white-collar workers.

It was always assumed that white-collar jobs were exempt from elimination. These jobs presumably required a human interacting with other humans. It was thought that there were no machines that could replace the human worker. Well, this is no longer so.

There has been a great technological advance that permits machines to engage in calculations of enormous amounts of data hitherto the domain of lower-level financial advisors. Indeed, these machines can calculate data that it would take

many lifetimes of an individual to calculate. The result is that these machines are in the process of eliminating the job positions of such lower-level "white-collar" jobs. To be sure, this has not yet affected what might be called the higher-level or supervisory positions. But one can see where the wind is blowing.

When "white-collar" positions were eliminated or reduced in number, they were indeed replaced by new "white-collar" positions. When, however, today, "white-collar" positions disappear, where is the container of new jobs to be created? And if they cannot be located, the overall effect is to diminish severely effective demand.

Effective demand however is the sine qua non of capitalism as an historical system. Without effective demand, there can be no capital accumulation. This is the reality that seems to be creeping in. There is no surprise then that concern is being expressed. It is not likely however that the "timid" attempts to deal with this new reality can in fact make a difference. The structural crisis of our system is in full bloom. The big question is not how to repair the system but with what to replace it.

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Europe is following Obama –
Washing its Hands of Palestine and Why

Alan Hart

My headline is a response to recent comments made by German Chancellor Angela Merkel at a joint press conference in Berlin with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the decision of the Cameron government in the UK to make boycotting goods from "Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank" by publicly-funded bodies including local councils and universities a criminal offence.

Much to the delight of Netanyahu who has rejected a French initiative to convene a regional conference to try to get a peace process going, Merkel said, "Now is certainly not the time to make really comprehensive progress." She added: "The European Union, and Germany as a member state, is very concerned about seeing things realistically. (My emphasis added). We know the threat of terrorism that Israel has to endure. We believe, on the other hand, that we have to advance a process of peaceful coexistence, and this, according to our opinion, is ultimately built on a two-state solution." In my view Merkel's words were, to say the least, disingenuous (my dictionary definition of that term is "not frank or open; merely posing as being frank or open; crafty, devious").

If Merkel and all other European leaders and their governments had any interest in acknowledging the reality on the ground in Israel/Palestine they would refrain from describing the attacks by individual Palestinians on Israeli Jews over recent months as terrorism. To qualify as an act of terrorism an attack has to be motivated/driven by the need and determination to achieve a political goal. In the case of the Palestinians that would be ending Israel's occupation and securing an acceptable amount of justice.

That has not been the motivation or drive of any of the Palestinians who have attacked and sometimes killed Israeli Jews in recent months. The attacks were and still are motivated/driven by total despair – the abandonment by individuals of all hope for an end to Israel's on-going and ever-expanding colonization of

the occupied West Bank and all it means of terms of the theft of more and more Palestinian land and water and the destruction of more and more Palestinian homes. In other words, the individual Palestinian attacks on Israeli Jews over recent months are best (most accurately) described as understandable responses to Israel's brutal repression.

My other reason for describing Merkel's words as disingenuous is that she knows, as all other European leaders and their governments know, that the two-state solution is dead, killed by Israel's on-going colonization of the occupied west Bank. All Western leaders also know that even if they summoned up the will to use the leverage they have to try to cause Israel to agree to bring the concept of a two-state solution back to life as the way to peace, there could never be such a solution to the conflict because no Israeli government is ever going to initiate a Jewish civil war to make the space for a viable Palestinian mini state.

The problem for all European leaders and the American president (Obama at present and whoever succeeds him after the November election) is that they can't acknowledge that the two-state solution is dead because to do so would leave them with only two options. One would be to go for a confrontation with Zionism and its monster child and use all of their leverage to try to bring about a one-state solution with equal political, other civil and human rights for all. (Yes, that would mean the de-Zionization of Palestine). The other would be to say (as Obama has said more than once) that they can't want peace more than the parties themselves; and that, of course, would be the cover for indicating without saying so that they were washing their hands of Palestine and leaving the fate of its Arabs to be determined by Zionism.

On the subject of the Cameron government's decision to make boycotting goods from Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank by publicly-funded bodies a criminal offence, I agree with a comment made by Glenn Greenwald in a recent article. Cameron was, he wrote, playing his part in a very co-ordinated and well-financed campaign led by Israel and its supporters to destroy the Boycott, Sanctions and Divestment (BDS) movement (in Jerusalem on 15 February, at the annual conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, retired Israeli Brigadier General Yossi Kuperwasser described BDS as "anti-Semitism" and "terrorism." I imagine he's deluded enough to regard all and any criticism of Israel's policies and actions as both).

Hillary Clinton, still it seems the most likely next president of America, has been advancing this Zionist campaign to de-legitimize and outlaw the BDS movement for many months. She and others who are dancing to Zionism's tune are not concerned that they are, as Hanan Ashrawi and Saeb Erekat put it in a PLO statement, "perpetuating injustice and empowering occupation."

Now back to Merkel's statement that the European Union, and Germany as a member state, is "very concerned about seeing things realistically." There is actually a great and little known truth hidden behind those words. It is to do with the real reason why Israel possesses nuclear weapons.

As I explain in detail in my book Zionism: The Real Enemy of the Jews, those Israeli leaders who insisted that anything should be done to enable their state to possess and develop nuclear weapons never believed they were necessary as a part of Israel's defence against the Arabs (in fact Ariel Sharon was the leader of those who were opposed to Israel acquiring nuclear weapons. Behind closed doors he argued that if Israel had them, the Arabs at some point would also acquire them. And if that happened, he said, Israel's ability to impose its will on the Arabs with conventional/non-nuclear weapons would be seriously compromised).

The possession of nuclear weapons is Zionism's ultimate blackmail card. That was indicated to me in 1969 by Moshe Dayan, Israel's one-eyed warlord. He assumed that a day would come when just about the whole world, governments as well as peoples, was fed up with Israel and would subject it to immense and possibly irresistible pressure to end its defiance of international law and denial of justice for the Palestinians.

At a point I said to Dayan, "What you seem to be saying is that if ever such a day comes, Israel's leaders will say to the world, 'Don't push us too far or we'll use these things.'" Dayan gave me a big smile and replied, "You're understanding me." Three days before Israel went to war in June 1967 I asked him what he thought the coming days would bring. He smiled, made a gesture with a finger to illustrate what he was about to say, then, directly to the camera, he said, "The desert is beckoning." That told me Israel was about to strike. In a report to ITN on the evening of Sunday 4 June I speculated that Israel would go to war the following morning. It did. And that's why I had no problem believing what Dayan indicated to me in 1969.

The conclusion I draw from everything I have learned from nearly half a century of engagement in various capacities with the conflict in and over Palestine that became Israel is that there are two main reasons for the refusal of the major Western powers to confront Zionism in order to provide the Palestinians with an acceptable amount of justice.

One is the influence (declining a little but still awesome) that the Zionist lobby in all of its manifestations has in the corridors of power together with unlimited funds to buy politicians. The other is fear that if pushed further than they were prepared to go, Israel's leaders would press a nuclear button or two and more if needed. This fear is no doubt reinforced in the minds of those Western leaders who are aware of what Prime Minister Golda Meir once said to me in an interview for the BBC's Panorama programme. As readers of my book and one or two of my blog

posts over the years know, she said that in a doomsday situation "Israel would be prepared to take the region and the whole world down with it." To those who are clinging to the hope that Europe will take the lead in pressing Israel to be serious about peace on terms the Palestinians could accept I say – It won't happen.

(c) Alan Hart

Alan Hart

Geo-graphical Conditions: Memory, Time, and Rift

Shakeel Anjum

I love numbers, but I guess numbers have been reduced to certain meanings let alone human beings. As for geography, it is haunting the texts of the Palestinian literature. [...] In the present fragmentation of space in the geography of Palestine, geography becomes one's own room. —Adania Shibli

Identity- who we are, where we come from, what we are- is difficult to maintain in exile...we are the 'other', an opposite, a flaw in the geometry of resettlement, an exodus. —Edward W. Said

In Search of an Inventory

Despite the contributions of the doyen of the Postcolonial Studies, late Edward Said, Palestinian people's struggle and their narratives against the Zionist colonization have been underrepresented in the discourses on colonialism (Moore 2013 and Moore-Gilbert 2009). As Edward Said puts it, one of the functions of imperialism and the ruling class has been, "the power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging', and that 'is very important to culture and imperialism and constitutes one of the main connections between them' (Said 1993). The blocking of narratives and not allowing others to speak has been the hallmark of Zionism, inherited from imperialism. The same concern is echoed by Jacqueline Rose while talking about Israel's famous novelist Amos Oz whose works have not only translated into other languages but has become a part of the English literary culture. Rose asks, 'So, who passes into English? Who decides? And at whose expense?' Rose then further argues, 'it's not the political content of his writing that makes Oz controversial. It's his standing. Oz, we might say straddles two political boundaries'. One, that of the contestation between Israel/ Palestine and other, the 'historical baggage' that Zionism inherits from the English culture (Rose 1996: 22). As Norbert Bugeja (2012: 78) points, 'Why has Oz enjoyed

such a widespread circulation across the Euro-Atlantic for the past forty odd years, whereas Emile Habibi's, Sahr Khalife's, and Ghassan Kanafani's works, which emerge from the same geo-political problematic as Oz have, in comparison, languished in the shadows of academia and general readership for almost that period?' Within twenty years of its establishment, a prominent Israeli literary figure, Y.S Agnon received the Nobel Prize in Literature while on the other hand writers, poets and critiques like Edward Said, Mahmoud Darwish and others could not be heard by the same Norwegian institution. The popular cultural institutions deny the existence of the Palestinians. It happened in the case of a film, *Divine Intervention* by Elia Suleiman, which was submitted to the Academy for the Oscar nomination but they 'refused it, saying there's no country called Palestine' (Edward Said and David Barsamian 2003).

Despite the blockade of Palestinian narratives, Palestinian writers, academics, playwrights, painters, filmmakers and novelists have come up strongly with their words, stories of sufferings, displacements, exile, torture and victimization by the Israeli settler-colonial state. Palestinians living in exile or in continued occupation by Israel have raised their voices in the form writing memoirs, autobiography, novels, short stories and so on. A number of memoirs have been written especially after Edward Said's memoir *Out of Place.* Raja Shehadeh's three memoirs, *Palestinian Walks: Notes on a Vanishing Landscape, Strangers in the House: Coming of Age in the Occupied Palestine, A Rift in Time: Travels with my Ottoman Uncle,* Mourid Barghouti's *I Saw Ramallah and I was Born There, I was Born Here,* Mahmoud Darwish's *Memory for Forgetfulness*, *In the Presence of Absence and The Journal of an Ordinary Grief,* Hanan Ashrawi's *This Side of Peace,* Ghada Karmi's *In Search of Fatima, Sari* Nusseibeh's *Once Upon a Country: A Palestinian Life,* Hala Sakakini's *Jerusalem and I: A Personal Record,* Ibtisam Barakat's *Tasting the Sky: A Palestinian Childhood,* Mitri Raheb's *I am a Palestinian Christian* are the painful 'inventory' of memoirs from all the walks of the Palestinian life expelled from the history by the Zionist colonization since 1948. The title of these memoirs suggests how geography and memory are intertwined. These memoirs challenge the imperial, colonial and the Zionist narrative of Palestine as an 'empty' territory waiting for the arrival of the Jewish Diaspora. In his essay, *Invention, Memory and Place*, Edward Said, while drawing from Eric Hobsbawm's book, *The Invention of Tradition,* suggests how memory and geography hold 'on the desire for conquest and domination' (Said 2000: 181). 'By inventing an ancient Israeli kingdom', Said writes that the Zionist leaders, scholars, artists and novelists have 'made it impossible for the present day Palestinians to say that their claims to Palestine have any long term validity' (Said 2000: 187)

Said was realizing how powerless the Palestinians were against the powerful 'invented' discourse created by the Zionism while the Palestinians lacked a

coherent and convincing 'narrative story with a beginning, middle and end' (Said 2000: 185). The production of the 'inventory is a first necessity' and because the Palestinians as a victim of Zionism 'is rarely exposed to public view', narrating their life stories are important (Said 1992: 73). The Palestinian writers after Said have filled the gap which Said as a scholar felt. Especially after the failed Oslo peace process, the Palestinians kept on losing more and more lands and the continued occupation dealt a heavy blow to the everyday Palestinian life. This essay meanders along Shehadeh's text, *Palestinian Walks: Notes on a Vanishing Landscape* and his other memoirs, essays and writings that verge on the time's hinges and geography's shafts.

Raja Shehadeh has captured the continued loss and occupation of Palestinian geography. Shehadeh's memoir, *Palestinian Walks: Notes on a Vanishing Landscape* is a testament to the erasure of the beautiful landscape by Israel's continued building of illegal settlements in West Bank, vulgar colonization and 'land pornography', to use Shehadeh's own words. Palestinian Walks is a journey of seven walks (*sarha*) around the hills of West Ramallah which started in 1978 and finished in 2007.

Navigating on a Water of Origin and Ash

> *I looked and there was my friend*
> *His face was formed in stone*
> *His profile defied the wild weather*
> *In his nose the wind was muffling*
> *the moaning of the persecuted*
> *There the exile came to the ground.*
> *Changed to the stone, he lives in his own country.*   —Pablo Neruda

Shehadeh's memoir, *Palestinian Walks: Notes on a Vanishing Landscape* deconstructs the whole idea of the Zionist imagination and the colonization of Palestine. Since geography as a discipline became an important tool in the hands of the imperialist power, this field of knowledge was rationalized and legitimized to subdue and colonize the non western world as 'laying claim to an idea and laying claim to a territory' in the words of Edward Said, 'were two sides of the same, essentially constitutive activity, which had the force, the prestige and the authority of the *science*' (Said 1992: 73-74). Shehadeh sets out to counter these narratives of the western imagination of Palestine. In the words of William Mackepiece Thackeray who wrote an account of his journey in his book, *Notes on a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo* and gave a description of Palestine as 'a landscape unspeakably ghastly and desolate'(Shehadeh 2008: xiii). Palestine was visited, imagined, mapped and talked about in the writings of the prominent British and

American writers and novelists like William Thackeray, George Eliot, Dorothy Richardson, Mark Twain, Herman Melville to name a few. One of the major flaws of the mapmaking and cartography right from its invention was that the footsteps of the people, their culture and everyday life, their stories, living beyond European and American frontiers were consciously not marked because people and their culture beyond their frontiers were 'uncivilized', 'brutal' and so many other adjectives which marked 'us' from 'them'.

Shehadeh in *Palestinian Walks* sets out to deconstruct the distorted imagination through his walks he calls as *Sarha* 'in the hills around Ramallah, in the 'wadis in the Jerusalem wilderness and through the gorgeous ravines by the dead sea' which started in 1978 and ended in 2007 covering a vast space over a period of 27 years (Shehadeh 2008: xii). Shehadeh begins his note of journey with a lament. In the introduction of the memoir, Shehadeh writes,

> When I began hill walking in Palestine, a quarter of a century ago I was not aware that I was travelling through a vanishing landscape. For centuries the central highland hills of Palestine, which slope on the one side towards the sea and the other towards the desert, had remained relatively unchanged. As I grew up in Ramallah, the land from my city to the northern city of Nablus, might with a small stretch of imagination, have seemed familiar to a contemporary of Christ. Those hills were, I believe, one of the natural treasures of the world (Shehadeh 2008: xi).

The single story of Zionism which Israel as a state constructs on the basis of the biblical imagination subdues and negates the presence of Palestinians as a people and their culture. By laying claim to West Bank and renaming as 'Judea' and 'Samaria', the state of Israel since the occupation after 1967 is continuously building settlements which has transformed the cultural landscape of Palestine and has led to the exclusion, dispossession, marginalization of the Palestinians by inventing myths, memory coupled with modern machinery. As David Harvey puts it, 'Place constructed in the imagery of homogeneity of beliefs, values, ideals, and persuasions coupled with a strong sense of collective memory and spatially exclusionary rights can be extraordinary players upon the world stage. And if, as is so often argued, a place divided against itself will fall, then the maintenance of that permanence that grounds politics becomes an end in itself, however self-destructive it surely must be'(Harvey 1996: 23).

Palestine because of its ties to theological and historical lineages has been a source of inspiration, imagination, contestation and power among the believers of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. As Shehadeh puts it

> Palestine has been one of the countries most visited by pilgrims and travelers over the ages. The accounts I have read *don not describe a land familiar to me, but rather a land of these travelers' imaginations*. Palestine has been constantly re-

invented, with devastating consequences to its original inhabitants. Whether it was the cartographers preparing maps or the travelers describing the landscape in the extensive travel literature, what *mattered was not the land and its inhabitants as they actually were but the confirmation of the viewer's or reader's religious or political beliefs* [Emphasis added] (Shehadeh 2008: xii).

As Henri Lefebvre argues that the social construction and the 'silencing and manipulation of the users of the space' by the power of imagination, construction of beliefs, negating and subduing the lived experiences of the people living through generations in a particular 'place of social space as a whole is usurped by a part of that space endowed with an illusory special status- namely, the part which is concerned with writing and imagery, underpinned by the written text (journalism, literature), and broadcast by the media; a part, in short, that amounts to abstraction wielding awesome reductionistic forces vis-à-vis 'lived' experience.(Lefebvre 1991: 52). Further down the line Shehadeh quotes Mark Twain who went on a 'pleasure trip' aboard *Quaker City* on 8th June 1967 from New York's Wall Street on a expedition to Europe and the Holy land which and the description of his journey was recollected by Twain in his book, *The Innocents Abroad or The New Pilgrims Progress,* published in 1869. Once Twain landed in Palestine, he wrote

> Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes. Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies... Nazareth is forlorn.. Jericho the accursed... Bethlehem and Bethany, in their poverty and humiliation... Jerusalem has lost its ancient grandeur. Palestine is desolate and unlovely. And why should it be otherwise? Can the curse of a deity, beautify a land? Palestine is no more of this workday world. It is sacred to poetry and tradition- It is dream-land (Twain: 2010: 396-397 Quoted in Shehadeh 2008: xiii).

For Shehadeh, the distorted description and the representation of Palestine is not the true picture of Palestine as opposed to his 'relationship to the land' where he has 'always lived, as immediate and not experienced through the veil of words written about it, often replete with distortions'(Ibid.: xiii). The landscape, its culture, its people, its history through generations, its stories of everyday life belonged to the Palestinians but the master craftsmen, cartographers and storytellers were either Europeans or the Americans in origin. As Jean Paul Sartre in his introduction to Frantz Fanon's text, *Wretched of the Earth,* writes, 'the former had the word; the others had the use of it' (Fanon 2001: 7). The brutality and the molestation of the Palestinian landscape and its culture is what irk Shehadeh. The words printed on a piece of paper have taken away the voices of the Palestinians. In the words of Edward Said, 'imperialism and Zionism has monopolized the entire system of representation' (Said 1993: 27). Shehadeh writes about the Palestinians as the very thing that renders 'the landscape "biblical", its traditional inhabitation

and cultivation in terraces, olive orchards the stone building and the presence of livestock is produced by the Palestinians, whom the Jewish settlers came to replace. And yet, the very people who cultivate the "green olive orchards" and render the landscape biblical are themselves excluded from the panorama. The Palestinians are there to produce the scenery and then disappear… In the process history, mine and that of my people is distorted and twisted' (Shehadeh 2008: xiv-xiv).

Since 1967, successive Israeli governments planned to populate West Bank with settlements. The father and the architect of settlement building in West Bank, Ariel Sharon, 'played a major role, saw the territorialities of the occupied territories as "elastic" and up for grabs' (Weizman 2007: 88). For Shehadeh when he heard about all these plans of building the settlements illegally in the occupied West Bank, he felt, he had 'contracted a terminal disease' (Shehadeh 2008: xvi). The manner in which building of the settlements and creating 'facts on the ground' is connected to the brutal imagination of Zionism and occupation leaves no ground for the Palestinians. In a speech in the Israeli Knesset Menachem Begin in May, 1982, said, 'Settlements… scores, almost one hundred years ago, in areas of the land of Israel populated by Arabs and sometimes solely by Arabs- was it moral or immoral; permitted or forbidden? One of the two. If it was moral then settlement near Nablus is moral- There is no third way' (cited in Auerbach 2013). The settlements for Israel as Eyal Weizman (2007: 8) writes, 'is understood by the Israeli public' as a 'national-messianic right'. It has been inducted into the core of Zionist philosophy by claiming that Israel has the 'moral' legitimacy to build settlements in the occupied territories even if it contravenes the International law and the Fourth Geneva Convention. Following the defense minister, Ariel Sharon's statement: 'we are going to leave an entirely different map of the country that it will be impossible to ignore'. The Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin said, 'settlement [in the occupied areas] is the soul of Zionism' (Quoted in Shehadeh 2008: 56). Oslo Accords failed to stop the burgeoning of the settlements in the occupied territories of the West Bank. Shehadeh laments how Palestinian leaders like Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas were blind to the combined forces of Israeli power with its legal institutions which takes away the Palestinian lands under the pretext of a labyrinth of laws which Israel invents to deny access to their own lands. Arafat's main aim was 'to secure recognition for the PLO' from Israel and the United States (Ibid.: 101). Since the Oslo Accords were signed, the building of the settlements in the occupied areas doubled.

> As we drove down to Jericho we passed the fledgling new settlements of Mitzpe Jericho. The language of conquest was writ large over the hills, over the wilderness, in every corner of the land. Everything signaled our defeat- from the earlier rows of settler apartment blocks piled over the dry pink hills forming the city of Maaleh

17

Adumin to this latest settlement venture in the wilderness… The countryside I grew was being transformed […] to make the 'desert bloom with concrete and neon lights. Vast areas of my beloved country were being fenced to become off limits to us (Ibid.: 112-114).

Shehadeh is witness to these changes while the lands under the Palestinian control 'was slipping' beneath their feet 'as the dead sea was receding from its salty shores' (ibid.117). Shehadeh laments, 'Oslo Agreements buried my truth' (ibid.123).

Archiving the Stones, Earth, Water and Stories

At the graveside of Emily Habiby, the renowned Palestinian poet, novelist, the epitaph reads as: *I Stayed in Haifa*. On the cover page of his memoir, *The Third Way (1982)*, Raja Shehadeh wrote, 'Between mute submission and blind hate. I chose the third way. I chose *Sumud*'. *Sumud* is not an ordinary word for the Palestinians; it has rather entered into the vocabulary of the resistance politics in the Palestinian context. *Sumud* means 'steadfastness' or to' stay put' which is 'the art of hanging on at all costs and against all odds, a mental and spiritual state of being that thousands of Palestinians have learned is not easy to master'(Audeh 1983:77). For the Palestinians *Sumud* is an art of resistance to Zionist colonization very much like that of the everyday unorganized resistance by peasants described by James Scott in *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (1985). The tools of resistance in as Scott views are 'foot-dragging, evasion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander and sabotage' In the case of the Palestinians the force of the Zionist colonization is more fierce than that of the peasants described by James Scott. Through his *Sarha,* Shehadeh is involved in a process of archiving the Palestinian space and time as well as the stories of people who passed through these landscapes, which is being continuously erased by the power of heavy bulldozers and other machinery combined with a force of biblical imagination. The fact that for Shehadeh it took almost 27 years for seven walks along the *wadis* and hills, signify how painful the occupation has dealt with the ordinary Palestinians. Shehadeh while lamenting and grieving on the erasure of the landscape, writes, 'the biography of these hills is in many ways my own, the victories and the failures of the struggle to save this land also mine. But the persistent pain at the failure of that struggle would in time be shared by Arabs, Jews and the lovers of nature anywhere in the world. All would grieve, as I have at the continuing destruction of an exquisitely beautiful place' (Shehadeh 2008: 1).

In the process of taking walks or *Sarha,* Shehadeh writes a biography of the hills which he thinks would in time be erased by the brutal colonization by the Israeli state. Remembering about the legacy of Abu Ameen, cousin of Shehadeh's grandfather, Judge Saleem, Shehadeh inherits this legacy of walking in Palestinian

style. Shehadeh writes, 'To go on a *Sarha* was to roam freely, at will, without restraint. The verb form of the word means to let the cattle out to pasture early in the morning, leaving them to wander and graze at liberty. The commonly used noun *Sarha* is a colloquial corruption of the classical word. A man going on a *Sarha* wanders aimlessly, not restricted by time and place, going where his spirits take him to nourish his soul and rejuvenate himself.... Going on a *Sarha* implies letting go. It is a drug free high Palestinian style' (Ibid.: 2) Along with his *Sarha,* Shehadeh takes the reader on *Sarha* as well. He invites the reader to go on an imaginary *Sarha* along with him. 'Each *Sarha* is in the form of a walk that I invite the reader to take with me. I hope by describing what can be seen, heared an smelled in the hills, to allow the reader to enjoy the unique experience of a *Sarha* in Palestine'(Ibid.: 2). 'To walk across a landscape with any degree of awareness' as Massey (2008) suggests, 'is to pick your way across the locations of a host of unfinished trajectories. Their unfinished addresses our today'. Walking is a process of 'enunciation' (De Certeau 1984). 'To walk is to lack a place' a process signifying absence as De Certeau suggests, 'an indefinite process of being absent and in search of a proper' (De Certeau 1984: 103). Place where people live are not 'containers' but 'the presence of diverse absences' (Ibid.: 108). Places are defined and 'composed by a series of displacements', 'fragmentary and inward turning histories, pasts that others are not allowed to read, accumulated times that can be unfolded but like stories held in reserve' (Ibid.: 108). Literally by going through Shehadeh's memoir I was filled with shame. What do I know about the landscape of my own university which is situated on a range of Aravali hills? What do I know about the stories about these hills? What do I know about the geography of a university apart from its politics and daily gossips and random walking with friends on a hilltop? Geography plays no part in university's thinking and philosophico-political discourses today. One of the reasons for the decline of universities today is that geography of the mind is held hostage in the universities.

Sarha for Shehadeh is not only an ordinary walk but a resistance to Israeli occupation, continuously stopping him to walk freely on a landscape to which he belongs. The irony of occupation is that as Shehadeh writes that it is far easy for a person from Gaza to visit China but a merely a 45 minute journey to Ramallah is a distant dream (Shehadeh 2008: xvii). *Sarha* in Palestine is a dream nowadays as a result of occupation and dividing the landscape in several Bantustans like labyrinth of settlements, checkpoints, blockades, zoning, 'enclaving' and 'exclaving', separation wall so high that it will put the Berlin wall to shame. Shehadeh's first *Sarha* after his return to Ramallah In 1978 and the path he 'stumbled, quite by accident, upon the legendary Harrasha of Abu Ameen, deep in the hills of Palestine' (Ibid.: 7). On his way to the hills he found a 'well preserved *qasr',* a castle and

reminded him of his grandfather and Abu Ameen when they camped in one of those similar structure on their way to *Sarha*. Overwhelmed by the 'exploding beauty and colour' of the earth, Shehadeh shouted 'S-A-R-H-A!' He felt he was, 'breaking the silence of the past, a silence that has enveloped this place for a long time' (Ibid.: 9). Herman Melville, the famous American novelist and the author of Moby Dick treaded the same path and described it as, 'Whitish mildew pervading whole tracts of landscape- bleached-leprosy-encrustations of curse-old cheesebones of rocks... all Judea seems to have been accumulations of this rubbish' (Quoted in Shehadeh 2008: 10). The distortion of the imagination can be seen when a Palestinian who has lived and experienced the same landscape as Shehadeh describes it and feels as he could 'sit all day next to this *qasr*' and feast his 'eyes on this wonderful creation' (Ibid.: 10).

The identities and dignity of the variegated people, their culture and their landscape is distorted by naming, framing and the power of imagination has been exposed in a critical study of geographical imagination in *Orientalism* by Edward Said. Each *Sarha* Shehadeh takes across the landscape of Palestine is replete with stories associated with space across time. It seems as if the rocks, the trees, the bushes, the qasr, have induced Shehadeh to go into a conversation about the stories and the footsteps of the landscape. While treading fertile plain of Marj Ibn A'mr (Jazreel valley) 'which stretches below the Carmel mountains to Jenin in the West Bank and breathtaking hills of Galilee', Shehadeh's imagination goes back to the battles, pathways of traders and pilgrims. 'This was the place where pitched battles were fought before the sixteenth century, leaving the remainders and 'ruins of the fortifications and castles of various invaders' (Ibid.: 6). Crossing Wadi Matar (rain), Shehadeh comes across a number of abandoned *Qasrs* and started thinking who might have been the inhabitants of these *qasrs*. Shehadeh talks about meeting Fareed, an inhabitant of Ramallah who now lives as a member of the Diasporic community in Washington D.C., he recalls that 'his strongest memory of growing up in Ramallah was pressed toes cramped in tight shoes' (ibid. 13). Further down the line Shehadeh while examining an abandoned *qasr* imagined about a family who had been the owner of this abandoned *qasr:*

> I could imagine him sitting by this window, as I was doing, and surveying his possessions. Perhaps he had a number of children whom he observed from and hurled orders at : 'You, Muneer, pick up those stones over there and plough the land around that plum tree.' You, Fareed, water that aurbegine plant over there.'... It was as though in this *qasr* time was petrified into an eternal present, making it possible for me to reconnect with my dead ancestors through this architectural wonder (Ibid.: 14).

For Shehadeh 'time was petrified into an eternal present' which allows him to build a thread of connection with his 'dead ancestors through this architectural

wonder' (ibid.15). Examining an 'oddly placed stone', scraping it which later turned out be a carved sitting chair, imagining it to be an *a'rsh* (throne) of an anonymous person, Shehadeh delves into the past and recalls that as a child he heard of Abu Ameen, his grandfather's cousin having an *a 'rsh* next to his *qasr*. 'Could this be it? Could this be Harrasha where Abu Ameen and my grandfather Saleem used to go for their *Sarha?'*, asks Shehadeh (Ibid.: 17). Abu Ameen turns out be a romantic who married a woman named Zariefeh and took her to honeymoon in his newly bought property, built a *qasr,* spent half of the year at home and remaining half at the hills.

Abu Ameen was not aware of what was going to befall on his future generations after the creation of the state of Israel and further colonization and occupation of West Bank.

> Abu Ameen was able to look out on the hills that remained unchanged ...He could not have been aware how fortunate he was to have security and the comfort of seeing the same unaltered view of the hills... But throughout my life I had the misfortune of witnessing their constant transformation. I first learned the Israeli government's settlement plans .... one hilltop after the other was claimed as more and more Jewish settlements were established. Then the settlements were joined with each other to form 'settlement blocks'. Roads were built between these clusters and ever expanding areas of land around them were reserved for their future growth, depriving more villages of the agricultural land they depended upon their livelihood. Thus one block of settlements was created north of Ramallah, another to the east and many more to the south. And between the blocks to the east smaller settlements called outposts began to crop up so that when I looked at night towards the north I saw a continuous stretch of settlements and roads that were creating a noose around Ramallah ... complicating our lives immeasurably and causing yet another damage to our beautiful landscape (Ibid.: 32-33).

Shehadeh is being witness to the destruction caused to the landscape, its trajectory and stories through a process beautifully captured by Eyal Weizman as, 'elastic geography' and 'biblical archaeology'. As Doreen Massey argues that the 'space is a dimension of 'multiplicity', of, 'contemporaneous existence of a plurality of trajectories, radical simultaneity, of trajectories; a simultaneity of stories so far' (Massey 2005: 8-14). Space is always open ended and it's not a flat surface or a 'container' as Massey suggests but the space is imbued with 'coevalness of stories and voices.' Shehadeh's Ramallah hills, abandoned *qasrs and a'rsh* and the places wherever he goes around echoes the stories of the past which enables him to connect with the present. As Lefebvre argues, 'time is inscribed in space' (Lefebvre, 1991: 95).

Zionism's idea of going back into space and to construct, frame, name the spaces in the biblical imagination is to enclose the space and bringing both space

and time to halt is depriving the Palestinians of their landscape connected to their stories of everyday life, both past, present and future. As Massey puts it, 'you can't go back in space-time. To think that you can is to deprive others of their independent stories' (Massey 2005: 125). The whole idea of the Zionist policy is to erase the landscape along with the history, trajectory, stories and voices. The whole politics and idea of the Zionist policy of taking over the hilltops and to claim the hilltops, the archaeology is involved in digging deep to trace the roots of a biblical land in Bronze age which refers to 'Cananite' period and Iron age which refers to the 'Israelite period'. The process of subduing and rendering mute the multiplicity and the stories of the other are done through a political and tactical use of archaeology. As Colin Renfrew and Paul Bahn write,

> Having established on much of a surface of unfamiliar Palestine, Zionism continued its vertical quest for the Promised Land downwards… The national role assigned to archeology was to remove the visible layer and expose the ancient Israelite landscape and with it the proof of Jewish ownership (Renfrew and Bahn 1996: 20-25 Quoted in Weizman 2007: 39)

Eyal Weizman beautifully captures the politics of archaeology in erasing Islamic cultural Pasts. Weizman writes

> a few meters below the surface, a palimpsest of 5,000 year-old debris, a vertical chronological stack of cultures of lives, narratives of war and destruction, has been compressed by soil and stone. Israeli Biblical archaeologists were interested in the deeper levels of Bronze and iron ages, which generally covers the period and time mentioned in the more recent religious interpretations of the Mishna. The upper layers of the Muslim and Ottoman periods were marginalized in digs and museums often dismissed as representations of a stagnant period, discarded as too new or simply left alone to rot and crumble (Weizman 2007: 40).

As Said (1993: 6) argues that across the geographical terrain, 'empty uninhabited spaces virtually do not exist'. Spaces do have their histories, stories, trajectories, voices, as argued by Massey and to which Said refers as 'overlapping territories, intertwined histories'. The imperial and the Zionist culture of imagining and constructing a single story of a space devoid of people, voices and history in a quest for 'making the desert bloom' is a politically motivated invention and construction with appalling consequences befalling on Palestinians as a people. The Zionist narrative in the process of creating 'facts on the ground' with the linking of archaeology and mythology to produce a homogenous Jewish identity and 'erase the question of "Palestine" from the history of Israeli state and society, which had become, quite simply, the nation-state of and for the Jewish people' (Abu El-Haj 2001: 5). As Harvey suggests, cultural-politics combined with political-economic power, 'intertwine in the social processes of place construction' (Harvey 1996:

320). The state and its institutions of power is imply a 'certain aestheticization of politics' as Harvey suggests, combined with the 'appeal to the mythology of a place and person' to achieve its nationalistic goals and the 'rhetoric of national liberation movements… imposed through imperialism and colonialism, of manifest destiny, racial or cultural supremacy, paternalism (white man's burden for example), and doctrines of national superiority' (Harvey 1990: *209*)

By creating the 'facts on the ground' the state of Israel in the process of colonizing the Palestine is robbing Shehadeh of his own history, memories, and story of his Ottoman past where his great-great uncle Najib Nassar was on the run after sought by the Ottoman authorities. Shehadeh paints the whole picture and traces the whole route of his uncle's route while escaping the Ottoman authorities in another memoir, *A Rift in Time: Travels with my Ottoman Uncle*. Shehadeh writes,

> To locate the places where Najib found refuge during his long escape from the Ottoman police, I first used a map made by the Israeli Survey Department. But I soon discovered that, in the course of creating a new country over the ruins of the old, Israel has renamed almost every hill, spring and wadi in Palestine, striking from the map names and often habitations that had been there for centuries (Shehadeh 2010: 3).

Failing to trace the escape route through Israeli map, Shehadeh was able to locate the places from a map he procured a 1933 map from the National Library of Scotland in Edinburg. Shehadeh further writes,

> The quest for Najib- the details of his life and the route of his great escape- that consumed me for the next thirteen years was not an easy one. Most of the Palestine's history, together with that of its people, is buried deep in the ground. To reconstruct the journey of my great-great uncle I could not visit any of the houses where he and his family had lived in Haifa, his point of departure. This mixed community of Arabs and Jews has become and Israeli city, with most of its former Palestinian inhabitants scattered through the world. Najib died on 30 March, 1948, just months before the Nakba (catastrophe), the mass expulsion and dispossessions of the Arabs of Palestine in 1948…. His, wife, siblings, and every one of our common relatives were forced out of Haifa, losing all their property… Furnitures, books, manuscripts, memorabilia, family photographs, heirlooms… Everything that belonged to them, everything that told their individual stories, was either stolen or seized and deposited in Israeli archives for use by Israeli researchers seeking to understand the history and character of the Arabs whom they were colonizing (Ibid.: 4-5).

Shehadeh's parents and his forefathers were born and raised in Jaffa, a port city which is now a part of the Jewish State of Israel. Its inhabitants were forced to leave Jaffa as a result of the 'ethnic cleansing of Palestine'. It was here the Jewish

militia, the Stern Gang, carrying a truck of oranges entered into the centre of the town and left it to explode. On 22 April 1948, as Shehadeh writes, Jaffa fell to the Jewish forces. Thinking that Shehadeh's parents will return to Jaffa after the UN Partition plan, he writes in *Strangers in the House*, 'two weeks stretched into forever' (Shehadeh 2010a: 5). Shehadeh could only imagine about Jaffa through the stories of his parents and grandmother. For a long time as a child lost in the imagination of a city which fell, he writes,

> Across the horizon in the beautiful city' of which I heard about and yearned to see. '... hostage to memories, perceptions, and attitudes of the others that I cannot abandon. My sense of place was not mine.... My life was shaped by the contrast between meagerness of life in Ramallah and the opulence of life in the city across the hills. *There were daily reminders of that cataclysmic fall from grace* and I could count on my grandmother always to pint them out. One was the son of Issa passing by our house pushing a cart with a few objects for sale: an old bottle, a tin can, a few articles of clothing, and an old kerosene stove called a Primus [Emphasis added] (Ibid.: 1-9).

Jaffa was home to Shehadeh's ancestors where his father was an acclaimed lawyer and later served in the Jordanian foreign ministry. As a result of the 'ethnic cleansing' and Plan Dalet, Ilan Pappe observed in his book, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine,* that Jaffa was the last of the Palestinian forces which fell to Zionist forces on 13th May. A massive force of '5000 Irgun and Haganah troops attacked the city' and laid a three week siege to the city and in defense of Jaffa there were only '1500 volunteers' (Pappe, 2006: 102-103). In one of the battalion called Jaffa brigade which was to be headed by an Iraqi commander, Abdel Wahab consisting of, as Shehadeh writes, ' baker, the blacksmith, a farmer and the man who sold newspapers' to defend it. The balance of force was obviously in favour of Israel, its units trained and assisted by the British colonial forces against which Arabs had no chance. The city and its houses were 'dynamited with people still in them' (Pappe 2006: 75) and out of 24 villages and 17 mosques in Jaffa as Pappe writes, 'today one mosque survives but none of the villages is left standing' (ibid. 102). After the victory of the Zionist forces and the fall of a city, its population of '50, 000 was expelled with the "help" of British mediation' (Ibid.: 103). Pappe describes the horrific scene of their flight in the northern harbor of Haifa. He writes, 'people were literally pushed in to the sea when the crowds tried to board the far-too-small fishing boats that would take them to Gaza, while Jewish troops shot over their heads to hasten their expulsion' (Ibid.: 103). In *Strangers in the House,* Shehadeh describes about the visit to Jaffa years after the *Al-Nakba*, 1948 when Shehadeh's father's old friend David Rosenblum came to see him after 1967 occupation of the West Bank and asked him 'if he could do anything', Shehadeh's father had only one wish: to see Jaffa again. On his father's arrival in Jaffa at Nuzha street, at his mother-in-

law's house, he stood at the entrance gate and saw that 'it was just as he left it, only now the paint was peeling' (Shehadeh 2010a: 59). A city in ruins, its population expelled, never to return, Shehadeh writes, 'Ghosts from the past do not freeze in time: their gardens continue to grow, their walls peel from the ravages of nature and neglect' (Ibid.:59). David Rosenblum took Shehadeh's father too see Jaffa. In Jaffa seashore at sunset, 'two men of the same age and height, a Palestinian and a Jew, stood side by side in the twilight of a ruined city' (Iibid. 61). Here the past is fused with the present to evoke a sense of place that is lost to which Jacqueline Rose refers to as 'the baggage of the mind' and 'nothing... is simply left behind' (Rose: 2007: 41). Zionism's construction of a homogenous space and its understanding of space as a 'flat surface,' as a 'container' where Jews from Diaspora can come and fill this 'container' obscuring the fact that a homogenous Jewish identity constructed on the basis of an organized and institutionalized memory of a past and nostalgia has forced the Palestinians to leave and live as exiles both internal and external. As Doreen Massey argues that the articulation of a nostalgic past in space and time 'robs other of their histories' (Massey 2005: 124).

Zionism's going back into space-time has robbed Palestinians of their own past and 'ongoing independent stories' (Ibid.: 125). 'This is a nation which desires its potential citizens- exiled, diaspora Jewry- to come home, with as much fervor', as Jacqueline Rose, a prominent psychoanalyst, writes, 'as it banishes the former occupants of its land from their own dream of statehood' (Rose 1996: 2). Rose writes further, 'Displacing the Palestinians, it then produced on the spot a new people without statehood not just by oversight or brutal self- realizing intention, but as if it had symptomatically to engender within its own boundaries the founding conditions from which it had fled' (Ibid.: 13). Shehadeh's memory of experienced, lived places is not dictated by mythical construction as opposed to Zionism's construction of a collective memory. As Mourid Barghouti said, 'our song is not for some sacred thing of the past but for our current self-respect that is violated anew everyday' (Barghouti 2003: 7). Amos Oz, a very popular and celebrated novelist of Israel wrote, 'we would build ourselves a land a thousand times as beautiful here' (Oz 1976: 15 Quoted in Rose 1996: 24). Oz's imagination obscures, hides, negates a very fundamental fact about space; the existence of Palestinians, their history and stories. 'Emptied of its history, the land is packed with appropriating mythological intent' (Rose 1996: 24). As Shehadeh himself writes,

> Europe and later Zionism, has endeavoured to rescue the historical significance of the region in its search for ancient Israel: a search for its own cultural roots which in the process has silenced Palestinian history and relegated it to prehistory, paving the way for the modern state of Israel to take control not only of the land but also of Palestinian time and space (Shehadeh 2008: 47).

Shehadeh's *Sarha* which he takes in the present tense sense of time continuously fuses with the past and the places where he goes for *Sarha* is coupled with an imaginary *Sarha* of a past filled with anecdotes, history, people, both of his own past and the past of his own community. For Shehadeh, heroism lies in the determination of the Palestinian people to 'stay put', and 'not in our acts of daring or even in military operations' (Shehadeh 2010a: 141). As Moore argues, 'Resistance in this text is conceived in at least two chronotopic modes. A shift explicitly registered from *Sarha to Sumoud'* (Moore 2013: 37). Shehadeh in the process is also invoking the past to 'stay put' against the Zionist occupation. Both the *Sarhas,* the physical walks in the hills and the imaginary *Sarha* of history, memories and stories are intertwined and is engaged in *sumoud.* Against the slogan of Menachem Begin, 'There is no third way', Shehadeh chose his own 'third way', that of resistance through *Sumoud.*

Coming to Terms with the Present: Geographical Conditions

The Oslo Accords that was signed between Israel and the PLO did not lead to the self determination of the Palestinian people. Since the signing of the Oslo Accords the building of the settlements in the 'West' Bank heightened to the degree that Sehadeh has lost hope in the peace process. Since his involvement in the legal struggle to contain the further Israeli colonization of Palestine, he views that the PLO was not concerned about the legal ramifications of the peace process. He hoped that the 'settlements would not be permanent' (Shehadeh 2008: 123). 'The legal battle waged for years' which gave a meaning to Shehadeh's life as he writes, 'were not recognized by the leadership' (Ibid.: 124). The signing of the Oslo Accords terminated and put an end to Shehadeh's 'narrative' and he felt, 'my bubble, my illusion was burst' (Ibid.: 124). He is aware of the looming disaster which is going to befall on this landscape. People find meaning of their lives in resistance to the occupation and in terms of the Palestinians, their existential meaning of life is forged through resistance where people contribute in a variety of ways to resist colonization. For Shehadeh it was the law through which he was contesting the occupation. 'What had framed my existence and given it a heightened sense of purpose was my resistance to the occupation, my work for justice' (Ibid.: 129). As a part of the delegation to the Oslo Accords he knew that the terms of the agreement were drafted by Israeli lawyers who were experts in the field. One of the reasons Shehadeh joined the delegation because he thought he could be of help to the PLO in understanding Israeli tactics and legal maneuvers.

The vision to challenge the occupation through law encouraged Shehadeh to establish his own organization called *Al-Haq* In 1978 which produced a series of documents and exposed Israeli land confiscations, building of settlements, checkpoints, roads, diverting key resources like water for the Israeli settlers while

leaving the Palestinians to subsist on a bare minimum. It was his commitment to justice, freedom and democracy that allowed Shehadeh to rebel against his father who was under continuous Israeli pressure to dissuade Shehadeh from continuing his work against occupation and 'accept the way things are' (Shehadeh 2010a: 182). The dispute between father and son is documented in Shehadeh's memoir, *Strangers in the House*. Shehadeh writes, 'My strong convictions prevented me from accepting my father's position. I looked at his generation as the defeated one.... My father's attitude came partly from concern for my well being and partly from pride. He could not allow me to do what he had always done' (Ibid.: 182-183). Despite all of the challenges Shehadeh continued to document illegal practices of Israeli torture, land confiscations, house demolitions, abuse of human rights, etc. Shehadeh documents the two confrontations on his walk along the hills: one, between him and the settler and the other between two young Palestinians. After a heated discussion with the settler, both settled for smoking *nergila* (joint). Shehadeh writes, 'I was fully aware of the looming tragedies and war that lay ahead for both of us, Palestinian Arab and Israeli Jew. But for now he and I could sit together, for a respite, for a smoke, joined temporarily for the mutual love of our land' (Shehadeh 2008: 203). The experience of facing two Palestinian boy wearing *kuffieh,* masked as shepherd, was worse than meeting the settler. 'Shaken' by the encounter Shehadeh's memoir ends with a sad note. He decided that he would not be coming to those hills anymore. He writes,

> As I stood in the ruins of one of my favourite places in the valley [...] I felt that the hills were not mine anymore... They have become a dangerous place where I do not feel safe... I bid this valley farewell. I would not be coming here for a long time. Perhaps not before this damned conflict with Israel with all its nasty consequences ends, if this should happen in my lifetime (Ibid. 214-215).

Shehadeh's quest for justice and a 'just' solution for Palestinian question is 'buried' by the Oslo Accords. 'Nothing can be done to change the past but I knew I had to come to terms with the present. The truth was that we had been defeated. We had lost' (Ibid.;118). As Gilbert Moore identifies Shehadeh's dilemma of 'coming to terms with the present' as 'the critique of the notion of singular *presence*' (Moore 2013: 41). Moore while taking cue from Edward Said, Judith Butler and Shehadeh's own memoir, *A Rift in Time: Travels With My Ottoman Uncle,* calls for a 'therapeutic teleology' where the two communities could identify with each other's historical and geographical pain and make way for a '*democracy to come,*' to use Jacques Derrida's phrase.

As Jacqueline Rose in her essay on Israel/Palestine question argues how the trauma and suffering of the Jews in holocaust is being transferred from Jews to Palestinians which she refers to as 'transgenerational haunting'. Rose writes, while

referring David Grossman and Raja Shehadeh. In Shehadeh's *Third Way,* he dreams that he is a 'victim of the victims of the Nazis ... I am more aware of the concentration camps, think about them more and more and dream about them more than the average Israeli does' (Shehadeh 1982: 64 Quoted in Rose, *1996: 31*). Rose points out to the 'historical pain' shifting across the geographical terrain. However the 'transgenerational haunting is not restricted to Shehadeh's writing alone. It is also reflected in Sari Nusseibeh's memoir, *Once Upon a Country: A Palestinian Life* and in other writings by Palestinian people. Nussiebeh writes,

> One day my older sister Saedah, thirteen at the time, fell into an uncontrollable fit of tears. She had brought home from school a copy of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. She cried and cried in anguished identification with this Jewish child hidden in an annex, terrified at being found out by killers of her people. It was paradoxical identification for the daughter of a mother who had suffered so much at the hands of the Zionists. But without a word , my mother gently wiped Saedah's tears away, and furtively wiped her own (Nussiebeh 2007: 66-67).

Rose's 'transgenerational haunting' to which Nussiebeh addresses as 'paradoxical identification' is now experienced by the Palestinians in their everyday life as is evident from Shehadeh's and Nussiebeh's memoirs. The geopolitical shifting of pain from Europe to Palestine identified by the Palestinians is the recognition of the Jewish experience. This 'paradoxical identification' and transmission of 'historical pain' experienced by both Israelis and Palestinians has to pave a way for a democratic state where the right of return of the Palestinians will be recognized by the democracy loving Israeli people. Shehadeh addresses this question through a secular and an open interpretation of geography. As suggested by Doreen Massey in her brilliant work, *For Space,* for the future to be progressive and for a secular interpretation of culture and space, the space has to be 'open'. Shehadeh delves into the landscape of the past and comes out with an interpretation of geography which identifies its plurality and paves the way for a geographical identification. Taking cue from Edward Said's idea of secular criticism, Doreen Massey's idea of space, Sari Nussiebeh's 'paradoxical identification' and Jacqueline Rose's 'transgenerational haunting', I suggest an idea of geographical identification where both the Palestinains and Israelis as manifested in Shehadeh's writing, identify geography as a trajectory of 'multiple stories'(Massey 2005), multiple histories, 'overlapping territories, intertwined histories' (Said 1993). The negation of a single story of space will allow us to have a secular interpretation of space. As Shehadeh writes,

> The diversity of cultures that once thrived here – the Bedouins and the villagers, the marshland farmers and shepherds coming to Palestine from Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, a mix of Bahais, Christians, Jews and Muslims... I will succeed

28

Shakeel Anjum

in imaginatively creating the region as it existed at the time of the Ottoman Empire, when the land was undivided. This will be my way of resisting what Israel has long tried to drill into my head about my place in this ancient after the fragmentation of our territory (Shehadeh 2010: 48-49).

... In the twenty –first century the case of Palestine remains one of the last surviving examples of a country usurped by a colonial project exploiting the religion to deprive Palestinians of their land. I am convinced that only when these wild contortions of history, religion and International law are challenged will Arabs and Jew come to accept each other, as my father and I were able to do. No strangers will remain in the house (Shehadeh 2010a: 241).

As Edward Said remarks that the 'task at hand' is to come to terms with 'each of the two communities, misled though both may be, is interested in its origins, its history of suffering, its need to survive. To recognize these imperatives, as components of national identity, and try to reconcile them rather than dismiss them as so much non factual ideology' (Said 1994: 268). Shehadeh's 'rift in time' addressed through a geographical incursion both into past and present as he himself hopes will pave a way for a geographical condition of dwelling into each other recognizing the other's traces, history, geography and memory.

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Shakespeare and Power:
Locating the 'Political' in King Richard II

Girish Kumar R.

Introduction

Shakespeare (1564 -1616), the bard from Stratford-on-Avon lived during the reign of Elizabeth I, the last monarch of the house of Tudor. Shakespeare provided an 'unmatchable literary lens' to explore major concepts of early modern political philosophy – 'the idea of state of nature and social contract; toleration and/ or secular nationalism as a solution to sectarian strife; the decline of corporatist feudalism and the rise of market individualism – chiefly in *King Lear*, the *Henriad*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Measure for Measure*' (Shulman 2014).His history plays portrayed the political and social evolution of the time, and are often regarded as Tudor propaganda showing dangers of civil war, glorification of the founders of the Tudor dynasty and a defence underlining the necessity of absolute monarchy for peace and order in a disordered world. Like an ordinary merchant or an ordinary farmer, Shakespeare too believed that the Wars of the Roses[1] was an 'unqualified nuisance' beset with social, political and economic problems. Medieval England craved for law under a strong king as the first essential of human welfare. The Tudors gave them law and gave them peace though Tudorism was a form of dictatorship, or 'Caesarism', and the Tudor ideal contained the 'seeds of a disastrous despotism'(Ivor, non dated).Shakespeare's historical drama is a very free adaptation of historical sources, which are read by modern historians with a healthy dose of skepticism. Shakespeare's history plays would be a poor place to look for the historical facts. Much of this analysis depends on the provenance of Holinshed's account of events, in a historical context and thus Shakespeare' dramatization of it."Shakespeare's Histories with their constant pictures of disorder cannot be understood without assuming a larger principle of order in the background" (Tillyard 1944). In fact, his spick-and-span presentation made the world perceive his historic plays as the truest version of Tudor's history. For the last 400 years

Shakespeare's history plays have been the primary shapers of most people's ideas about what happened in England between 1399 and 1485 (from the fall of Richard II through to the crowning of Henry Tudor). Shakespeare's *Henriad,*[2] the second historical tetralogy, portrays the violent overthrow of Richard II causing havoc in the political discontinuity in England leading to the rise of Henry V, the son of the usurper Bolingbroke. The 'political Shakespeare' is located in the cusp of modernity akin to the modern voyages of Hobbes and Machiavelli; but with sheer virtuosity of his prosaic beauty, the terse interpretation of power, and wider appeal to the common folks of his time combined with an indefatigable devotion in Catholic mores and virtues. Unlike other modern thinkers, Shakespeare constructed an indestructible political literary viaduct between medievalism and modernity better than his predecessors and contemporaries.

Locating the Political Shakespeare: Major Influences

a) Divine rights Theory of kings.(2.3, 305)

The medieval ages was marked by a contest betwixt two rival theories of sovereignty —one representing the King and the other the Papacy. The Divine Rights of Kings had been brandished as a counterblast to the Divine Right of Popes. Nothing under Heaven is finer than a good king for people, a bad king being the most disastrous. Civil authority is an ordinance of God.[3] Shakespeare's play King Richard, in tune with the dominant political discourse prevalent in those times, emphasized the strength as well as the flaws of the divine right of kings. Though Shakespeare wrote the historical play on a story that happened in 1400, the divine theory of kings was popularized by James VI of Scotland in 1597-98. To James the state of monarchy is 'the supremest thing upon earth; for kings are not only God's lieutenants upon earth and sit upon God's earth, but even by God himself are called gods'. '... the Divine Right of Kings was a dangerous phrase and perilously sweet to the ears of James' (Brown, non dated) bringing Shakespeare closer to the King. Catholic thought was to premise their belief system upon submission to monarchy.

Many of the embellishments Shakespeare makes to the information he found in Holinshed's Chronicles are directed towards reaffirming Richard's status as a divinely sanctioned king. The first and most striking example is the way the character of Gaunt changes. In the 'Chronicles', Gaunt is a disorderly and rapacious magnate. However, in 'Richard II', Gaunt is the voice of reason, wisdom, and above all, patriotism. Shakespeare further enhances Gaunt's patriotism and loyalty to the king in order to place the emphasis on Richard's divine right to rule. Gaunt emphatically expounds the importance of the Divine Right of Kings. The first of these speeches comes at the beginning of Act II, as Gaunt speaks with the Duchess of Gloucester. Gaunt knows Richard was an accomplice in the murder of

Gloucester, but still he refuses to support any action that would put Richard's crown at risk. Protecting Richard's position as God's vicegerent is extremely important to Gaunt. For whatever crimes Richard has committed, it is the responsibility of God alone, not Richard's subjects, to judge and punish him for his offenses. Gaunt's condemnation of disobedience to Richard because of Richard's divine right to the crown exemplifies the Tudor political thought of the 16th century.

In*Richard II*, Richard says that Kings rule by divine right and cannot be deposed, for they are anointed by an irremovable balm, as he tells those around him:

"Not all the water in the rough rude sea

Can wash the balm from an anointed king."

When Bollingbrook announces that 'in God's name, I 'll ascend the regal throne', observe the objection of the Bishop of Carlisle who in an apparent reference to King Richard as the God's representative prophesies:'The blood of English shall manure the ground/ And future ages groan for this foul act;/ .../ Disorder, horror, fear and mutiny/ Shall here inhabit, and this land be call'd/ The field of Golgotha and dead men's skulls'.

In Henry V, Shakespeare stresses the need to use religion to perpetuate power and remain as a legal heir. Henry V, son of Bolingbroke, presents himself as a good listener and a great democrat, always receptive to others' views and suggestions, though in the end, Henry shrewdly ensures that others follow him. The scene in the Council deliberating on invasion of France is an example. Henry himself presents him as 'a Christian king' and not a tyrant, always acting on behalf of God. The chorus regard him as the 'mirror of all Christian kings. Even the traitor, the earl of Cambridge says ' never was monarch better fear'd and lov'd than is your majesty'. But Henry, the king in disguise, accepts the excuse of William, who has had a verbal encounter with Henry at the campfire. But Henry came here as a man and not as a king and 'implicitly admits that majesty is a garment worn, not (as Richard II imagined) an inherited mystery that exalts one man above other mortals' (Robert Ornstein).

b) Machiavelli's 'virtuo'

Medieval Europe was marked by Western Empire and the Holy Roman Empire, both made of a loose conglomeration of feudal lords vying with each other demonstrating absence of unity and nationalism. The slugfest between Emperors and Papal Legates made matters worse many a time leading to conflict and anarchy. The 'cradle of the Renaissance was a bed of disorder' yielded to Despots. From Italian Despotism emerged Machiavelli's conception of the State. A nationalist to the core, he disclaimed feudalism, mercenary troops, political power of guilds, arts and trade, and opposed temporal dominion of Popes to achieve unity. To him Italy

needed a wise prince who should never stand idle in peaceful times, but increase his resources with industry in such a way that they may be available to him in adversity. To Machiavelli, a prince needs to be people friendly and shrewd to achieve security in adversity. It is safer to be feared than loved, when, of the two, either must be dispensed with, for men are more generally inclined to submit to him who makes himself dreaded than to him who merely strives to be beloved. One, however, should wish to be both. A wise man will inspire fear in such a way that if he does not win love, he will avoid hatred (Marriott 1908).

Whether Shakespeare read Machiavelli or not, Machiavellian thinking was an undoubted influence on representations of politics in Shakespeare's history plays. Shakespeare's princes resonated the Machiavellian 'Superman' Caesar Borgia, and Machiavelli supplied the characteristics of his politic villains, steered him to interpret the problems of relationship between nations and rulers, between men and their neighbors (Stark 1930). The Elizabethan playwrights cannot escape from the influence of Machiavelli, which is attributed to Shakespeare's contemporary dramatist Marlowe, who introduced Machiavelli into English drama. His conception of Machiavelli's principle of *virtu' – virtu* of Caesar Borgia – resides in a cold, calculating manipulation of men and events for political aggrandizement has veritably revolutionized the English Drama (Warshaw 1916).'Machiavel' had become an important character in Elizabethan drama and 'Machiavellism' an important factor.

King Richard II speaks with regal dignity like "lions make leopards tame", "we were not born to sue but to command" but he is actually powerless to enforce his commands and his powerlessness makes him see the abrupt ending of the duel betwixt Thomas Mowbray, the Duke of Norfolk and Bolingbroke. Richard urges them that 'Wrath-kindled gentlemen berul'd by me/ Let's purge this choler without letting blood'.Peace to be achieved and, rage to be withstood by 'forget, forgive; conclude and be agreed'. Surprisingly for a Shakespearean history, *Richard II* contains no battle scene. Richard's retreat is, to verbal, not physical, force (Leggatt 1988).Richard was worried over Bolingbrook's rising courtship to the common people, and his space in people's hearts.The subtext thus portrays Richard, the King as a weak character whose decisions frequently oscillate, emphasizes on truce and adverse to loyal friends. Thus in *Richard II* Shakespeare draws a sharp contrast between a 'flawed medieval monarch Richard and the cold, laconic, calculating new throne, following Machiavellian formula by befriending the common people and crushing the nobility (Newell).

c) The Tudor Nationalism

A national identity arrives when citizens see the state as a reflection of their will. Nationalism is a 'movement and a state of mind that brings together

national identity, consciousness, and collectivities'. It 'transforms the old order to modernity', places 'imagination above production, distribution, and exchange', and alters 'the nature of power over people and territories that shapes and directs the social and political world'. Nationalism is essentially 'homogenous'(Greenfeld 1992). National unit is 'perceived as larger than any concrete community' and is the fundamental sociopolitical fact about the modern world. The underlying philosophy of Tudor nationalism was to be found in the writings of Francis Bacon, written about 1585. The faith of both Bacon and Shakespeare was rooted in a strong monarchy, the triumph of 'Tudor Nationalism', commercial prosperity, sternly benevolent Toryism and continual contempt of the faith and fantasies of natural law (Ivor....28-30). Liah Greenfeld opines that nationalism first arose in England in the sixteenth century due to the Tudor state-building requirements and Reformation turmoil (Greenfels 1992).England, and in turn 'Englishness', are keenly shaped by its sovereign. Shakespeare's English history plays maneuver in terms of nation by privileging the voice of the monarch. Conflict with France, victories over rebels, shrewdness of the king as a military leader – Shakespeare used everything possible to shape England and Englishness as a nation as the England of Shakespeare's time was 'fertile soil' to nurture the rise of secular nationalism and the type of state-building it needs. Shakespeare belonged to a genre of 'innovative literary nationalism' represented by Marlowe, Sidney, Spenser, and so forth (Shulman 2014).Shakespeare's *Henriad*, tells the story of England as a nation through the lives and exploits of these figures.

The first example of using 'nation' is taken from a source dating to 1300, the second reference being drawn from John Wyclif around 1380 during the reign of King Richard II. Two centuries later Shakespeare uses the classic speech of John of Gaunt

In *Richard II* to evoke the concept of a sacred England as a natural jewel, impregnable against the attack of others existing as a separate political state occupying a territory carved by Nature – one of the best-known expressions of English nationalism (Bosworth 2013). All the key British traits of individualism, exceptionalism and 'chosen' status are present in this Elizabethan rhapsody (Rojek 2008).

> This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,
> This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
> This other Eden, demi-paradise,
> This fortress built by Nature for herself
> Against infection and the hand of war,
> This happy breed of men, this little world,
> This precious stone set in the silver sea,
> Which serves it in the office of a wall,

Or as a moat defensive to a house,

Against the envy of less happier lands,

This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,

This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,

Fear'd by their breed and famous by their birth,

Renowned for their deeds as far from home,

For Christian service and true chivalry,

As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry,

Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's Son,

This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,

Dear for her reputation through the world […]

The 'realm' imagined by John of Gaunt is medieval England before the decline of barons in which the population is related to the polity only as occupants of the land and the king's subjects; their stake in it being of a utilitarian and accidental nature (Cohen 2002).The king simply is: his monarchy survives until his death or until he is usurped. What kind of king he was depends entirely upon his use of power and power's use of him. The king, in his life time while making his history, is feeding his posterity – the successors and descendants who will remember him, will praise or blame him, and the writers who will reinvent him for their time. (Cohen…..). In England the people needed to detach themselves both from the universalist claims of the Catholic church and transfer their allegiance from the monarchy to the concept of the nation (Greenfield 2000).

In *Henry V* Shakespeare portrays friction with France to define England. Henry, the prince, also has to negotiate the competing nationalities within his own army. 'With captains representing the four countries which will form modern Britain – England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland – *Henry V*, written and staged in 1599, foreshadows the ascension of James I and the unification of the crowns' (Morrow…).As the chorus tells the audience to make use of their imaginary forces work as it is not possible to confine two mighty monarchies and wars that involve thousands of warriors 'within the girdle of these walls', each character in the stage represents a culture, or a segment of population. For instance, Fluellen represents the Welsh, Pistol the underclass, Jamy the Scottish, etc. This representation of poor and rich, English, and Welsh, Scottish and Irish represents the diversity of English diverse national character that further legitimizes the attack on France with the support of Ireland, Wales, Scotland.In the end all- Irish, Welsh, and the Scottish- express their admiration for Henry through these characters. The Chorus is a devout patriot, who from the beginning to the end of the play glorifies Harry's chivalries and brutalities despite the king's callousness against humanity. At the climax of the play we see Henry trying to win Katherine's heart saying'… it is not

possible you should love the enemy of France, Kate; but, in loving me, you should love the friend of France; for I love France so well that I will not part with a village of it, I will have it all mine; and, Kate, when France is mine and I am yours, then Yours is France and you are mine'. Shakespeare never makes patriotic Harry telling the French princess that England belongs to her, if she marries him. Henry wins France through war, and holds it through love. Be it through war or love, the patriot Henry aspires for the creation of an empire, a Great England through an expansionist policy is perfectly portrayed by the nationalist Shakespeare in Henry V.The ideological premise upon which Shakespeare constructs his themes and characters are based on Nationalism. His writings lend support to whatever that supports nationalism - be it the orgies of war or horrors of holocaust or the moral turpitude of the king. War may increase taxation for the lower orders, or it may be instigated by the members of the Privy Council or even the church, but it strengthens nation unity – this is what Henry V hankers.

2. 'POWER' IN KING RICHARD II

If Hobbes' main task was the demolition of medievalism, by creating an unchallenged Leviathan-Sovereign, who smashes the 'loose conglomeration of borough, manor, guild and Church, which has constituted the pre-Tudor State' through his Social Contract Theory, Shakespeare with his plays gave substantive credence to this theory among the common folks of England during the Tudor period making absolutism the acceptable notion. The predominant political doctrine proclaimed by the Tudors is the absolute authority of the king, who is responsible only to God for his deeds – the doctrine being expressed explicitly in the 1571 homily – *Against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion* enabling the dynasty to establish absolute power and demolish the opposition.[4] Rebelling against the king is tantamount to sinning against God.

Before Richard was challenged by Bolingbroke, Richard was confident and knew what to do as a king (his actions in Act 1), but once challenged he becomes increasingly emotional and confused. Richard later, however, realizes the frailty of worldly power and the mortality of kings:

> For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground
> And tell sad stories of the death of kings;
> How some have been deposed; some slain in war,
> Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed;
> Some poison'd by their wives: some sleeping kill'd;
> All murder'd: for within the hollow crown
> That rounds the mortal temples of a king

Keeps Death his court and there the antic sits,
Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,
Allowing him a breath, a little scene,
To monarchize, be fear'd and kill with looks,
Infusing him with self and vain conceit,
As if this flesh which walls about our life,
Were brass impregnable, and humour'd thus
Comes at the last and with a little pin
Bores through his castle wall, and farewell king!
Cover your heads and mock not flesh and blood
With solemn reverence: throw away respect,
Tradition, form and ceremonious duty,
For you have but mistook me all this while:
I live with bread like you, feel want,
Taste grief, need friends: subjected thus,
How can you say to me, I am a king?

In the end we see the transference of power making the king in Richard a subject.

Ay, no; no, ay; for I must nothing be;
Therefore no no, for I resign to thee.
Now mark me, how I will undo myself;
I give this heavy weight from off my head
And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand,
The pride of kingly sway from out my heart;
With mine own tears I wash away my balm,
With mine own hands I give away my crown,
With mine own tongue deny my sacred state,
With mine own breath release all duty's rites:
All pomp and majesty I do forswear;
My manors, rents, revenues I forego;
My acts, decrees, and statutes I deny:
God pardon all oaths that are broke to me!
God keep all vows unbroke that swear to thee!
Make me, that nothing have, with nothing grieved,
And thou with all pleased, that hast all achieved!
Long mayst thou live in Richard's seat to sit,
And soon lie Richard in an earthly pit!
God save King Harry, unking'd Richard says,
And send him many years of sunshine days!
What more remains?

...
Made glory base and sovereignty a slave,
Proud majesty a subject, state a peasant.
...
O that I were a mockery king of snow,
Standing before the sun of Bolingbroke,
To melt myself away in water-drops!

Albeit, in *King Richard* Act V Scene II, we see the Duke of York telling the duchess about the change of guard with people crying 'God save thee, Bolingbroke!'

As in a theatre, the eyes of men,
After a well-grac'd actor leaves the stage
Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be tedious.'

York shows no mercy even to his son, Aumerle when he realizes that Aumerle, one of the close confidants of King Richard, is plotting a conspiracy to kill Bolingbroke. Through this shift of people's reverence from Richard to Bolingbrook, Shakespeare repudiates the theory of divine right of kings and instead assumes that power, the key concept in politics, is to be worshipped. We don't know much about the common people, but we hear that they "Threw dust and rubbish on King Richard's head" (V.ii.6) and were eager to welcome Bolingbroke. They are referred to only as a group and painted in less than flattering terms. The groom, who along with the gardeners is one of the few common people whom we see directly in the play rather than through the filter of other characters' reports. In parallel with the common people who rapidly move to support Bolingbroke, a group of nobles (including Aumerle and Carlisle) remain vehemently opposed to Bolingbroke's 'pernicious plot' and instigate their own plot.

As AB Steel noted, the reign of Richard II was notable for he was the last king of the old medieval order: 'the last king ruling by hereditary right, direct and undisputed from the Conqueror. The next kings of the next hundred and ten years ... were essentially *de facto* not *de jure,* successful usurpers recognized after the event, upon conditions, by their fellow magnates or by parliament' (Steel quoted in Tillyard, 1944). Richard was the authentic heir of the crusading Plantagenets having the full sanctity of medieval kingship and the strong pathos of being the last king to possess it – an honour Tudors could not claim however powerful they be, however undisputed their hold over their country's church be. Nor did Richard's crimes ever amount to tyranny to warrant an outright rebellion. Be it York or Bastard, they never aspire for changing existing government though they shift their allegiance after change (Tillyard, 1944).

Shakespeare might have been deeply influenced by Machiavelli's *Prince* (1532) that stresses more on nationalism/ patriotism and places greater importance to a strong king capable of leading a stronger nation. King Richard fell short of Shakespearian good king. No wonder, Shakespeare's Richard II was seen by Queen Elizabath as a 'good propaganda' used for seditious ends, who felt that she would meet Richard's fate from Essex.[5] James (1986) raised the question how much Shakespeare was retrospectively using this inherent irreligious challenge to warn of the consequences of abuse of power, neglect of the obligations of monarchy to subjects, while at the same time warning England's nobility (James 1986). Indeed the *Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion* (1571) was a direct response to the Northern Rebellion of 1569.[6]Events of this kind were pre-charged with contemporary ideological significance as they came into Shakespeare's hands, though the question of where his play stands on the issues involved is of course tricky!

Conclusion

Shakespeare's historical drama, though depends much on the provenance of Holinshed's historical account of events, is regarded as a free adaptation of historical sources. Though not considered as a true space for the historical facts, his plays found coveted place in people's hearts. People know more of English history between 1399 and 1485 (from the fall of Richard II through to the crowning of Henry Tudor) through Shakespeare's history plays. It shaped the English nationalism and have served as the bridge between medievalism and modernity. The 'political Shakespeare' is located in the cusp of modernity and resonates the political philosophy of realists like Hobbes and Machiavelliwith the drama of politics and the melodrama of power more comprehensible to a common man.

Notes

1. 'Wars of the Roses' refers to the heraldic badges (that were used by the monarchs of the Kingdom of England) associated with the two royal houses, the White Rose of York and the Red Rose of Lancaster. It is a series of wars fought between these two rivals of royal House of Plantagenet from 1455 to 1487. Lancaster led by Henry Tudor won the final war defeating the last Yorkist king, Richard III, at the Battle of Bosworth Field. Finally Henry VII of Lancaster married Elizabeth of York, uniting the two claims. The House of Tudor ruled the Kingdom of England until 1603.

2. Scholars use the term 'Henriad' for Shakespeare's second tetralogy. It comprises *Richard II*; *Henry IV, Part 1*; *Henry IV, Part 2*; and *Henry V*. The subject matter of the second tetralogy comprising the three *Henry VI* plays and *Richard III* comes chronologically before the first tetralogy. The term "Henriad" derives from the Classical epics the *Iliad* and Aeneid.

3. George Buchanan (Transl. Duncan H. MacNeill ,*The Art and Science of Government among the Scots,* (George Buchanan's *"De jure regniapudScotos"),* MacLellan, 1964:

Girish Kumar R.

70-102 ,

4. *XXI. An Homily against disobedience and willful rebellion.* The Books of Homilies (1547, 1562, and 1571) are two books of thirty-three sermons. It elucidates the reformed doctrines of the Church of England in greater depth. The title of the collection is *Certain Sermons or Homilies Appointed to Be Read in Churches.* Queen Elizabeth, who ruled England at the time the play *King John* was written, even made the churches in England read a sermon (on a regular basis) called "Homily Against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion." Rebellion, according to the Elizabethan worldview, was a 'great a sin against God'. See "An Homilie against Disobedience and Wilfull Rebellion." Reprinted in William Shakespeare, *King Richard II*, ed. Andrew Gurr. Cambridge University Press, 2003: 215-220.

5. The Tudor Monarchs, who were popular with the people, felt themselves to be the absolute rulers of England, but they worked in association with the Parliament. When Elizabeth I died in 1603, she had no children, and so Parliament looked to her closest relative James VI of Scotland, who became James I of England. James I and his son Charles I were both vocal about their support for divine right.

6. The Northern Rebellion of 1569 also called the Rising of the North of 1569, was an unsuccessful attempt by Catholic nobles from Northern England. One of her first actions as Queen Elizabeth I of England was the establishment of an English Protestant church. The Catholic Nobles wanted to depose Queen Elizabeth I of England and enthrone with Mary, the Queen of Scots.

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Reinforcing Economic Empowerment through Social Safety Net: The Experience of NREGS in Ernakulam

K.M. Seethi

The concept of economic empowerment has gained increasing legitimacy and popularity with the introduction of employment generation programmes across the world India. Such programmes with effective social safety objectives have become an indispensible part of the policy making agenda today. This has great relevance for countries such as India where the problem of unemployment has become one of the most critical challenges of social policy making (Dreze 2011). Public work schemes have been used to generate employment through the creation of labour-intensive productive assets and have thus provided the foundation for programmes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) The Act for the scheme envisages, among other things, reinforcement of economic empowerment, enhancement of livelihood security of the poor by generating wage employment opportunities in works that develop the infrastructure base of that particular locality; rejuvenation of natural resource base of the area concerned; creation of a productive rural asset base; stimulation of local economy for providing wage employment and ensure women empowerment (Kerala, LSGD 2006; India, MRD 2013).

The Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is therefore one of the radical initiatives put in place by the Government of India in the post-independence period, towards legal enforcement of the 'Right to Work' with a view to enhancing livelihood security. Though seemingly limited in its scope (100 days per household per year), the Act emerged as a powerful tool of economic empowerment for the rural poor in India. It provides vast opportunities for them not only to escape from the decades-old poverty and miseries of social stratification, but also to organize and fight for similar rights like the 'right to social security.' It also helps empower woman by guaranteeing them relatively autonomous income-generating employment schemes (Hirway and Batabyal 2012).

As the various studies indicated, women, having once experienced the value of bringing home a money wage from their own labour, have developed a sense of confidence and capacity to take up challenges in other diverse areas of their social domain. The enactment of NREGA is therefore viewed as a "grand victory of Indian democracy" (Dreze and Khera 2011). As Jean Dreze (2011) remarked, the Act underlines the fact that the Indian political system can no longer remain elitist and the underprivileged majority can no longer remain marginalised. The Act is therefore an assurance that the demands of the underprivileged will prevail over the privileged. It is a deepening process of democratization and social and economic empowerment of the poor and underprivileged. However, the most crucial challenge is how the NREGA can be put in place, both in letter and spirit, and how this social legislation can be given practical meaning and effects.

A Breakthrough in Social Security

The Mahatma Gandhi NREGS represents a breakthrough in the trajectory of wage employment schemes in India's post-independence history. NREGS is unique "in its scale, architecture and thrust." It sustains an integrated natural resource management and livelihoods generation perspective. The provisions for transparency and accountability under the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS make it a distinct public policy initiative addressing the interests of all immediate stakeholders (India, MRD 2013). The NREGS is essentially a bottom-up and peculiarly a people-centred endeavour. Being a demand-driven, self-selecting and rights-based scheme, it ensures a legal guarantee of wage employment, besides provisions for allowances and compensation, in case of failure to provide work on demand, and delays in payment of work undertaken. In such cases, the State shall bear the cost of the unemployment allowance. The State shall also provide employment as 100 per cent of the unskilled labour cost, and 75 per cent of the material cost of the programme is borne by the Government. The system of devolution of financial resources to Grama panchayats (GPs) [with GPs implementing 50 per cent of the works in terms of cost] is unique. A great share of the responsibility for the success of the NREGS lies with the wage-seekers, grass root level agencies (such as self-help groups) and local governance structures. Social audit provides an unprecedented accountability of performance, especially towards the immediate stakeholders. Given the distinct features of the Scheme, an innovative and integral approach is called for in the effective implementation of NREGA so that the goals of the Act can be properly realized (India, MRD 2013:113-117).

The NREGS achievements have been exemplary as recorded in many studies (see India, MRD 2013; Dreze and Khera 2011; India, Planning Commission 2010; Babu and Rao 2010; TISS 2011; Kerala State Planning Board 2011). Since its launching in 2006, around Rs 1, 10,000 crores was spent as wage payment to

K.M. Seethi

rural households and generated 1200 crore person-days of employment. On an average, 5 million households have been provided employment every year since 2008. Eighty per cent of households are being paid directly through bank/post office accounts, and 10 crore new bank/post office accounts have been opened. While implementation is still a challenging task across regions, states and districts, there are positive feedbacks emerging to indicate that MGNREGS has contributed to increased rural wages, reduced distress migration from traditionally migration-intensive areas, usage of barren areas for cultivation; and empowerment of the weaker and marginalised sections and thereby giving them a new sense of identity and bargaining power. Though the achievements of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS have been impressive in diverse areas, there have been some issues with regard to its implementation that need to be addressed seriously. As such, the Ministry of Rural Development brought out a discussion paper in 2011 which identified some major challenges in the implementation of the scheme and suggested measures to deal with them effectively.

Rationale and Objectives

Considering the size and scope of the programme implementation, it has become necessary for the policy makers, experts and those who are in charge of implementation to know the benefits and impacts of such development intervention. Further, issues and challenges limiting the effective implementation of the programme at the grass-root level could be identified and analysed through a detailed micro-level data analysis and corrective measures be outlined. The broad aims of the study are (i) evaluation of the efficacy and effectiveness of the programme vis-à-vis its objective; (ii) critical assessment of the policies, procedures and practices to reach conclusions, especially on appropriate modifications required; (iii) assessment of the performance of various institutions under the Act; and (iv) documentation of best practices for replications. The study has tried to assess the role/influence of NREGS in poverty reduction, social and economic empowerment, empowering of marginalised groups and women. It further attempts to quantify the nature and utility of assets created and the contribution of the scheme in improving agriculture and natural resources. The study also seeks to comprehend the level of empowerment it has brought in strengthening grass root level democracy and facilitating governance reforms and analyze the problems and concerns under the scheme and to put remedial measures across for innovation and sustenance.

Methodology and Design of the Study

The impact assessment study attempts to evaluate NREGS in the Ernakulam district of Kerala with a focus on financial inclusion and economic empowerment. The methodology employed in the study is analytical, based on a combination of

qualitative and quantitative data generated through purposive sampling techniques as well as through Focus Groups Discussions and interactions with stakeholders. The main objective of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics and viewpoints of a population that are of interest, which will best enable to answer research questions. In impact assessment studies, quantitative and qualitative methods often play important roles, either simultaneously or sequentially, for the purpose of answering some questions through (a) convergence of results from different sources, (b) answering related questions in a complementary fashion, (c) using one set of methods to expand or explain the results obtained from use of the other set of methods, (d) using one set of methods to develop schedules/questionnaires or conceptual models that inform the use of the other set, or (e) using one set of methods to identify the sample for analysis using the other set of methods. Particularly useful in the context of evaluation research and policy analysis, this strategy involves identifying who the major stakeholders are who are involved in designing, giving, receiving, or administering the programme or service being evaluated, and who might otherwise be affected by it.

Likewise, the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is a rapid assessment, semi-structured data gathering method in which a purposively selected set of participants gather to discuss issues and concerns based on a list of key themes drawn up by the researcher. This qualitative research technique has been developed to give researchers a better understanding of the data from quantitative surveys.

Strategies of Field Study in Ernakulam

Twenty Grama Panchayats in Ernakulam have been selected out of 84 from 14 blocks. The selection has been made on the basis of the performance of the NREGS and the guidelines in place. With a view to evaluating the performance of the scheme, the research team used the parameters/indicators such as the maximum number of household registration, household participation, 100 days to maximum households, women's participation, SC/ST participation and the expenditure. Following this the team selected two best performing and two low performing Panchayats in the district. Using the participation in NREGS and census data, two SC and ST populated Panchayats were also selected. The remaining 12 Panchayats were randomly selected comprising all Block Panchayats. The research team visited all the selected Panchayats of Ernakulum and collected data from beneficiaries and non beneficiaries. The team visited 2-5 worksites on an average and interacted with workers, mates, MGNREGS officials and people's representatives and those who were present. The team met between 2000 and 2500 workers at various sites, working on both private and public properties. A district level workshop was also organized to generate qualitative data also.

K.M. Seethi

The District Profile

Located in the central part of Kerala, Ernakulam is one of the 14 districts of Kerala with a higher population. The district incorporates the largest metropolitan region of the state, Greater Cochin. Ernakulam also is the highest revenue yielding district in Kerala and is seen as the commercial hub of the state. It is the third most populous district in Kerala, after Malappuram and Thiruvananthapuram. It also hosts the highest number of international and domestic tourists in the state. As per the 2011 Census data, Ernakulam has the population of 3,282,388 (3.2 millions) of which male and female were 1.61 million and 1.66 million respectively. Sex ratio in Ernakulam stood at 1027 per 1000 male. Average literacy rate of Ernakulam in 2011 was 95.89 compared to 93.9 of 2001. The district's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) is Rs. 4.94 million and per capita is Rs. 94392. The work participation rate in the district is 38.06%. The district has 4.04% cultivators, 5.71% agricultural labourers and 1.92% household industry workers. 88.33% of workers belong to other categories.

Impact Assessment

While the achievements in the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS in Kerala have been very impressive in Kerala, the district of Ernakulam has made overall progress in terms of achieving the goals of planning and execution of the scheme. By 2012-13, the district had generated 5178894 cumulative person days showing 163% increase over the previous year. It was seen as a remarkable achievement to maintain 60 person days on an average, which was well above the state average. The scheme was launched in the district during 2008-09, and ever since it has made remarkable progress. During 2012-13, a total of 269927 workers from 1, 68,282 families had registered under the scheme. A total of 1,67,672 job cards were issued in that year. Out of this 18,993 households were from SCs and 1062 households were from STs (MGNREGS, Ernakulam, *Annual Report 2012-13* and *Annual Report 2013-14*). Twenty Grama Panchayats in the district have been selected (out of 84) for field investigation. As such 1000 samples were taken for analysis – 50 each for all 20 GPs. Out of 50. a minimum of 30 samples belonged to the direct beneficiaries and 20 non-beneficiaries of NREGS. Thus, 600 beneficiaries and 400 non-beneficiaries constituted the sampling segments of the survey.

The findings from the survey of 20 GPs in Ernakulam broadly represent the NREGS scenario of the entire district. Since 2008 the number of people joining the scheme increased considerably. But there was also a sudden spurt in the number during 2011. The largest number of people joining the scheme (59.67%) was in that year. However, there was no particular reason that could explain this increase in number. By that time more than 86 per cent of the total respondents had joined the

scheme. The social categories of the samples taken show that the majority of the respondents (71.17%) belonged to the general category. While, the SCs constitute 23.83%, the share of STs is 5%.

The NREGS is a milestone from the perspective of women's empowerment. The Act is committed to ensuring that at least 33% of the workers shall be women. It plays a major role in economically empowering women and laying the basis for greater autonomy and self-esteem. During the year under study in Ernakulam, the share of women workers was 96% in the 20 Grama Panchayats. The educational status of the beneficiaries showed that more than 81% of the workers had studied up to 10th standard. The workers having the age above 36 constitute 91.17% of the samples collected. Among this, the share of females is 90.80%. From the samples taken, it was found that the largest number of beneficiaries belonged to the age group of 46-59 (39.67%). There was also a significant number of people above the age of 60 (22.67%).

Majority (72.83%) of the respondents possessed land in the range of 1-15 cents. The number of workers without land is 23 (3.83%) of the total respondents. 61.17% of the workers belonged to the below poverty level (BPL) category and 38.33% belonged to above poverty level (APL) category. Some perceptible contradictions may also be found if one relies only on the category of ration cards. For example, those who were relatively well-off were placed under the BPL category and those who seemed to be relatively poor (without land or any source of income) were placed under the APL category. The survey showed that of the total respondents, 88.83% had the monthly income of less than Rs.3000. Majority of the workers said that NREGS was their main source of employment. Most of them came to know about the scheme from the Panchayats.

The survey data indicated uneven response about the rights under the NREGS. Only 16% of the respondents had excellent awareness about these things. 35% respondents had good awareness about their rights and entitlements. Though there was a Grievance Redressal Cell under the provisions of the Act, the awareness about it among the workers was abysmally low (15.33%). About 84.67% respondents had no awareness about it. Under the MGNREGS, the workers are entitled to get compensation for delayed payment. According to the Operational Guidelines (2013), "in case wages are paid beyond 15 days of work done, compensation shall be paid along with the wages without the worker having to file a claim for compensation." The field survey, however, indicated that 0.50 per cent of the total samples (3/600) received compensation. 56.50% did not get any compensation for delayed payment. 43 % of the workers were not aware of such a provision. Similarly, workers participation in the planning and implementation of the projects is crucial, particularly through Grama Sabha which is the pivotal body.

The study shows that 98.17% of the respondents did participate in the NREGS Grama Sabha. Identification of works is equally important in the planning and execution of the project. Awareness about place of work varied among samples. The majority (88.50%) of the sample beneficiaries indicated that NREGS Grama Sabhas provided the platform for identifying works.

An important aspect of the NREGA is the provision for 'Social Audit.' The Act says that it is "a means of continuous public vigilance" (Section 17) "to ensure public accountability in the implementation of projects laws and policies." It is stated that the social audit is an effective means for ensuring transparency, participation, consultation and accountability under the Act. The process combines people's participation and monitoring with the requirements of the audit discipline. It is envisaged as a continuous and ongoing process involving public vigilance and verification of quantity and quality of works at different stages of implementation; and a process to be conducted in every Grama Panchayat (GP) at least once in six months, involving a mandatory review of all aspects. As such it is a fact finding process. The work involves only investigation by cross-verifying facts and details in the records from the workers and cross-verifying works at site. The study from the 20 Panchayats in Ernakulam provided a mixed response. 48.33 % respondents said that social audit took place periodically within the stipulated time period. 47%, however, opined that there was no regularity in the conduct of social audit. The remaining samples showed that they were not aware of such a mechanism. Likewise, the visit of officials is also an important provision for ensuring efficiency and monitoring. 99.50 workers responded that officials at various ranks from BDOs to overseers had visited the worksites. Workers in all panchayats were engaged in various activities such as irrigation, augmentation of water supply, land development, agriculture related activities, water samples, cleaning and sanitation works, prevention of floods, animal husbandry and in other Centre or state sponsored projects. 19.83% of the beneficiaries said that the NREGS works were undertaken in their own lands. The remaining 80.17% said that they worked elsewhere.

One of the goals of NREGS is empowerment of the socially disadvantaged, especially women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, through the process of a rights-based legislation. 99.83% of the workers opined that the scheme was useful to them. Among the respondents, 96.84% indicated that the scheme had helped develop collective action and companionship. 78.35% workers said that the domestic environment had improved significantly after working in the scheme. 66% said that the scheme paved the way for increased socio-political participation. Women, SCs and STs, and persons above the age of 60 shared the view that the scheme had empowered them through collective action. Marginalized sections

such as SCs and STs responded that 71.67% among them experienced better socio-political participation. 71.51 % of the total respondents said that the NREGS had improved their economic conditions. The survey shows that 90.50% of the beneficiaries had improved their household consumption. While 73.50% workers used their wages from NREGS for health related requirements, this was even higher (78.67%) among the workers of the age group of 60 and above. The pattern was almost the same for women (73.09%) and SCs and STs (79.19%).

The analysis showed that only 39.17% could acquire physical/non-physical assets with NREGS wages. 36.33% said that they could acquire household durables with the money they received as wages. This was shown higher (38.73%) among the SCs and STs. Regarding financial assets, the survey showed that 33.67 per cent of the workers had benefitted. Of this, 24.51% invested in chit funds, 11% took insurance policies and only 2.67% deposited as cash assets. Among the category of workers in the age group of 60 and above, the habits of acquiring financial assets was not common (11.77%) in chit funds and 4.42% in respect of insurance policies. It was generally seen that the majority of the rural population was debt ridden. They used to borrow money from local money lenders (with exorbitant interest rates), local financial institutions or from SHGs and friends. The survey showed that 73.50% workers used the NREGS wages for repayment of debts.

The NREGS has obviously strengthened the mobility of people at the bottom, especially of women and marginalised sections. The findings specifically indicated the levels of participation of workers. It is seen that 91% of the NREGS workers were members of Kudumbasree, an important scheme of poverty eradication in Kerala. There is also a NREGS Workers' Union. But it was found that only 20.50% of the workers had membership in the Union. Only 2.67% workers were members of any political parties.

The survey included about 400 non beneficiaries from the 20 Grama Panchayats representing 14 Blocks. The responses of non-beneficiary households, elected representatives of three tier Panchayat Raj institutions, Block Programme Officers, mates, Panchayat Secretaries, Engineering Personnel of MGNREGS and LSGD, Data Entry Operators, Representatives of financial institutions and progressive farmers were taken for analysis. The survey showed that 49.25% non-beneficiaries were not registered in NREGS because they were already employed. 10.75% were not interested in the scheme due to low wages. 45.50% sample non-beneficiaries said that they had only moderate awareness about the scheme. 11% of the non-beneficiaries said that they had benefitted from the NREGS activities in their own land. 59.50% respondents from non-beneficiaries said that the NREGS activities had augmented sanitation and infrastructural development in the rural areas. 38.50% agreed that the scheme helped mitigate poverty among the poor in

the area. It is significant that 41.75% non beneficiaries had the opinion that the scheme had helped strengthen women empowerment in their locality. 30.50% said that the MGNREGS helped strengthen material production sector. 24.50% viewed that the activities helped improve soil conservation and irrigation facilities.

Majority (54%) of the sample non beneficiaries said that the NREGS activities supported the economically well off people. 50.25% said that the present wage pattern under the scheme was not adequate. 22%, however, opined that there was a misuse of government fund and therefore the scheme was a waste of public money. 14.75% had the view that the delay in getting wages was a major drawback of the scheme. 2.50% had a feeling that the scheme caused the loss of employment opportunities in the rural areas.

Financial Inclusion and Economic Empowerment

Financial inclusion is recognised as an inevitable component of inclusive growth and sustainable development, the two guiding principles of a public policy regime. The concept of financial inclusion entails the process of establishing links between the people and formal financial institutions. It is through this process that the people can access various products/services offered by formal financial institutions. To be precise, the process ensures the availability of banking and similar services at an affordable cost to the poor and disadvantaged and bringing them into the framework of formal financial institutions (RBI 2011; Rangarajan 2008)

The idea behind the concept of financial inclusion is to ensure new ways of ending economic exploitation and social inequalities of the poor who are most often vulnerable to informal channels such as money lenders and private lending institutions for meeting their needs. The Government of India has recognised that social inequalities and exploitation cannot be addressed without setting a new track of financial inclusion. Though it is one of the proclaimed goals of the Government, financial inclusion appears to be a challenging task due to several problems such as weak financial delivery infrastructure, lack of financial literacy, prevalence of informal sources of financial services, low levels of income, distance from the financial institutions etc. However, the efforts underway such as nationalization of banks, primary sector lending, establishment of specialized rural banks, licensing policy of RBI etc. have strengthened the process of financial inclusion over years. It is to be noted that non bank agencies such as post offices and micro finance institutions also play a significant role in providing financial products to the poor. As such financial inclusion under MGNREGS could be a challenging task.

The parameters of financial inclusion (supply side) and the parameters of financial literacy (demand side) have been taken together to evaluate the overall

success rate of financial inclusion in Ernakulam. The following Index of financial inclusion epitomizes the rate of success in the district.

Index of Financial Inclusion

    I.   Parameters of Financial Inclusion (Supply side of financial inclusion)

    II.   Parameters of Financial Literacy   (Demand side of financial inclusion)

I. Parameters of Financial Inclusion (Supply side of financial inclusion)

    i)   Opening of bank account

    ii)   Problem in opening bank account

    iii)   Other benefits of bank account

    iv)   Delay in getting wages

    v)   Acquiring financial assets

    vi)   Source of credit

    vii)   Cost of bank visit

    viii) ATM facility

    ix)   Cheque book facility

II. Parameters of Financial Literacy (Demand side of financial inclusion)

    i)   Received assistance for opening bank account

    ii)   Operation of bank account

    iii)   Knowledge on banking transitions

    iv)   Received orientation for banking activities

    v)   Frequency of bank visit

$$\text{IFI} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n_1} Xi + \sum_{j=1}^{n_2} Yj}{n} \qquad n = n_1 + n_2$$

$$\text{IFI\_DD} = \frac{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n_1} Xi}{\sum_{j=1}^{n_2} Yj}}{n_2} \qquad j = 1, 2, 3 \dots, 5; \ n_2 = 5$$

The results of the cumulative analysis show that the process of financial inclusion in the 20 sampling units has shown 'Good' progress (67.50%) from both supply-side and Demand-side variables. The results from SC & ST populated sampling units, however, show variance. While the cumulative results from SC & ST populated sampling units show the level of achievement in terms of 'Good' only to the tune of 26.57% and 33.33% respectively, there is also a substantial level of progress made in financial inclusion from demand-side and hence the SC-ST populated sampling units show 'Moderate' success in financial inclusion.

K.M. Seethi

The study also focused on a wide range of questions related to awareness about the banking, services from the banks, problems of withdrawal and investments, provisions of loans and problems of repayments, other services received, responses from the bank officials, and other sources of borrowing, etc. Almost all beneficiaries and non beneficiaries agreed that payment of wages through banks is beneficial and rewarding. As wages are provided through banks, it provides incentives for savings and helps buying of household items, etc. The fact that banking services have reached out to the masses is generally seen as a positive pay-off of the NREGS.

Those who are opposed to the payment of wages through banks are workers in advanced age, illiterates and those who cannot afford to travel from far off places. Some workers have complained about the transaction environment in banks such as indifference and delay. Bank officials are apparently not comfortable when workers visit banks collectively for withdrawal. Workers were also not able to periodically check whether their wages were credited, balance pending and identifying the credited amount for the work done from time to time. Hence, they demanded that there shall be a separate counter for NREGS transactions.

Though transactions with the banks enhance their social status, it does not benefit workers significantly in terms of availing loans though some use the MGNREGS account for availing gas subsidies. Due to lack of adequate knowledge and skills, many are not able to use ATM facilities. Banking transactions cause additional expenses in terms of transportation cost and loss of work, if the schedule of work is underway on that day. The NREGS has strengthened Kudumbasree programmes. This, in turn, has helped workers to have more opportunities to take loans from Kudumbasree. Working with the NREGS has helped the beneficiaries to have credit facilities with local shops and local sellers. People now have more confidence in lending money to MGNREG workers.

The survey in the district showed that only 7.17% of the sample beneficiaries had savings bank account either with scheduled commercial banks or cooperative societies prior to their registration with the NREGS. There was a significant rise in the number of account holders since 2008. The increase can be understood in the background of the deepening of the process of financial inclusion as part of the government schemes in place, including the NREGS. However, 97.67% of the workers did not have ATM and cheque facility under MGNREGS bank accounts. It is also observed that almost 98% of the workers visit their banks only occasionally. Only 1.83% workers visit their banks once in a month. The survey also investigated problems in opening bank accounts, mode of operation, frequency of verifying pass books etc.

99.67% of the workers said they did not face any problem in opening bank accounts. 40% workers said that they had received support from Mates for opening

accounts. Almost all (99.5%) sample beneficiaries said that they ensured verifying their pass books. Likewise, 99.83% workers said that they were the custodians of the NREGS pass books. 99.17% workers revealed that they were personally withdrawing money from NREGS bank accounts without anybody's help and almost all of them were withdrawing money directly from the banks. However, access to banking institutions and the cost of transportation are important to workers. About 52% of the respondents said they had to travel kilometers to reach the bank where they were holding their accounts. 18.33 sample beneficiaries conceded that they had linked their NREGS account for getting gas subsidy. Only 1 per cent said they had received loan through this account.

Self-help groups appeared to be the major source of borrowing (62.50%) before the commencement of work under the NREGS. Local money lenders (34.50%) and private money lending institutions (45%) used to play an important role in providing loans to the rural poor with higher interest rates. However, there was a sharp decline in borrowing money from local money lenders and private lending institutions since the starting of work under the scheme. The beneficiary responses on financial awareness (in regard to banking transactions) showed that there was a considerable increase in awareness (50%) after joining the scheme. However, they acknowledged that 94.17% of them did not receive any orientation about banking services, including transactions.

64.50% workers said they had to spend some money for getting job card registration such as for taking photos and stationery purposes. 92.83% of the workers said they had no problem in getting work under the scheme. Majority (95.67%) of the workers said that they had faced no personal problems such as insults at work sites. however; delay in getting wages was raised by many. 60% workers said it would take more than a month to get their salary. Yet they never received any compensation for the delay in wage payment.

Economic and Social Empowerment

The qualitative data derived from Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and the District level workshops reinforced many of the findings of the survey.

Enhanced Dignity and Enhanced Capability: There was a general appreciation of the employment guarantee scheme underway in the state. Both beneficiaries and non beneficiaries shared the concern that the NREGS need be sustained and diversified in its scope and scale. The scheme provided a window of opportunities for a large segment of people who never enjoyed livelihood security but were confined to limited spheres. It facilitated and strengthened a vibrant civic sphere by setting a new track of social capital, and thereby a new level of inter-personal, inter-community interactions was set in motion. All participants

underlined the fact that the NREGS had substantially changed many prevailing stereotypes about 'labour.' It has enormously strengthened the confidence of the working class, by giving a new meaning to the dignity of labour. All of them agreed that this massive programme gave a new sense of confidence with regard to the 'right to work' and livelihood security. The scheme has also perceptibly reduced the gap between the government and the people insofar as the beneficiaries tended to believe that they were also government servants albeit on an ad hoc basis.

Since empowerment has become a buzzword of contemporary development discourses, it has also become an inevitable component of the scheme. It ensured constant interactions between the beneficiaries and officials of the government, besides engagement with institutions and organizations. This enabled the workers to have more autonomous space to undertake their own particular activities without anybody's help. Many of them agreed that their social interactions and engagements with the various social forces and agencies multiplied over time and thereby enhanced their capabilities.

Enhanced health security: The study brought to light another important factor related to the health status of workers. Many of them conceded that their mental and physical health improved considerably with the advent of the scheme. There was a perceptible decline in life style diseases, and hence the health expenditure of workers was reported to have come down considerably.

Enhanced civil consciousness and public action: Many of the workers pointed out that there was a remarkable increase in civic consciousness with the advent of the NREGS. This can be capitalized by strengthening public works programmes from road building and road maintenance to cleaning of canals, hospitals and schools. Sanitation works also need to be augmented. Weaker sections as well as marginalised communities see the scheme as having contributed to their increased mobility and enhanced public consciousness.

Enhanced Mobility and Social Inclusion: Most of the beneficiaries shared the feeling that the scheme provided a fresh impetus for social inclusion by setting a track open for all sections, irrespective of age, gender, caste or religion. The scheme has also been found extremely important in strengthening grass root level democracy as is evident from the high level of participation of people involved in the NREGS work.

Scheme-related Problems

While the overall benefits of the NREGS have been valued by the both beneficiaries and non beneficiaries, there were also some limitations, according to them. Some of them call for short-term and others long-term solutions. The NREGS workers said that they experienced occasional accidents and mishaps. This

has been reported from where workers will have to engage in hard labour. Drawing from the experiences at worksites, they pointed out that there were no adequate protection and safeguards in place if a worker had to encounter an accident. Some workers noted that as per law, victims of such an accident were entitled to get adequate compensation, but it was seldom given. Furthermore, they pointed out that whatever health expenses they had to incur for such accidents, they could claim only if victims were under treatment in a government hospital. If a worker meets with an accident, she/he loses not only a day's wage but incurs additional burden for treatment. Though first aid shall be provided in all work sites as per the Act, many Panchayats do not provide this. Beneficiaries are also sometimes forced to work in highly unhygienic circumstances including in places like canals and pits where human excreta were often dumped. They do their work, but without any protective measures. This calls for worker-friendly health protection.

Beneficiaries generally felt that the number of days of unskilled manual work should be increased to 200 days minimum as the existing arrangement is too inadequate. Workers also demanded enhancement of wage to the level of Rs.350 insofar as the wages being paid are too meagre compared to the quantum of work to be done. Many workers complained that there were also problems associated with the working time. They suggested that the working time under the scheme should be rescheduled from 9 to 4 taking into consideration the problems faced by women, children and aged. Almost all workers insisted that there should not be any delay in the disbursement of wages. Though there is a provision for compensation as per the Act, it is rarely provided. The delayed payment may make the NREGS less attractive, according to workers. Some beneficiaries demanded that noon meal provision should be made for all workers. Workers also suggested that the ratio of workers Vs Mates shall be modified from the current level of 40:1 to 20:1. Besides uniform, workers demanded that they should be provided with bonus for Onam and Christmas festivals. A major demand of the workers as well as non beneficiaries is that the NREGS work shall be commenced at the beginning of the financial year itself. Delayed starting can cause loss of hundred days of work.

Suggestions

Many concrete suggestions have also emerged from the study of both beneficiaries and non beneficiaries. There is a general view of all stakeholders that agriculture shall be an inevitable component of the NREGS. Cultivation shall be encouraged in public lands or in lands under the possession of private individuals as part of employment guarantee scheme. The agricultural activities shall be undertaken in tune with appropriate climatic conditions. If workers are to do their jobs in the lands under the possession of big land lords, a part of the estimated amount shall be taken from such land owners.

The NRGES work shall be diversified in areas where the general public benefits eventually. This will help avoid doing their work in private lands which sometimes causes discomfort in dealing with land owners. Many workers consider the distribution of muster roll from the blocks as not encouraging. They demanded that the Panchayats shall undertake the task. There shall be a provision in the law for giving TA and DA to Mates. Many beneficiaries noted that that they were not aware about the Grievance Cell under the NREGS. If provisions are there under law, it should be properly put in place. Insofar as the work determining process was not properly done and that the MGNREGS Gram Sabhas were rarely convened, there should be a proper monitoring mechanism to ensue this. Though Social Audit is mandatory, many believed that this was not regularly and systematically done. Hence GPs shall ensure proper social audit as per law.

Thus, the study underlines that though the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA remains a challenging one, there is strong evidence to suggest that the Scheme has immensely contributed to (a) economic and social empowerment of the rural poor; (b) increased mobility and social dignity of the weaker sections as well as marginalised communities;(c) mitigation of poverty; (d) increased state intervention for livelihood security and natural resource management (e) strengthening new domains of social capital (f) new incentives for cultivation and asset creation; (g) convergence of public works programmes and (h) deepening of democratisation and grass root level engagements. The eventual success of the scheme depends on the convergence of the state and the non state agencies in sustaining the spirit of the Act while implementing it for the benefit of the poor and underprivileged.

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NREGS, Local Economy, and Infrastructure Development: The Experience of Kollam

C. Vinodan

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is a milestone in setting a legal framework for livelihood security in rural India. This 'work guarantee scheme' also helps serve other objectives as well - in creating productive assets, protecting the environment, empowering women, reduce rural-urban migration and fosters social equity. Above all, the basic components of the inclusive growth strategy of the Indian economy are also inbuilt in NREGS. The village economy would improve only when the livelihood position of the village people also improves. In the tenth year of its implementation, the NREGS, unique in its scale and delivery architecture, has played a crucial role in asset creation, local economic development and regeneration of rural natural resource base. Kerala has made a significant progress in implementing the programme during the last several years.

The NREGS is, in many ways, a programme to strengthen grass-root level participation of citizens through democratic process, multi-layered social audit and transparency mechanism through the involvement of civil society towards sustainable and equitable development. An important objective of the Act is to improve the quality of life of rural households who are vulnerable to out-migration in search of daily wage employment by channelizing the workforce towards developmental activities at the village level itself. Economic development refers to increases in the standard of living of a nation's population associated with sustained growth from a simple, low-income economy to a modern, high income economy. Its scope includes the process and policies by which a nation improves the economic, political, and social well-being of its people. The impact of NREGA on the economy is not uniform throughout the country. On some of the aspects it has created a position impact on the households in terms of female participation rates and increase in the number of days of employment.

Local Economic Development (LED) is an approach to economic development, particularly in the developing world that, as its name implies, places importance on activities in and by cities, districts and regions. This involves added micro-economic measures at the local level to complement macro-economic measures at the national level. LED encompasses a range of disciplines including physical planning, economics and marketing, all with the goal of building up the economic capacity of a local area to improve its economic future and the quality of life for all. Local economic development may be defined as increases in the "local economy's capacity to create wealth for local residents." Such increases occur if local resources, such as labour and land, are used more productively. Economic development can occur through local job growth, which causes unemployed labour and land to be used. But economic development also occurs by shifting employed labour and land to more productive uses, for example better jobs. The promotion of LED signals the drive for rooting employment creation by building on the comparative advantages and the unique characteristics of localities. Decentralization reforms, advancing in many countries, provide ample opportunities to tap into the potential of local economies. LED strategies contribute to stronger policy coherence between national and sub-national levels, whilst connecting to cross-border value chains and markets.

Local economic development is seen as one of the most important ways of decreasing poverty. LED must aim to create jobs by making the local economy grow. This means that more businesses and factories should be started in the municipal area. As part of the Integrated Development Planning (IDP), key stakeholders in a municipality must come together to reach agreement and take decisions to make the economy grow and create income opportunities for more people, especially the poor. National government makes policy and provides funds, research and other support for local economic development. Municipalities decide on LED strategies and the process of arriving at a LED strategy must be part of the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) process. The LED strategies should be based on the overall vision outlined in the IDP and should take into account the result of the analysis done to identify problems and prioritize development projects. It should also look at things like integrating our residential and work areas, building development corridors between areas and supporting the economy with good public transport.

This paper focuses on local economy and infrastructure development through the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS in Kollam district. The major factors analyzed in this section include influence of NREGS on the economic development of the locality, awareness about economic development through NREGS, training inputs on basic and economic development through NREGS, awareness about the responsibility of panchayat in local economic development and development of basic facilities,

C. Vinodan

engagement in agricultural jobs as part of NREGS, item-wise engagement in agricultural jobs as part of NREGS, sources of water for irrigation, improvement of the irrigation facilities in the locality, small scale enterprises, development of basic facilities, assets information and information on income, environmental protection etc.

The NREGS marked a paradigm shift from the other employment programmes with its right-based approach. The government is legally accountable for providing employment of hundred days to those who demand it. This programme not only provides employment but also focuses on inclusive growth, basic and economic development of the locality.

Objectives of the Study

The impact assessment was carried out with the followings objectives of the study;

1. To understand and analyze the local economic development and infrastructure development of rural areas through the implementation of MGNREGS;
2. To assess the influence of the programme in agriculture, irrigation activities in the rural areas;
3. To know the awareness about the responsibility of panchayats in local economic development and development of basic facilities;
4. To measure the nature and utility of assets created and the contribution of the scheme in making improvements in the fisheries sector of the state;
5. To make aware on workers involvement in development of local basic facilities; and
6. To suggest remedial measures, if necessary, based on the findings of the study.

Strategies of the Study

1. Assess the overall impact of the programme implementation and to analyse the extent of compliance of Act, guidelines and other relevant orders along with the extent of exercising the right based approached of the Act, nature and utility of assets created, impact of the programme in decentralised governance institutionalising transparency, accountability, social audit aspects etc.
2. The impact of MGNREGS in social empowerment especially of marginalised groups and women (Name of the sector allotted for special assessment) will be evaluated and will include in the report as the second part.

Design and Methodology

The Grama Panchayats are the primary sampling unit. Purposive Sampling Method used for conducting the study. Twenty Grama Panchayats were selected

in the Kollam district. While selecting the Grama Panchayats the following criteria were observed.

The samples of 20 Grama Panchayats were selected for the purpose of the study.

This includes;

2 best performing Panchayats,

1   least performing Panchayats ,

1   Panchayat with highest no. of SC population

1   Panchayat with highest no. of ST population

15 Other Panchayats.

i)   The 15 Panchayats include both coastal and inland Panchayats. These Panchayats were selected on a random basis.

ii)   There shall be at least one Grama Panchayat in each Block Panchayat of the district.

iii)   Two Grama Panchayats which was made best performance in the district during the year 2011-12 in providing employment in terms of number of households, generating person days and employment provided per household (preferably in two block Panchayats).

iv)   Two Grama Panchayats with low performance in the district during the year 2011-12 in terms of providing employment in terms of number of households, generating person days and employment provided per household.

v)   Grama Panchayat/s of the district with maximum SC Population.

vi)   Grama Panchayat/s of the district with maximum ST Population.

vii)   Selection of Grama Panchayats was done in consultation with the District Programme Coordinator and Joint Programme Coordinator of MGNREGS.

viii)   The information gathered in each sampling unit was done through in depth interview with the cross section of all stakeholders of MGNREGS.

ix)   The total number selected for interview per sampling unit was 50 and out of this minimum 20-30 numbers were invariably from the beneficiary householders of MGNERGS.

x)   The responses of non- beneficiary households, elected representatives of three tier Panchayat Raj Institutions, Block Programme officers, Panchayat Secretaries, Engineering personnel of MGNREGS and LSGD, Data Entry Operators, Representatives of financial institutions and Progressive farmers etc were included.

xi)   FGDs were conducted in each sampling unit with recorded beneficiaries/ Job card holders and non- beneficiaries, indirect beneficiaries etc.

C. Vinodan

xii) One regional stock taking workshops was conducted in each district with participating workers, progressive farmers, NGOs, voluntary organisations, farmers organisations, media persons, Civil society organisations, SHG/ Kudumbasree, Govt officials from departments like rural development, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Forest, Diary, Soil conservation, Fisheries etc.

xiii) Panchayat profiles were prepared with particular reference to works undertaken, number of beneficiaries, amount disbursed, types assets created, innovations made in programme implementation.

Results and Discussion

The following section presents data analysis and results on local economic development and infrastructure development though NREGS scheme. The report consists of the details of the data collected and its statistical analysis. The SPSS software is used to find out the descriptive statistics and t-test for some analysis and compare the variables drawn from the collected data. The major findings are presented in this part and followed by summary and future directions.

Table (1): Influence of MGNREGS on basic and economic development of the locality

(%)	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Very good	109	16.6
Good	333	50.8
Average	157	24.0
Very little	50	7.6
Not at all	6	.9
Total	**655**	**100.0**

The Table (1) shows the opinion of respondents on the influence of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS on the basic and economic development of their locality. Of the 655 respondents, half of them (50.8%) reported favourably as 'good' and another 16.6% as 'very good.' 24% of them considered it as 'average.' Only 0.9% reported that Mahatma Gandhi NREGS failed to make any influence. Thus, the survey clearly reveals that the majority of respondents believed that this scheme would influence their local economic and basic development.

Table (2): Awareness about basic and economic development through MGNREGS

Awareness input	Frequency	Percentage
Very much	57	8.7
Good	339	51.8
Average	173	26.4
Very little	76	11.6
Not at all	10	1.5
Total	**655**	**100.0**

The Table (2) shows the responses of the participants about the awareness of the NREGS programme in relation to the basic and economic development of the locality. A little more than half (51.8%) of the respondents gave the reply "good" and 26.4% of the respondents called it "average." Only 8.7% have the highest positive response. So it is clear that the workers were aware about the various aspects of the local economic development activities through the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS programme. FGDs, however, suggested the need for effective implementation and more awareness programmes for stakeholders. It was suggested that training to all the workers for skill development was necessary.

Capacity building and technical support of State/District/Block level rural development functionaries/agencies and Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) officials and awareness generation of potential and existing workers form the most strategic aspect in effectively implementing rural development schemes, policies and plans of the government. Effective implementation of centrally sponsored rural development programmes like Mahatma Gandhi NREGS involves complex and multi-layered processes. Further, the recent amendments to Mahatma Gandhi NREGA 2005 have necessitated enhancement of capacity building of all stakeholders to achieve expected outcomes. The stakeholders need to fully internalize the new implementation architecture of the programme, the importance of social mobilisation, the procedural details involved as also the relevant technical issues.

Table (3): Training inputs through MGNREGS

Training and classes received		Frequency		Percentage	
Very frequently	Yes	15	367	2.3	56.0
Frequently		113		17.3	
Minimal		94		14.3	
Very less		145		22.1	
Not at all		288		44.0	
Total		**655**		**100.0**	

Table (3) shows that 56% of the respondents had received some sort of training as part of the MGNREGS programme. The panchayats are expected to play an important role in rural development in India. Plan documents of both the central and state governments and various committees have emphasized the importance of these bodies in the polity. Five-year plans, especially the second five-year plan, laid special emphasis on the role of panchayats in rural development. For awareness generation, all state governments undertake intensive and regular IEC drives using media to publicize the key messages and key provisions of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA to various stakeholders. More intensive campaigns have been initiated in migration prone areas in advance of and during migration months. It is very important to standardize the key messages across all media, including interpersonal communication methods to avoid confusion and to ensure clear understanding.

Table (4): Awareness about the responsibility of Panchayats in local economic development and development of basic facilities

Knowledge on the responsibility of Panchayat		Frequency (N)		Percentage	
Very much	Yes	16	530	2.5	80.9
Good		166		25.3	
Average		192		29.3	
Very little		156		23.8	
Not at all		125		19.1	
Total		**655**		**100.0**	

It is found from the survey that 80.9% of the respondents were aware of the responsibility of Panchayats in local economic development and development of

basic facilities at varied levels. A little less than one-fourth (23.8%) had only very little awareness about the same.

Agriculture

According to the scheme, a minimum of 60% of work in a district should be "in the nature of productive assets linked to agriculture through the development of land, water and trees." The fine-print suggests that if it is implemented, it could push overwhelming activity under the job scheme towards agriculture. The 60% floor limit is "in terms of costs." Given that, many works permitted under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA, like road construction, are capital-intensive because of the material costs, the stress on 60% minimum expenditure on farm-related activity would compel the authorities to discourage other work.

Table (5): Engagement in agricultural jobs

Response	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Yes	395	60.3
No	260	39.7
Total	**655**	**100.0**

The Table 5.5 shows that 60.3% of the respondents have engaged themselves in agricultural jobs as part of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS programme. Almost 40% of the respondents are not working in the field of agriculture as part of this programme.

Table (6): Item wise engagement in agricultural jobs as part of MGNREGS

	Response	Percentage
Paddy cultivation	No	82.9
	Yes	17.4
Coconut plantation	No	61.2
	Yes	38.8
Rubber plantation	No	67.5
	Yes	32.6
Floriculture/Fruit trees	No	99.5
	Yes	0.5
Vermi compost	No	100.0

Aqua Culture Fishing	No	100.0
	No	99.8
	Yes	0.2
Seri Culture	No	99.8
	Yes	0.2
Others	No	66.6
	Yes	33.4

Table (6) gives an item-wise description of the agricultural jobs undertaken by the respondents as part of the MGNREGS programme. Major jobs undertaken include paddy cultivation (17.4%), coconut plantation (38.8%) and rubber plantation (32.6%).

Table (7): Water Sources for Irrigation

Sources of Water	Frequency	Percentage
Canal	7	1.1
Well	56	8.5
Tube Well	205	31.3
Water Tank	4	.6
Dam	8	1.2
Lake	3	.5
Others	101	15.4
No Response	271	41.4
Total	**655**	**100.0**

Table (7) shows that 31.3% depended on tube well for irrigation purpose. Works on individual land permitted under NREGA are irrigation facility, horticulture plantation and land development. The works taken up under these facilities are irrigation facility, construction of dug well, farm pond, diggi, tanka, water hose and tank cum dug well, ground water recharge structure, construction/lining of water courses/ irrigation channel and other works of irrigation facility measurable and popular in the area as irrigation facility.

Improvement of the irrigation facilities in the locality (Diagram 1)

According to the survey, 79.9% of the respondents noted that Mahatma Gandhi NREGS had lead to the improvement in the irrigation facilities in the locality.
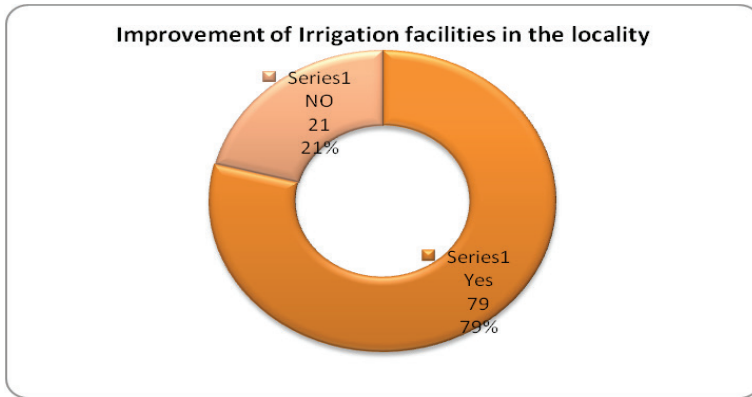
Opinion on the improvement of the irrigation sources in the locality

The diagram (1) shows the opinion of the respondents in terms of the item-wise improvement of important irrigation facilities. A little less than half (43.9%) of the respondents reported improvement in the canal facilities, 27.2% reported improvement in the wells, almost half (49.4%) of them reported renovation or digging ponds and 30.2% reported construction of bunds for irrigation purpose.

Impact on local markets

The purpose of implementing NREGA is to provide basic livelihood facilities to the rural masses. The village economy would improve only when the livelihood position of the village people improves. The improvement in livelihood security and local economy will have corresponding change in the local markets especially in local business and the consumption patterns of the rural people. This section shows the study results on the impact of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS on the local markets in the selected Panchayats of Kollam districts:

Table (8): Small scale businesses as part of MGNREGS

Item	Response	Frequency	Percentage	Total
Initiated small scale business	Yes	9	1.4	100
	No	646	98.6	
Sale of finished products	Yes	6	.9	100
	No	649	99.1	

The table (8) shows that Mahatma Gandhi NREGS had only very limited role in initiating small scale business and in sale of finished products. Only 1.4%

C. Vinodan

reported that they had initiated some small scale business. But the FGDs showed significant changes in the consumption pattern of the local people in the selected panchayats. The local traders also supported this view. FGDs also recommended amendment of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA to introduce small scale income generation activities such as stitching unit, pickle and food processing units and value added products units. The impact of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA on local labour markets is significant in the district in many ways. The programme has increased rural labour participation rates by drawing into the workforce many who were not active workers in the past due to their family constraints and social inhibition. Now they consider Mahatma Gandhi NREGS as a governmental programme aimed for improving their living standards. The study also finds that the scheme has created labour shortages in the conventional rural labour market. A section of the people who are already engaging in land development and other works in the rural labour market are seeking MGNREGS work. The FGDs also validated these findings. It also shows that significant improvements in wages in the local labour market.

Table No (9): Small scale business involved by the respondents

Item	Response	Response	Percentage
Bakery/Sweets	No	648	98.9
	Yes	7	1.1
Rice Powder/Curry Powder making	No	655	100.0
	Yes	0	0.0
Tailoring	No	654	99.8
	Yes	1	0.2
Craft making	No	655	100.0
	Yes	0	0.0
Weaving	No	653	99.7
	Yes	2	0.3

Development of Basic Facilities

A high level of involvement in road, rail development was reported by 61.5% of the respondents. Another 20.6% reported medium involvement in the work. FGD recommended the assessment of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS works periodically and suggested that the coordination of various government departments is necessary for efficient functioning of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS works.
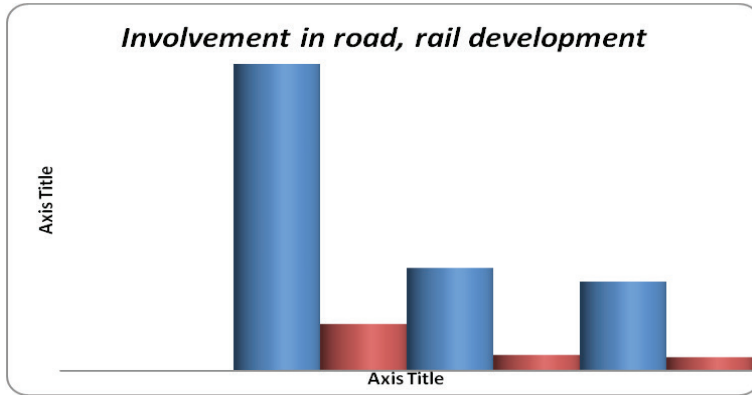
Table (10): Engagement in Development of basic facilities

Item	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Did you engage in the development of basic facilities in your Panchayat?	Yes	640	97.7
	No	15	2.3
	Total	655	100.0

Table (11): Workers' involvement in development of local basic facilities

Item	Response	Number	Percentage
Road Construction	No	270	41.2
	Yes	385	58.8
House Construction	No	560	85.5
	Yes	95	14.5
Latrine / Other Cleanliness Programme	No	495	75.6
	Yes	160	24.4
Lane Cleaning	No	108	16.5
	Yes	547	83.5
Building construction	No	624	95.3
	Yes	30	4.6

The study shows that local infrastructure development was the prime area in the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS works in the district. Table (10) shows that 97.7%

respondents were engaged in the development of basic facilities in their locality. FGDs also support this data.

Table (11) shows item-wise responses on involvement in the development of local basic facilities. More workers were engaged in the cleaning of lanes. 83.5% workers reported accordingly. More than half (58.8%) of the respondents were engaged in road construction. Latrine and other cleaning programmes were done by almost one fourth (24.4%) of the respondents. The FGDs highlighted the need to focus, in each and every panchayat, on the areas of water conservation works and construction and re-excavation of ponds and wells. One of the most notable findings of the study is that Mahatma Gandhi NREGS helped the conservation of traditional drinking water resources and, to a certain extent, reduced water scarcity in the Panchayat.

Assets Information and rating of the utility of local assets after programme implementation

One of the major objectives of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS is the creation of sustainable assets that strengthen the livelihood resource base of rural areas. Mahatma Gandhi NREGA lists a wide range of permissible works for meeting regional variations across the country. Since the inception of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS, we can see that the works undertaken are works related to water (water conservation, flood control, irrigation, drought proofing, renovation of traditional water bodies and micro-irrigation). Another major development is related to rural connectivity which has the potential to benefit rural communities by improving irrigation facilities, enhancing land productivity and connecting remote villages to input and output markets. The present study shows that there were significant developments in this area in the Kollam district as result of the MGNREGS. The above table shows the level of utility of the local assets subsequent to the implementation of the MGNREGS programme.

- In the opinion of 53.3% of the respondents, the utility of canal is high. Another 41.1% reported its utility to be average.

- 63.4% reported the utility of the Bund to be high. Average utility rating was given by 27% respondents.

- When 43.1% respondents reported the utility of pond to be high, 48.5% reported the same to be average.

- The utility of roads is reported as high by 36.6% respondents. The same is reported as average by 55.1%.

- Utility of the 'waste disposal' process is reported to be high by 13.3% only. Average response was given by 74.5% on the same item.

In the FGD sessions the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA officials recommended channelizing the NREGS to asset creating works. Another point emerged during FGD sessions was that the political intervention in the implementation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS scheme adversely affected the results of the productive sectors. Therefore, asset creating works were considered as a challenging task to the panchayats. The study also reported that Grama Panchayats did not take any measures to create sustainable assets to generate wage employment within the village.

Income DifferenceTable (12): Comparison of the mean income of men and women before and after the implementation of MGNREGS

Item	Implementation Status	Mean Score (N=655)	't' value	'p' value
Daily income of men	After	624.35	32.991	<0.001
	Before	452.48		
Daily income of women	After	517.42	37.847	<0.001
	Before	350.75		

Table (12) gives the details of the pre and post difference in the mean income of men and women after the implementation of the MGNREGS programme.

The mean daily income of men was Rs. 452/- before the initiation of the programme. After the programme it rose to Rs. 624/-. There was a significant difference (t = 32.9, p<0.001) in the mean income before and after the implementation of the programme.

Similarly, the mean daily income of women was Rs. 350/- before the initiation of the programme. After the programme it rose to Rs. 517/-. There was a significant difference (t = 37.8, p<0.001) in the mean income before and after the implementation of the programme.

Opinion on the level of income increment (Diagram 2)

According to 44% respondents there was a high level of increment in the income after the initiation of MGNREGS programme. Another 33.6% reported the increment level as 'medium'.

C. Vinodan
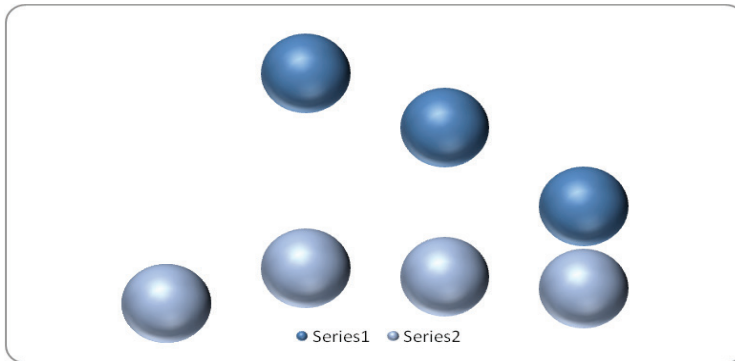
During the FGDs with the respondents, it was pointed out that the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS programmes helped transfer income to poor unskilled rural households during slack agricultural seasons by providing them temporary employment on public work in rural areas, thereby enabling them to have smooth consumption spending.

Opinion on the level of upliftment of poor after MGNREGS

The survey shows that the level of upliftment of poor was 'high' and there was significant improvement in the income level and living standards as a result of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS in the district. The statistical data and FGDs validated this argument. According to 58.8% of the respondents, the level of upliftment of the poor in the district was quite visible. It was only 'medium' according to another 32.8%.

Overall development after MGNREGS

The overall development covering variables such as poverty reduction, women empowerment, local market, basic facilities, agriculture and environment protection after the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS implementation was reported as 'high' by 68% respondents. 'Medium' response was given on the same by 23.7%.

Environment Protection - Involvement in environment protection activities as part of MGNREGS

The Mahatma Gandhi aims to create sustainable livelihoods through regeneration of the natural resource base of rural India. This is very much relevant in the context of growing vulnerabilities of climate change. Preservation of local level natural resources is very important. The study also assessed the suitability of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS works in terms of their usefulness for environment and ecology in the specific context of Kollam district. Involvement of Mahatma Gandhi

NREGS members in the environment protection activities was 'high' according to 64.2% respondents. It was only 'average' as per 19.5% respondents. The significant point was derived in the FGDs on the management of natural resources. The land mafia was found to have controlled the natural resources of the few Panchayat with their political influence.

Issues in the Agricltural sector

The impact of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA on agriculture sector has been the subject of considerable debate among researchers and policy makers across the country. This study highlights the main issues in the agricultural sector. According to 29% respondents, barren land, unfit for agriculture is an issue. Less rain is an issue according to another 28.5% respondents. Low productivity is an issue for 25.3% respondents and 36% reported poor irrigation facilities. A small section of the respondents reported (12%) that agricultural land getting transformed into barren land was the major issue. 29% highlighted that less rain and change climate was the pressing issue in the agricultural sector in the district. High production cost was an issue for 16% respondents. The impact of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS on agriculture sector has been the subject of considerable debate among researchers and policy makers across the country. The survey finds that the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS has had a positive impact on labour force participation in the agricultural sector following its implementation. This was highlighted in FGDs. The FGDs also suggested that the MGNREGS works related to the agriculture field should be assessed by the agricultural department and directions to appropriate agricultural work in accordance with the season should be provided by the agricultural department. It also suggested that temporary earning opportunities in periods of less agricultural activities in the rural areas should be given. In other words, the objective of the Act is to create durable assets and strengthen the livelihood resource base of the rural poor.

(Table 13): Impact of MGNREGS in solving issues in the agricultural sector

Item	Opinion on the possibility	Frequency	Per cent
Is MGNREGS useful to find solutions to the issues in agricultural sector?	Highly	381	58.2
	Average	191	29.2
	Low	73	11.1
	Nil	10	1.5
	Total	655	100

C. Vinodan

The table (13) shows that 58.2% considered the impact MGNREGS as highly useful to resolve opined in the agricultural sector in the Kollam district. However, 29.2% opined that it could be useful at an 'average' level. Also, 11.1% said that MGNREGS could be useful only at a 'low' level.

Negative impacts of MGNREGS on the development of agricultural sector

From among the total respondents, 7.6% reported that Mahatma Gandhi NREGS had negatively impacted on the development of agricultural sector in the district. A whopping majority (84%), however, did not feel that MGNREGS had not left any negative impact on the agricultural sector. It is revealed in the FGDs, that in some of the panchayats, group farming was done by self-help groups, and was a successful model in the productive sector. The work was organized through the Kudumbashree project and the poor had a stake in the work right from the beginning.

Opinion on social usefulness of MGNREGS programme

The social relevance of a development programme like Mahatma Gandhi NREGS assumed greater significance in the Indian context. This study also assessed the social usefulness of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS programme in the Kollam district. It revealed that almost all sections (98%) of the respondents underlined the social relevance of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS and highlighted the need for sustainability of the programme. The FGDs and validation workshops also supported this argument.

Participation in the Gram Shabha

The social sustainability of development is ensured through creation and strengthening of the institutions of participation, networking and empowerment. In this context, the role of Grama Sabha and PRIs is very important in the effective implementation of the programme. According to the Act projects are selected in the Gram Sabha meeting as per the demand of the local community. Gram Sabha plays a crucial role in conducting social audits of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA work. The study revealed that large number of women had participated in the Gram Sabha meetings. Generally, women workers were not allowed to take part in the Darbar. Women participants reported that this was a scheme where they could raise their voice. Women's participation in decision making process has increased after the introduction of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS, mainly due to their economic independence.

Women Empowerment

An important objective of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS has been to encourage women's effective participation, both as workers and as administrators. For instance, according to Mahatma Gandhi NREGA guidelines, at least one-third of the beneficiaries shall be women who have registered and requested for work under the programme. Further, since employment is provided within 5 km radius of the village, it has the potential to bolster women's participation. The Mahatma Gandhi NREGS highlighted the process of women empowerment. It sought social security rather than economic security for the marginalized sections including poor rural women folk. Mahatma Gandhi NREGS has been able to make most of the women independent, and thereby empowered them. It gives opportunity to women for governmental work, which is to provide higher wages. Work opportunities outside home reduced the economic dependence of women on men and also increased their economic command within the family. However, 30 to 35 per cent of the total respondents agreed in the FGDs that Mahatma Gandhi NREGS has given greater economic independence to women and also generated purchasing power at local economy. Through this scheme, women have started to assert themselves by raising their voice.

Gender Equity and Social Security

Mahatma Gandhi NREGS acted as social security measure to the aged women, widows, divorced and deserted women. Through this Act women have received equal wages under the provisions of the Equal Remuneration Act 1976, an important measure, given the prevailing gender wage disparities. The female dependency level has declined after the execution of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS. However, women have been able to access health facilities after working in Mahatma Gandhi NREGS. It has also helped in increasing the savings of women. In the FGDs one of the remarkable observations was that the work was organized by women's groups, and therefore gender mainstreaming was evident.

Other Important Views Derived from the FGDs are:

- The workers complained that no one gets proper medical treatment and compensation while an accident occurs during Mahatma Gandhi NREGS works.

- Some of the workers complained that the mate of a ward tampered with the names and attendance of wage seekers and   ill-treated them in the worksite. She even demanded bribe for allotment of works. Due to her political influence the workers did not make any complaint to the authorities.

C. Vinodan

- Social auditing and inspection of the work helped to increase the transparency of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS works.

- The Panchayat bureaucracy said that the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS created more liabilities to the Panchayat. Therefore sufficient number of employees should be appointed.

- FGDs suggested the inclusion of cultivation of medicinal plant in MGNREGS works for Govt. Ayurveda dispensary.

- The participants suggested that convergence of animal husbandry with Mahatma Gandhi NREGS would give motivation for poor farmers who were engaged animal husbandry.

- FGDs also suggested rescheduling the work time, increasing wages and providing of more working days.

- It was found that workers could get wage directly and there was no mediator among the workers and work providing officials.

- Some participants in the FGD pointed out that this scheme provided job only for local people. So they could protect their own indigenous agricultural varieties and environment.

- The watershed master plan was sanctioned in most of the panchayats, therefore they could take necessary steps for the protection of the water resources.

- The purchase and storage of the materials were said to be a great burden on the panchayats. The secretary of a Panchayat recalled with his previous experience that the materials collected for the Rajeev Gandi Seva Yojna had been stolen from the custody of the Panchayat.

- Lack of a manual or handbook made the MGNREGS work complex and difficult.

- It was suggested to provide importance to community level development through construction of roads, water conservation and water harvesting, minor irrigation network and renovation of traditional water bodies as a measure of improving ground water level which would ultimately help in increasing the irrigated coverage in the rural area.

- There were many incidents reported regarding misuse of the programme by the people who belonged to rich family. Therefore, it was suggested that scrutinizing and monitoring the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS was necessary.

- The wives of the government employees, and the pension holders should be evacuated from the programme, thereby more employment days would be provided to the eligible employees, according to some.

- There were also criticisms in FGDs that the real beneficiaries of the MGNREGS were the upper class land owners, instead of the poor people.

Conclusion

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has thus made a significant impact on the local economy, infrastructure development and sectors like agriculture, livelihood and social life of the rural Kollam people. The women workers who actively participated in the programme gained enormous benefits for economic and social encouragement. The nature of work under the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS has helped the beneficiaries to develop leadership qualities, improving of physical and mental health as well as the social relations. The scheme has made its own contribution to the agricultural sector by way of increasing production of certain crops. It has also contributed a lot to the health sector by bringing down the intensity of communicable diseases. Thus, the contribution of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS to the society as a whole is unquestionable.

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The Role of CONAIE (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador) in the Indigenous Rights Movement in Ecuador

Muhammed Shabeer

Ecuador is an Andean republic in South America with a significant indigenous population. According to the National Population Census of Ecuador (2011), only 7% of the total population of Ecuador is indigenous and 72% of the population is *Mestizos* (a mixed race of white and indigenous). The indigenous movement in Ecuador criticized the report by saying that the government is deliberately trying to under-represent indigenous communities in the country. They claim that about 40% of the total population in the country is indigenous. Indigenous movement in Ecuador has been called the strongest indigenous movement in Latin America. FEI (Ecuadorian Federation of Indians, linked to the Communist Party), FEINE (Ecuadorian Federation of Evangelical Indigenous People, a Protestant Indigenous Organization), FENOCIN (National Federation of Peasant, Indigenous, and Black Organizations, linked to the Socialist Party) and CONAIE (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador) are the major indigenous organizations currently active in Ecuador. CONAIE was formed in 1986 to provide broad representation for the indigenous communities of Ecuador and it became the strongest indigenous organization in the country. CONAIE is composed of three regional federations: the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENAIE) in the eastern Amazon region or *Oriente*; the Confederation in the Central mountain region or the *Sierra* (ECUARUNARI); and the *Coordination of Indigenous and Black Organizations of the Ecuadorian Coast* (CONAICE) which altogether represent fourteen indigenous ethnic groups in Ecuador.

The Evolution of Indigenous Rights Movement

The politicisation of the indigenous populace in Ecuador could be viewed as the response to various problems faced by indigenous communities from time to time and most of such problems still remain unresolved. Based on such demands indigenous mobilisations of varying magnitude and vigour had frequently intervened in Ecuador's politics especially in the 20th century. Colonial state had marginalized the indigenous livelihood in Ecuador by restructuring the agrarian land as *latifundias* and *minifundias*. Since then the native communities of Ecuador became landless and were confined to indentured labour. Land has become a persisting indigenous demand till this date. The *Mestizo* state had attached literacy and property requirements to attain citizenship. Lack of citizenship was the major road block in the emancipation of indigenous communities of Ecuador. Along with demand for land, right to education also became an important indigenous demand. Due to the disenfranchisement, indigenous people got systematically excluded from democracy and governance for almost 150 years. Oil drilling in the Amazon region and the colonization of the region resulted in habitat loss for the indigenous communities. Indigenous organizations often criticizes those state policies by which more and more indigenous land was appropriated and leased to the oil companies. Thus, collective rights over community land and natural resources, freedom from exploitation and environmental rights also got included in indigenous demands. Entangled livelihood of whites and the indigenous had resulted in the rise of *Mestizos* in the population. *Mestizos* have become the majority in the state. With the rise of ethnic consciousness, the indigenous movements found problems with the aspirations of the majoritarian *Mestizo* state. So they have initiated a vigorous campaign of ethnic assertion in order to protect their identity, culture and language. They have even advocated the reassertion of indigenous identity among the *Mestizos* in the coastal Ecuador. Indigenous groups had identified a threat in extensive integration of indigenous cultures to the civil society. So they raised the demand for the conservation of indigenous culture, languages, handicrafts, medicines and pedagogy.

The modern manifestations of the indigenous rights movement started in Ecuador during 1940s in collaboration with the 'left', particularly with the Communist Party. At that time, the movement focused on the struggle for the improvement of work conditions, and eventual abolition of the *hacienda* system, for access to land and for education. Access to education was also linked to citizenship rights because the illiterate could not vote or be elected until 1979. During 1960s, Church also started organizing indigenous communities in the country. During this period, the priorities were the struggle for agrarian reform and agrarian development, to overcome exclusion from education, against discrimination, for cultural rights, and for indigenous territories (Becker2008)[1].

According to Zamosc (1994) the Agrarian Reform Law of 1964 worked as a catalyst for the modern indigenous movement which outlawed absente ownership and abolished serfdom in Ecuador. The second land reforms of 1973 encouraged land colonization in the *Oriente* which led to conflicts between the settlers and the indigenous communities in Ecuador's Amazonian region. It resulted in the creation of an indigenous organization of the Shuar community in the Amazon region whose primary agenda was defense of indigenous lands against colonization. The first of the regional indigenous organizations to form in the *Sierra* or the central highlands was the ECUARUNARI (Movement of the Indigenous People of Ecuador) in 1972 which asserted class-based ideology focusing on the struggle for land. As the military regimes and succeeding civilian administrations in the 1970s began to change their agrarian policy from land distribution to increase agricultural productivity, ECUARUNARI shifted from its stress on class analysis and land reform to demands which included freedom from ethnic discrimination and defense of indigenous languages and culture. In 1980 the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENAIE) was formed as a regional organization in the *Oriente*, much as ECUARUNARI in the *Sierra*. Together with ECUARUNARI, CONFENAIE began a process of integration and organizing the remaining indigenous populations, particularly in the Cost. That process of integration eventually led to the creation of CONAIE in the November of 1986 (Zamosc 1994)[2].

Kenneth P. Jameson (2011)[3] feels that the indigenous movement in Ecuador has been one among the most successful social movements in Latin America since the late 1980s. CONAIE's political agenda includes the strengthening of a positive indigenous identity, recuperation of land rights, environmental sustainability, opposition to 'neo-liberalism' and rejection of U.S. military involvement in South America. Its success may be attributed to its formulation and persistent advocacy of the 'Pluri-national' state against a social order which marginalises indigenous rights and livelihood (Jameson 2011:65).

Since its inception, CONAIE pursued a political strategy of popular mobilization and direct negotiations with government to achieve its goals (Mijesky and Beck 2008)[4]. CONAIE was able to unify indigenous communities from local level to national level in a corporatist style. CONAIE achieved a significant victory in 1986 when it struck a deal with the government regarding bi-lingual education. Under the agreement, CONAIE assumed responsibility for managing bi-lingual education in all indigenous areas of the country. Indigenous languages will be the principal medium or main language for instruction in schools under this project and Spanish will be the language for inter-cultural relations. Such an achievement was followed by several indigenous uprisings led by CONAIE during 1990s and

had deeply influenced the state policy during 1990s. That marches also achieved the creation of a series of institutions for education, health and development which were jointly managed by state and indigenous organizations (Martinez Novo 2010)[5].

Paul Dosh (2013) finds it interesting that CONAIE which explicitly shunned electoral politics since its inception had made a dramatic shift in 1996 when it formed a political party called 'Pachakutik' political movement and entered electoral politics in Ecuador (Dosh 2013)[6]. CONAIE and 'Pachakutik' had considerable impact in the 1998 Constituent Assembly. The new constitution of 1998 had declared Ecuador a 'multicultural' country, which asserted the right of communities to preserve their culture, forms of political organization, and administration of justice. The 1998 constitution also had provisions regarding the creation of indigenous territorial entities. However, many of these rights depended on the implementation of further legislation and this task was difficult because 'Pachakutik' was a minority in Congress. The national representation of 'Pachakutik' in Congress has been from 10 % to 7.5 % of Congressional seats. They had significant representation at the regional and local level till 2004 (Zamosc 2007).[7]

According to Sandra Edwards (2010)[8], the political regime inaugurated in Ecuador since 1979 was unable to process the central tensions in Ecuadoran society such as inequality, economic instability, corruption etc. along with the indigenous demand for their autonomy over land and livelihood. As a result, such a system meddled through decades of political instability which resulted in the the removal of three sitting presidents: Abdala Bucaram in 1997, Jamil Mahuad in 2000, and Lucio Gutierrez in 2005. CONAIE was very active in the movement against Bucaram and Mahuad. Even though CONAIE was aligned with Gutierrez initially, later the alliance fell apart (Edwards 2010). The alliance of the indigenous movement with Gutierrez who gave a coup d'état in 2000 was criticized for the lack of solid democratic values of the indigenous movement for participating in coup. In 2002, Gutierrez won the Presidential elections in alliance with 'Pachakutik'. That allowed CONAIE to participate in government, and some of its leaders to become ministers of state. In 2003, 'Pachakutik' was forced to leave the government when Gutierrez started enforcing 'neo-liberal' policies in the country (Zamosc 2007).

Rafael Correa's Government and CONAIE

In the 2006 Presidential election in Ecuador, 'Pachakutik' run with its own indigenous candidate, Luis Macas, but only obtained below 2 % of the national vote. However, 'Pachakutik' kept some of its strength at the regional and local level. This relative electoral failure has led some regional and local indigenous leaders to ally with *Alianza PAIS* - Rafael Correa's political party, while many of them also

remain in Pachakutik or CONAIE. Such a way, the lack of support of 'Pachakutik' for Correa's candidacy in the first round of 2006 Presidential election is viewed as the root of the separation between Rafael Correa's project and the indigenous movement (Martinez Novo 2010). Roger Burbach (2007) observes that Rafael Correa, who got elected in 2006, has managed to re-establish a modicum of order in Ecuador's sensitive political environment after decades of political instability. In less than an year, without widespread violence, all of Ecuador's political institutions fell under control of the executive. The opposition, which was never loyal to the concept of equality or representative democracy, has been decimated. In this situation, Correa has concentrated all the powers of government and representative functions in his own hands (Burbach 2007:5)[9]. Rafael Correa and his 'left-wing' administration were convinced that they are the catalyst for profound change that will end the last decade's vicious cycle of instability and provide a more just future for citizens. That conviction is based primarily on the President's record-high approval rating and proven talent to communicate with the poor and working class. Its leaders see themselves as progressive, well-educated elite and believe the era of the old, discredited power structures, in particular the traditional parties, has ended. James Petras (2008) observes that Rafael Correa's appeal was largely a result of three factors: his abolition of the Congress-the traditional seat of constituted power; his convocation of a new Constituent Assembly; and his populist socio-economic measures, favoring different sectors of the urban and rural poor (Petras 2008)[10].

There are views that the indigenous movement seemed for a while, lost its relevance as a vanguard in the anti-neo liberal struggles with the rise of Correa's 'Post-neoliberal' project. For instance, Correa's project attracted a good number of intellectual collaborators of 'Pachakutik' and CONAIE, further weakening the indigenous movement. Nevertheless, now that social movements and environmentalists and their agendas have been marginalized from the governing coalition, CONAIE has the potential to lead Ecuadorian social movements. According to Carlos De la Torre (2010)[11], the Ecuadorian opposition did not have the resources to engage in acts of collective defiance against Correa's administration. That enabled Correa to relentlessly pursue most of his policies in the way he wanted. Most of the time, sidelining traditional political parties in the opposition, indigenous groups especially CONAIE had led many agitations against Rafael Correa's government over concerned policies. Keeping this in mind, Correa's government did not organize the subaltern beyond elections, and has not promoted mechanisms of participatory democracy at the local and community levels in order to downplay the influence of CONAIE in the ground (De la Torre 2010). Cesar Montufar (2013) observes that the 'Post-neoliberal' experts who occupy key positions in Correa's administration understand democracy as social justice, selectively disregarding the institutional

mechanism of liberal democracy as impediments to express the will of the majority. The leader and the experts see themselves as capable of speaking on behalf of the people as a whole, and not for special interest groups including autonomous social movements (Montufar 2013:298)[12]. According to Catherine Conaghan (2011) the project of Correa's government is to build a state conceived as the representative of the general interest of society. All organized groups especially CONAIE, regardless of their ideology or class, were dismissed as privileged interlocutors representing special interests, while his elected government was deemed the only legitimate guardian of the national interests (Conaghan 2011:300)[13].

Marc Becker (2011) says that Correa had emerged out from a liberal frame work that always emphasized on individual rights and called for a citizen's revolution in Ecuador. Correa incorporated indigenous demands in his election manifesto and promised constitution reforms in Ecuador in order to get the support of indigenous movements in Ecuador especially CONAIE in the second round of the Presidential election in 2006. Later it was proven that Correa's relations with indigenous movements are entangled in the complications, limitations, and deep tensions inherent in pursuing revolutionary changes within a constitutional framework. Ciccariello-Maher (2013) posited that Correa had stolen the thunder from the social movements and re-emerged successful at the cost of marginalizing social movements. Correa's tactics of engagement with social movements that was very important in his rise to power appears problematic. His strategy of co-opting the demands from below and watering down from above does not sound very different from that of his predecessors (Ciccariello-Maher 2013:130).[14]

CONAIE and the New Constitution (2008)

Marc Becker (2011) observes that, in order to draft a new constitution, Correa had dissolved the Congress because he didn't have absolute majority in the Congress. A Constituent Assembly was formed by elections in September 2007, in which the President had put all his efforts ensure a huge majority for his Proud and Sovereign Fatherland Alliance(AP) which is a loose and diverse grouping of activists of civil rights and social movements, academicians, technocrats, some trade unionists and NGO leaders. In the election AP secured 70% votes and the 'right wing' traditional parties along with CONAIE had put forth a poor show in the elections and got marginalized in the Constituent Assembly. Such a huge majority enabled Correa to draft the new constitution directly under his auspices. Becker states that there were criticisms raised against Correa especially from CONAIE and even from 'left' leaning members of AP, as the drafting of the new constitution in the assembly witnessed a political high handedness of Rafael Correa even in debating the demands raised by indigenous groups like 'Pluri-nationalism' and

collective rights which were earlier a part of Correa's election manifesto (Becker 2011)[15]. Although the indigenous demand that Ecuador should be 'Pluri-national' was there since the early 1990s, it was not accepted in the 1998 constitution because some sectors feared that this could give grounds for the division of the country. So 1998 constitution declared Ecuador a 'multicultural and Pluri-ethnic' state.

The new constitution was generally regarded as a progressive document as it recognized some of the important demands raised by indigenous communities. Martinez Novo observes that two strands of political views existed within the Constituent Assembly irrespective of the party line regarding the indigenous demands. Such a division can be seen throughout the debates in the Constituent Assembly in order to draft the new constitution of Ecuador (Martinez Novo 2010). Serious debates between indigenous leaders and members from AP occurred in the Constituent Assembly in designating Ecuador as a 'Pluri-national' state in 2008. Marc Becker says that according to indigenous leaders especially members of CONAIE 'Pluri-nationalism' did not mean the division of the state, but it did mean self-determination, celebration of diversity, anti-discrimination, and a transitional period of affirmative action, as well as redistribution of resources. 'Pluri-nationality' is a political process that seeks to restructure the state with a new geographical organization where indigenous territories have equal privileges than traditional geographical divisions such as provinces or municipalities (Becker 2011).

However, a large section of members from AP and other social movements in the assembly didn't accept CONAIE's version of 'Pluri-nationalism'. They argued that 'Pluri-nationalism' is not based on autonomy of indigenous peoples in their own territories, but on inclusion and equality in diversity that pervades all institutions of society. Autonomy can be used by the conservatives to strengthen their power and to resist change, and emphasizes the need for unity as well as equality. After this debate, a consensus was reached in the governing party and 'Pluri-nationality' was included in the constitution. Martinez Novo (2010) also acknowledged that there were criticisms that 'Pluri-nationalism' was accepted as a term in the new constitution, but emphasizing the unity and predominance of the central state. The sovereignty of the state thus superseded territorial autonomy, and special representation of indigenous nationalities beyond regular democratic representation was not accepted (Martinez Novo 2010).

In addition to 'Pluri-nationalism', another debate in the Constituent Assembly was whether *Quechua* and other indigenous languages would be granted official status. According to the new constitution Spanish is the official language of Ecuador; *Quechua* and *Shuar* are official languages for intercultural relationships (Becker 2011). According to Carmen Martinez Novo (2010) a majority of the members in the Constituent Assembly even from AP wished to accept the indigenous demand

to give official status to *Quechua*, but the final consensus reached by Correa's party was to leave Spanish as the only official language, and to declare native languages 'languages of inter-cultural communication'(Martinez Novo 2010).

Chapter IV of the new constitution explicitly recognized the collective rights of "communities, peoples, and nationalities." Article 56 stated that "indigenous communities, peoples, and nationalities, Afro-Ecuadorians, form part of the unified, indivisible Ecuadorian state." These rights include those of embracing an ethnic identity, being free of racial discrimination, holding communal territories, and protecting natural resources. Rafael Correa himself proclaimed that his Government's goal is to build the *Sumak Kawsay* (live well), which is metaphysically understood as the harmony between community and their cosmos' and was enshrined during the new constitution of 2008. This objective comes from indigenous cosmology and aims to build non-Western relationships between society, nature, and development. Jayati Ghosh (2012)[16] observes that the new constitution of Ecuador had validated *Sumak Kawsay* or the good way of living which is in short a society that respects the dignity of individuals and community groups in all its dimensions. It involves a development structure with certain goals. Scholars like Mary Elizabeth Whittemore (2010) says that it is significant that Ecuador is the first country in the world to codify such novel constitutional mandates such as rights of *Pachamama* (Nature), *Sumak Kawsay* etc. Right of *Pachamama* stipulates the right to an integral respect for nature's existence and for the maintenance and regeneration of its life cycles, structures, functions, evolutionary process and restoration. If the new recommendations are enforced, they could transform legal treatment of the environment. But according to Whittemore, Ecuador's President seems more focused on the economy than the constitution. Additionally, procedural confusion and half a century of political instability mean that the new provisions will likely linger in the constitution without any real bite. Regardless, Ecuador's new constitution paves the way for potentially transformative environmental change in the future (Whittemore 2010:660)[17]. Martinez Novo (2010) observes that the question of indigenous territories and control of non-renewable natural resources remains a problematic and ambiguous as these territories do not pertain to the regular territorial organization of the state. Their legal status will be defined by secondary legislation that has not yet been developed and that is causing tensions. Furthermore, it is clear in the constitutional text that non-renewable resources belong to the central state. The charter of indigenous rights in the constitution establishes that communities should be consulted when their territories or rights are affected, but it is not clear whether this consultation is binding for the state (Martinez Novo 2010).

Despite significant political influence, indigenous people continue to suffer discrimination at many levels of society. In the Amazon region, indigenous

groups have attempted to win a share of oil revenues and a voice in decisions on natural resources and development. Although the 2008 constitution recognizes indigenous justice and the right of indigenous groups to be consulted on matters affecting their communities, the government has maintained that it will not hand indigenous groups a veto on core matters of national interest. Stephanie Selekman (2011) observes that the new mining law, combined with the introduction of a draft water law in September 2009, has stirred conflict between the government and CONAIE-led indigenous groups (Selekman 2011)[18]. According to Ciccariello Maher (2013) Correa's emphasis on large scale extraction evoked widespread protest and resulted in violent clashes between armed force and social movements since 2007. In 2009, the mining law implemented by Correa was also criticized by movements and individuals. Marc Becker (2011) observed that the government's conflicts with CONAIE were mainly rooted in strong disagreements over mineral extraction and over the autonomy of indigenous organizations. Correa sees mining as the country's future and proposes to use natural resources to alleviate poverty. The indigenous movement and ecologists argue that the new constitution's overarching goal of *Sumak Kawsay* – meaning 'the good life' or 'living well' in *Quechua* – requires a rejection of mineral extraction and asks for alternative relationships between humans, nature, and development (Martinez Novo 2010).

It has been pointed out that the control over the natural resources is the key factor behind the development of resource based countries like Bolivia and Ecuador in their pursuit of the development (Kennemore, A. & G.B. Weeks 2011:275)[19]. Jayati Gosh (2012) noted that at times, the global primary commodity boom especially oil prices had benefited the Correa's regime in Ecuador, to perform well in favorable circumstances. But there exists an inherent unpredictability in the primary commodity prices. Ecuador government has to walk a tight-rope to find out new sectors of economic resources-input to achieve macro-economic stability and budget balance (Ghosh 2012:48). Maria Christina Vallejo (2010) argued that much of Ecuador's oil production was in the hands of the state oil company Petroecuador, but the technical capacity of this company was limited (Vallejo 2010:170)[20]. In 2013, Ecuador announced that it will auction more than three million hectares of Amazonian rainforest to Chinese oil companies. Such a proposed extension of refining frontiers is targeting the vast natural resources in Ecuadorian Amazon which is home to a large number of indigenous communities and as a result, government is facing significant opposition from indigenous communities especially CONAIE. Thomas Abott (2013) said that the controversies erupted in Ecuador regarding the Yasuni ITT also resorted to the escalation of tensions existing between the government and the indigenous groups. The aim of the initiative is to provide a creative solution for the threat posed by the

extraction of crude oil in the Ishpingo-Tiputini-Tambococha (ITT) oil fields, which are located in the highly vulnerable area of Yasuni National Park. In August 2013, Correa abandoned the initiative and approved oil drilling, blaming lack of support from the international community for the decision (Abott 2013)[21]. Amnesty International (2012) also observes that such attempts by Rafael Correa, to expand the frontiers of oil exploration in order to meet the financial requirements of the government expenditure has put the Ecuadorian politics in such a precarious situation in which a government which is headed by a popular President who used to re assert his commitment on social inclusion and participatory democracy is confronted by the country's most powerful indigenous organization which is not in a mood to compromise(Amnesty International 2010)[22]. Moreover, on the question of autonomy the government had collided with indigenous movements on several occasions. From 1988 to 2009, indigenous organizations managed a parallel educational system of bilingual education outside the Ministry of Education. This was the only case in Latin America in which indigenous organizations had the autonomy to nominate the personnel of educational bureaucracies, to hire teachers, and to give shape to a new curriculum. In February 2009, through Executive Decree 1585, the government of Correa abolished the autonomy of indigenous organizations to elect the authorities of bilingual education or to decide on educational policies and there by the government transferred bilingual education from indigenous organizations to the Ministry of Education. Indigenous teachers opposed this transfer as an attack to their autonomy (de la Torre 2010:30). Marc Becker (2011) also argues that government is trying to divide the leadership of CONAIE from the rank and-file. Parallel indigenous organizations were created under the auspices of the government (Becker 2011). Carlos de la Torre and John Anton (2012) also added that the government reactivated the Federation of Ecuadorian Indians (FEI) from the top down. Leaders of smaller organization that had rivalries with CONAIE used such opportunities to strengthen their organizations. Similarly, the Afro- Ecuadorian movement also chose to ally with the government (de la Torre and Anton, 2012:40).[23]

Correa sees indigenous and other poor Ecuadorians as beneficiaries of state distribution but not as autonomous actors. Indigenous movements accuse that protest is criminalized in Ecuador and they face accusations of terrorism. Carmen Martinez Novo (2009)[24] observed that government does not consider groups like CONAIE to be 'real' social movements or representatives of civil society. They are depicted as privilege groups that hinder the strengthening of state power. At this juncture it is noteworthy to look at Benjamin Dangle's(2010) observation that "the threshold of the political dynamics between Rafael Correa's government and the indigenous movements in the country is entangled in the debates around new

constitution of 2008 and the mining policy of the Ecuador" (Dangle 2010)[25]. Being a resource based economy; as it is evident that government is well set to throw all its weight on its policy for the expansion of the frontiers of natural resource excavation. In the government's mining policy, CONAIE sees a formidable challenge to indigenous livelihood. In the popularity of Rafael Correa also, CONAIE senses a potential threat as his government can co-opt many indigenous leaders and groups there by weakening CONAIE's authority over the indigenous masses in the country. Therefore CONAIE sustained its opposition to Rafael Correa throughout his three terms of Presidency. In the 2013 Presidential elections, '*Pachakutik*' had placed Alberto Acosta: the President of the 2008 Constituent Assembly, to contest against Rafael Correa. Then also Correa won in the first round with a huge majority by discrediting the campaign against him by both the CONAIE and the 'right wing'. In 2017, CONAIE became so desperate to put an end to the rule of Correa in the country. CONAIE had supported Paco Moncaya of the National Agreement for Change in the first round against AP candidate Lenin Moreno and in the second round CONAIE openly appealed to vote against Lenin Moreno: Correa's successor in the Presidential election in 2017. But Lenin Moreno had defeated Guillermo Lasso of Creating Opportunities with 51.16% votes in the Presidential runoff.

Such a way, the standoff between CONAIE and the civil society movement led by Rafael Correa is continuing in Ecuador. CONAIE's quest for political power through '*Pachakutik*' had become somewhat saturated as they failed to project themselves as something more than an ethnic political party. Organizational and tactical contradictions had also contributed to this setback as we saw in the coup against Jamil Mahuad in 2000 and support to Lucio Gutierrez in 2002. On the other hand, the rise of urban civil society movements like AP had catered as a political alternative to the traditional political parties for the urban populace in the country. CONAIE's influence in the Ecuador politics was at its peak during 1990s when the sate was reeling under economic crises implicated by the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) implemented in the country by neo-liberal regimes. CONAIE was able to topple several governments during that period through huge and continuous political mobilizations. Rafael Correa also made use of such an anti-neo liberal political platform constituted by social movements and became the President of the country. He was successful in providing political stability and increasing state control over the natural resources. Through social redistribution programmes he maintained significant support among middle class, urban poor, working class and rural peasantry. That support shielded Correa and his government on each and every instance of confrontation with the opposition including CONAIE. Even though CONAIE was successful in representing the indigenous woes regarding oil exploration, Correa's campaign for the necessity of

oil revenue for uninterrupted social distribution got wider consent than CONAIE's criticisms. Thus Correa managed to have a political edge over CONAIE since the inception of his regime. On the indigenous rights front, CONAIE still remain as the vanguard of indigenous rights in country as the influence of other organizations like FEI, FENOCIN etc. is negligible when compared to CONAIE. Despite inner conflicts and saturation at the political front, CONAIE still maintains significant authority over the majority of the indigenous masses in the country. It should be noted that even after electoral setbacks, severe state repression throughout a decade, CONAIE didn't conform or got co-opted. Certain scholars had pointed out that Rafael Correa and his team is leading Ecuador through the path of 'Socialism of the 21st Century' within the available limited space of liberal democracy dictated by the neo-liberal world order. In a similar pattern, we can also conclude that in spite of all shortcomings, CONAIE is also thriving in the whatever limited space it occupy in the Ecuadorian polity; seeking new alliances and avenues to address the state power in pursuit of indigenous rights in the country.

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Muhammed Shabeer

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Financial Inclusion, Gender and Social Capital An Assessment of the MGNREGS Programme in Pathanamthitta

Bijulal M.V.

This paper is based on a study on assessment of the impact of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), mainly among the beneficiaries of the scheme, with special focus on financial inclusion. Based on an extensive field survey and critical interactions with institutional functionaries at various levels as well as non-beneficiaries, in Pathanamthitta district of Kerala, India, the study will examine the overall impact of the scheme to a large section of rural women workers as well. This paper is divided into six sections. The first section provides an introduction to the MGNREGA. The second section gives an account of the methodology employed for the study and a review of the some previous studies. Section three provides an overview of the district profile. Section four gives an analysis of the impact assessment of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA in the Pathanamthitta District Section five offers an analysis of the financial inclusion through the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS in Pathanamthitta District.. Section six brings out the findings as well as conclusions.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), 2005 emerged as an intervention for poverty reduction in rural India. Initially, few rural districts were chosen for implementation based on individual state-wise plan on employment guarantee under the national guidelines (India, MRD 2013; Kerala, LSGD 2006). In India, employment generation through public work programmes has been used to address the issue of unemployment and generate employment through the creation of labour-intensive productive assets. The implantation of the MGNREGA, however, was radically different to the previous experiences, for its innovative planning process and better transparent processes at the Gram Sabha level for its implementation

The primary objective of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is boosting wage employment opportunities for most marginalized sections of the rural population. The secondary objective is to strengthen natural resource management through works that address causes of chronic poverty, like drought, and thus encourage sustainable development. The Act seeks to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work (India, MRD 2013). The Act envisages, *inter alia*, enhancement of livelihood security of the rural poor by generating wage employment opportunities in works that develop the infrastructure base of that particular locality; rejuvenation of natural resource base of the area concerned; creation of a productive rural asset base; stimulation of local economy for providing wage employment and ensure women empowerment (India, MRD 2013; Kerala, LSGD 2006).

What differentiates the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA from the previous schemes for providing employment is its quintessence in terms of offering legal enforcement of the Right to Work. The present study has considered different factors such as planning, implementation and outcomes of the scheme and seeks to explain as to how the Act emerged as a powerful instrument for empowerment for the rural population. As observed in some previous studies on the scheme, women, having experienced the worth of money wage from their own labour, have developed a sense of confidence and capacity to take up challenges in other areas of their social life. The enactment of NREGA is thus viewed as a landmark in Indian democracy. The present study underscores and some important aspects of political and social inclusion of the marginalized people, facilitated by the implementation of the NREGS (Dreze and Khera 2011). The present study also provides further insights into the gender dimensions of the rights centric scheme.

The MGNREGA and Its Mandates

The Mahatma Gandhi NREGS has been envisaged to realise a set of goals with a view to ensuring social protection for the most vulnerable people living in rural India through providing employment opportunities; ensuring livelihood security for the poor through creation of durable assets, improved water security, soil conservation and higher land productivity; strengthening drought-proofing and flood management in rural India; aiding in the empowerment of the marginalised communities, especially women, Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), through the processes of a rights-based legislation; strengthening decentralised, participatory planning through convergence of various anti-poverty and livelihoods initiatives; deepening democracy at the grass-roots by strengthening the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs); and ensuring

greater transparency and accountability in governance (India, MRD 2013). It may be argued that the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA has thus become a powerful social instrument for inclusive growth in rural India through its impact on social protection, livelihood security and democratic governance. The Act was notified, and initially implemented, in 200 rural districts in its first phase (with effect from 2 February 2006). During 2007–08, an additional 130 rural districts were selected to implement the Act. The districts that were not covered under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA were to implement it with effect from 1 April 2008. Since then, Mahatma Gandhi NREGA has been implemented across the country.

Provisions of Act

Basic unit for registration is a household and each household is entitled to a 100 days of employment an year. The registered household is provided with a Job Card, an instrument of identification for demanding employment. The Mahatma Gandhi NREGS provides for employment opportunity within two weeks, within a radius of five kilometers, and offers unemployment benefit, if employment is not granted within 15 days. Priority is to be accorded to women ensuring that at least one-third of the beneficiaries under the Act are women. Weekly payment of wages shall be made and payment shall not be delayed beyond a fortnight. Payment of wages is statutorily made through the individual/joint bank/post office beneficiary accounts. In order to ensure that the workers get benefitted directly under the Scheme, the Act prevents the role of contractors or machinery in the proper execution of the works. Facilities such as crèche, drinking water and shade have to be provided to all beneficiaries in all worksites. Transparency and accountability in the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS is mandated through social audit which has been made indispensible to scrutinize all the records and works under the Scheme. Grievance redressal mechanisms and rules have to be put in place for ensuring a proper implementation process..

As mentioned earlier. the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS represents an epoch making initiative in the trajectory of wage employment schemes in India's welfare policy history. The NREGS is essentially a demand-driven rights-based and grassroots specific people-centered endeavour. Devolution of powers and responsibilities as key to the idea of decentralized planning and implementation is quite evident in the working of the NREGS. The system of devolution of financial resources to Grama panchayats is commendable and unique. Social audit provides an unprecedented accountability of performance, especially towards the immediate stakeholders.

Regarding the reach and effectiveness of the NREGS across the country, there has been encouraging assessment from the popular media as well as from

various agencies (Dreze and Khera 2011; Planning Commission 2010; TISS 2011; Kerala State Planning Board 2011). The NREGS achievements have been many and varied as shown in several studies. Since its launching in 2006, around Rs 1, 10,000 crores have been spent as wage payment to rural households and generated 1200 crore person-days of employment. On an average, 5 million households have been provided employment every year since 2008. Paying through formal financial systems has been a success. Eighty per cent of households are being paid directly through bank/post office accounts, and 10 crore new bank/post office accounts have been opened.

At the national level, participation of maginalised sections of the population in NREGS is quite encouraging. Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) share 51 per cent of the total person-days generated and women in work force account for 47 per cent, well above the mandatory 33 per cent as made by law. The works relate to rural connectivity (such as village roads, water conservation and water harvesting, irrigation canals and renovation of traditional water bodies, flood protection and drought proofing, land development, and work done on private lands. Crores of Job Cards have been issued and these, along with the muster rolls, have been uploaded on the Management Information System (MIS), available for public scrutiny. Important changes are perceptible after the implementation of the NREGS which led to promotion of peoples' participation through grassroots democratic institutions.

Though the achievements of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA have been impressive in different areas, there have been some issues with regard to its implementation that need to be addressed seriously. On 1 September 2011, the Ministry of Rural Development brought out a discussion paper entitled *Reforms in MGNREGA Implementation*. This document identified nine major challenges in the NREGA implementation and suggested measures to deal with them effectively.

Later on, in September 2011, an expert committee under the chairmanship of Mihir Shah, member, Planning Commission, was appointed to give substantive operational content to the solutions suggested to deal with the challenges. Based on the report of this expert committee, the list of permissible works under MGNREGA has been expanded in March 2012 to strengthen the synergy between MGNREGS and rural livelihoods, particularly agriculture; respond to the demands of states for greater location-specific flexibility in permissible works and; help improve the health and ecological situation in rural India, with a particular focus on sanitation (India, MRD 2011).

Following this, a new set of 'Operational Guidelines for MGNREGA' has been issued so that the challenges in its implementation are effectively addressed and the real goal of MGNREGA can be realised. The measures include notification of

the Social Audit Rules in June 2011 to make it mandatory to have a social audit conducted by the Gram Sabha (GS) according to a prescribed procedure twice a year; asking the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) to conduct a performance audit of MGNREGA, a process that is to be completed by end-December 2012 for all States; making certification of MGNREGA accounts at the Gram Panchayat (GP) level by chartered accountants compulsory over time, starting with 20 per cent GPs; increased use of information technology with the ultimate objective of having a transaction-based MIS in all states and the initiation of an ambitious Geographical Information System (GIS)-based monitoring system.

Review of Literature

It is pertinent to mention here the studies and extensive field investigations carried out by the Union Ministry of Rural Development.. *Sameeksha 2012: An Anthology of Research Studies on the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005, 2006–2012* commissioned by the Ministry of Rural Development (2012) is an analytical anthology of major research studies done on NREGA that were published in academic journals or came out as reports till 2012. It is a comprehensive volume dealing with multiple issues, emerging concerns and problems pointed out by a large number of studies (India, MRD 2012).

Certain studies have given specific attention to rights protection aspects while implementing the NREGS. The IIT-Chennai (2010) made an assessment of the NREGS activities with relevance to village requirements. It examined six key aspects, viz. effective tracking of job requests, wage difference across districts, impact of MGNREGA on agriculture, high participation of women in MGNREGS, human rights and MGNREGA, effectiveness of Grama Sabhas in decision making and reasons for low BPL participation in MGNREGA. The findings indicate that MGNREGA has become a great supporting factor for the poor. It also highlights good practices including prompt wage payment, protection of the rights of rural women and provision of a helpline.

A detailed narrative on the genesis of the idea of employment guarantee and the rights-based aspects of the legislation is attempted in Khera (2011). This study provides a a detailed account of the 'battle for employment guarantee' in rural India. Going beyond the controversies that have All essays are based on field studies of NREGA. A wide range of issues is investigated such as entitlement, corruption, people's perceptions of NREGA, women's empowerment, mobilisation of unorganized workers, and socio-economic impact of NREGA. A comparative analysis of the challenges and successes in the implementation of NREGA in different States, including Orissa, Himachal Pradesh, and Rajasthan is also provided.

There are critical accounts which highlight aspects of shortcomings in governance like Ambasta (2010), which argues that the challenges of inclusion are astounding and this has been hampered by an inadequate devolution of funds, functions and functionaries to the PRIs. This study tries to put across an agenda of reforms for NREGA to realise its true potential. Aspects of providing

the marginalized sections with opportunities for self reliance and inclusion is addressed in Babu and Rao (2010), a detailed study of the impact of NREGS on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes focusing on the survey conducted in eight states - Tripura, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Mizoram, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Aspects of financial inclusion form an institutional perspective is done by Bhatia and Adhikari (2010) which focuses on the difficulties MGNREGA workers face when they are beyond the reach of banks or post offices. Their difficulties are further confounded if the transaction is done through the post offices due to their poor record-keeping and the inability to cope with mass payments of NREGA wages.

Dasgupta and Sudarshan (2011), using data from the 2004–05 NSSO survey and Mahatma Gandhi NREGA data from official sites, analyzed the increasing women's participation in the NREGA. It was found that wherever women's actual wages as a share of men's is lower in the private sector, women are flocking to work in the scheme. This will inevitably raise women's bargaining power, and is potentially a critical factor in reducing gender disparities in the labour market. Dreze (2011) brings in evidences from a field study conducted in Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Tamil Nadu and looks at the effectiveness of the transparency safeguards under MGNREGA. In the initial stage of implementation of the Scheme, claims were often made that MGNREGA funds are not reaching the poor based on misleading accounts of a CAG report. The field studies undertaken indicate positive findings, says Dreze, which show an improvement, fewer instances of corruption and leakages under NREGA than programmes like the National Food for Work Programme.

Dutta et al. (2012) analyse the data from India's National Sample Survey for 2009–10 that show considerable un-met demand for work in all states. The authors have shown the expectations that poorer families tend to have more demand for work on the Scheme, and that (despite the un-met demand) the self-targeting mechanism allows it to reach relatively poor families and backward castes. The extent of the un-met demand is greater in the poorest states—ironically where the scheme is needed most. Labour-market responses to the scheme are likely to be weak. The scheme is attracting poor women into the workforce, although the local-level rationing processes favour men, says the study.

Problems of women while engaging in work in the scheme have also emerged in the recent past. Hirway and Batabyal (2012) argue that Mahatma Gandhi

NREGA has added to women's time burden and drudgery by analyzing the impact of MGNREGA on women in a village of Gujarat though much remains to be done in empowering women to become active participants as well as real beneficiaries of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA.

Rights based approaches and implementations of such efforts have been a regular feature in studies on social processes. This stream of analysis has found its place in studying the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS. Sharma (2010) has critically examined Mahatma Gandhi NREGA as a Rights-based legal framework for guaranteeing basic livelihood security to rural households. The main concern of the study is to examine the legal design and policy innovations and the extent to which they facilitate the fulfillment of the objectives of the Act. The issues discussed in the context of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA as a Rights-based law may be pertinent to policy formulation in other development contexts. Verma (2011) argues that one of the great strengths of MGNREGS is that it is self-targeting. This means that unless there is widespread systemic corruption, the programme benefits will reach its desired beneficiaries as the rich elite are unlikely to be willing to do unskilled manual labour for minimum wages.

The externalities brought in by the implementation of the scheme and the desirable changes it has brought in through fair practices of accommodation, participation and inclusion of the grassroots are worth mentioning. TISS (2011), in its study, says that the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA has raised a formidable challenge to the existing institutional framework, as well as to the elected representatives, officials and workers to effectively plan, organise and execute a large number of works across the State in order to work towards the creation of assets that contribute to livelihood security and regeneration of the natural resource base. The response from the State of Kerala, in terms of procedural clarity for programme implementation has been remarkable, as it capitalized on its achievements in implementing democratic decentralization over the past decade.

In the specific context of Kerala, the higher participation of women is a reality which has invited scholarly attention. A study undertaken by the Kerala State Planning Board (2011) indicated that women workers have dominated in the number of days of employment provided due to the positive role played by Kudumbasree and the Self Help Groups in Kerala. It says that the greater involvement of women can be explained in terms of gender parity. Unlike in most other works where there are large gender wage gaps, Mahatma Gandhi NREGA promises equal wages to men and women. However, a problem indicated by the study is relevant in that the poorest workers often require daily payment of wages, which leads them to other activities even at lower wage rates. The Planning Board recommended that Mahatma Gandhi NREGS employment of 100 days to one family in a year should

be modified to 100 days of work for each worker in a year, to enable them to make their livelihood in a financial year.

Current practices in governance and the challenges involved have been specially attended in the case of Kerala. Analyzing the functioning of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS in several Grama Panchayats in the Wayanad and Palakkad districts of Kerala, Gandhigram University (2009) sought to analyse the extent to which the scheme has generated employment, assessing the impact of the scheme on selected variables, and ascertaining the limitations and constrains faced by the functionaries in implementing the scheme. The study says that the start-up activities initiated and implemented in various panchayats have generated high degree of awareness among the people resulting in their active participation in the scheme. Jos Chathukkulam and Gireesan (2007), in their report, pointed out that the MGNREGS has made substantial headway in achieving its goals. The effects of MGNREGS on the rural poor in elevating the income of beneficiary households were quite perceptible unlike similar wage employment programmes of the past. Several positive impacts have also been noted such as achievements made in terms of flood control and protection, renovation of traditional water bodies, micro irrigation, water conservation and harvesting.

The role of Kudumbasree is quite evident and its role as a hub in the whole working of the scheme has been carefully studied. Nair, Sreedharan and Anoopkumar (2009) conducted a survey on the impact of the Mahatma Gandhi NREG in three Grama Panchayats of the Kasaragod district of Kerala. The study underlined the role played by the Kudumbasree in the operation of the scheme. The NREGS is found to be successful in raising the level of employment and income of the rural household, thereby enhancing their purchasing power. Though the role of Grama Sabhas in the formulation of plans was weak, there has been an impressive array of achievements in diverse areas, says the study. Vijayanand (2009) says that the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA has strengthened the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) over years. Sudarshan (2011), while examining women's participation in NREGS in selected areas in Kerala, Himachal and Rajasthan, has found that the scheme has succeeded in bringing together large numbers of women into paid work, many of them for the first time. The studies outlined above represent only a cross section of a vast array of the literature on different aspects of the NREGS. Though a number of studies have been done on Kerala experience, feedbacks with respect to financial inclusion and local economy and infrastructure development are yet to come. The study dealing with the experience from Pathanamthitta seeks to provide insights on financial inclusion as one of the prime concerns of the national employment guarantee scheme.

Methodology of the Study

The methodology employed in the study is analytical, based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative data generated through purposive sampling techniques as well as through Focus Groups Discussions and interactions with stakeholders. Qualitative methods are, for the most part, intended to achieve depth of understanding while quantitative methods are intended to achieve breadth of understanding. All major stakeholders involved in designing, giving, receiving, or administering the programme or service being evaluated. Focus Group Discussion (FGD), semi-structured data gathering method in which a purposively selected set of participants gather to discuss issues and concerns based on a list of key themes were also conducted in each panchayath for different stake holders. This qualitative research technique has been developed to give a better understanding of the data from quantitative surveys. A district level Workshop consisting of all stakeholder of the Scheme was also conducted as part of research.

Twenty Grama Panchayats in Pathananthitta have been selected out of 54 from 8 blocks (see table 1). The selection has been made on the basis of the performance of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS. With a view to evaluating the performance of MGNREGS, the study used the parameters/indicators such as the maximum number of household registration, household participation, 100 days to maximum households, women's participation, SC/ST participation and the expenditure. Following this the study selected two best performing and two low performing Panchayats. Using the census data two SC and ST populated Panchayats were also selected. The remaining 12 Panchayats were randomly selected comprising all Block Panchayats.

An index of financial inclusion (FI) has been developed to assess the activities and performance of NREGS using variables under the parameters of supply side and demand side, as provided in detail in Section IV. The data generated from the field have been classified and analyzed with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Section III Pathanamthitta District: a Profile

The district has five taluks (Kozhenchery, Adoor, Thiruvalla, Mallappally and Ranni), eight Blocks and 54 panchayats. The total area of the district is 2637 square kilometers. Around 60 percentage of the total area comes under forests. Land utilised for non-agricultural purpose account for 6.16 per cent of the total land area, and 30.82 per cent of the total area is used for agricultural purpose.

Table 1: Blocks and Select Grama Panchayats

Block	Panchayats
Ranni	Naranammoozhy (ST), Seethathode, Ranni-Perunad
Konni	Konni, Thannithode , Vallicode
Parakkode	Kodumon (SC), Ezhamkulam , Pallickal
Elanthur	Chennerkara, Elanthur, Naranganam
Pandalam	Pandalam, Aranmula
Koipuram	Eraviperoor , Koipuram
Mallappally	Kaviyoor, Mallappally
Pulikeezhu	Nedumpram, Peringara

The total population of the district, according to the 2011 census, is 11,97,412, comprising of 3.59 per cent of the State population. Sex ratio in the district is 1129 females per 1000 males. The density of population is 453 per sq.kilometers. The Scheduled Caste population is 13.74 per cent. The Scheduled Tribe population is 0.68 per cent to the total population of the district. Total literacy of Pathanamthitta district is 96.93. Male literacy rate is 97.70 per cent, and female literacy is 96.26 per cent.

Table 2: Pathanamthitta - General Profile

Particulars	Pathanamthitta	Kerala
Total Population	1197412	33387677
Male Population	561716	16021290
Female Population	635696	17366387
Density (per sq.km)	453	859
Sex Ratio (Females per 1000 Males)	1129	1084
Total Literacy (in Per cent)	96.93	93.91
Male literacy (in Per cent)	97.70	96.02
Female literacy (in Per cent)	96.26	91.98
SC Population (in Per cent)	13.74	9.10
ST population (in Per cent)	0.68	1.45

Source: Census of India 2011: Primary Census Abstract - Data Highlights, Kerala, Series 33 (Kerala: Directorate of Census Operation).

Impact Assessment of MGNREGS IN Pathanamthitta

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) was implemented in Pathanamthitta District from 2008 April onwards. In the initial years, the registration was low but in the subsequent

years the participation of people recorded a huge increase. The participation of marginalised sections, especially the SC and ST were high. Dominance of women in the workforce was quite evident in Pathanamthitta (95 per cent) as in the case of other districts in Kerala. In the initial year, 74415 households were registered which included 18500 SC and 1041 ST households. The registration of households was increasing tremendously since then. During 2013-14, there were 12140 registered households and 203042 cardholders. Among them, there were 16671 SC households and 985 ST households. Corresponding to the increase in the number of registered households, there was an increase in person days generated and the amount spent as well (Figure 4.1). In 2008-09, the cardholders belonging to the SC category got 10494 person days work. During this period, cardholders from the ST communities got 343 person days work. The total person days generated during this period was 343550. In 2013-14, 769012 person days generated for SC and 32959 person days were generated for ST communities. The total person days were generated was 3598767.

The expenditure pattern showed an increasing trend from 2008-09 to 2012-13. During 2008-09, the total expenditure was Rs. 401.02 lakhs. It increased to Rs. 6401.08 lakhs in 2012-13. However, it decreased to Rs. 4983.34 lakhs in 2013-14. There was an upward trend in expenditure from 2010-11 to 2012-13, followed by a steep decline in 2013-14, resulting in a negative growth. This negative growth was not a unique situation of Pathanamthitta district. A decline was clear in the state as a whole. This was due to the policy changes concerning the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA by the Union as well as the state governments. The total expenditure tremendously increased from the beginning to 2012-13 at the national level. The total central budget outlay of 2012-13, Rs. 40100 crores fell down to Rs. 33000 crores in the 2013-14 budget. This change at the national level reflected in the performance at the district level also. Besides that, the new regulations such as conferring more importance to asset creating works have negatively affected the performance of the scheme. The rate of change both in person days and the total expenditure, (Figure 1).
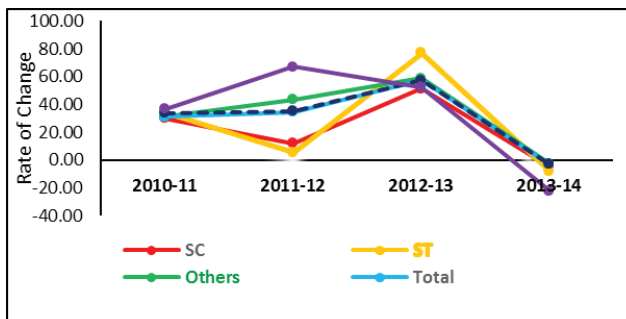

Figure 1 Rate of Change in Person days generated and Expenditure

Bijulal M.V.

Socio-economic Profile of Beneficiaries

The following section provides an analysis of the data on family, education, income, assets, enrolment and participation in the MGNREGS etc. relating to the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries who have participated in the field study held in eight Blocks in Pathanamthita district. There were 600 respondents from the category of beneficiaries, 30 each from 20 different panchayats.

The Mahatma Gandhi NREGS is aimed to mitigate poverty, and the participation of the marginalised sections in the scheme is accorded high importance. The social categories of beneficiaries include the SC, ST and others. Among the samples persons, those belonging to the SC category constitute 32.17 per cent, the figure for the ST category is 3.17 per cent, while others form 64.66 per cent of the beneficiaries. Female workers are the majority comprising of 96 per cent of the sample. Male participation is very low, who constitutes only 4 per cent. The largest section of respondents from the beneficiary group belongs to the age group of 46-59, which constitutes about 38 per cent, followed by the 36-45 age group with 32.47 per cent participation. 19.26 per cent females belongs to the 60 and above age group. This shows that there are more elderly persons in Mahatma Gandhi NREGS, since they have no other alternative employment. Analysis of the age and gender data further shows that 91.67 per cent male workers are above 46 years and 62.50 per cent belongs to the 60 and above age group, which shows that young and middle aged people are not participating in this scheme. Those who are aged or being differentially abled are participating as well. In the case of women also, around 20 per cent of the workers are in the 60 and above age group.

Table 3: Socio-Economic profile of Beneficiaries

Specifications	Category	Per cent
Age	25 - 35	10.27
	36 - 45	32.47
	46 - 59	38.00
	60 and above	19.26
Sex	Male	4
	Female	96
Category	SC	32.17
	ST	3.17
	Others	64.66

Marital Status	Unmarried	1.66
	Married	77.17
	Widow/widower	20.17
	Divorce	0.50
	Seperated	1.00
Education	Illiterate	4.65
	Literate	2.17
	Primary (1 – 7)	31.67
	High School (8 – 10)	54.17
	Higher Secondary and above	7.34
Land ownership	Land less	
	Between 1 – 5 cents	
	Between 6 – 15 cents	
	Between 16 – 25 cents	
	Between 26 – 50 cents	
	Above 50 cents	
Economic Status	BPL	77.00
	APL	22.83
Average Monthly Income	Upto Rs.3000	82.67
	Between Rs. 3001 – 7500	13.00
	Between Rs. 7501 – 15000	3.16
	Rs. 15001 and above	1.17

Among the beneficiaries 77.17 are married. Those from the widow/widower category come to 20.17 per cent. It is quite evident that the   Mahatma Gandhi NREGS is providing livelihood to widows and single persons in desperate and vulnerable situations, as around 50 per cent of widows belong to the age group of 60 and above. Divorcees belong to 46-59 age group. Among the seperated, 50 per cent belongs to the above 60 age group. These trends show that those who have limited mobility and were in desparate need to engage in wage labour to earn their daily bread and were discrminated against or avoided from regular employment market due to ageism were active participating beneficaries of the   Mahatma Gandhi NREGS. It may be also inferred the partially disabled as well as aged persons suffering from physical limitation to perform works to the quantum and quality of persons with full physical abilities, find the worksite as a friendly place. A

sense of collective action prevails the worksites, where the aged and tired persons get their share of work done by their fellow workers.

The data on educational qualification of beneficiaries show that only 4.65 per cent are illiterates. Majority of workers, i.e., 54.17 per cent have education upto the secondary level. The data also show that there was one post graduate among the 600 beneficiaries. Among the beneficiaries, 77 per cent belongs to the Below Poverty Line (BPL) category and 22.83 per cent belongs to Above Poverty Line (APL) category. The categorisation of BPL/APL is based on the beneficiaries responses to the research team. But those who were relatively well off or among the respondents were found to belong to the BPL category strangely. Similarly, those who have less land holdings and family income were wrongly included into the APL category also. According to the workers, many of them who were included into APL category was due to some administrative lapses or oversights and this issue was taken up with the district authorities to reinstate them in BPL category. Beneficiaries having the monthly income of less than Rs. 3000.00 were 82.67 per cent and only 1.17 per cent had more than Rs. 15000 income per month. Many workers could be identified as poverty-ridden according to the official data. In this context, income through the scheme is seen as an important resource.

Awareness

Awareness about the programme is an important factor in terms of the attraction of the work under the scheme. The survey shows that awareness about these rights and entitlements among workers was uneven. Among the respondents, 21.16 per cent had very poor knowledge. Those having good awareness was 36.17 per cent and 14.17 per cent had excellent knowledge. Those having moderate awareness were 28.50 per cent. This shows the level of rights literacy among workers. It seemed those had good and excellent awareness about these were those who had undergone training, as also they had performed as mates at some point of time. Awareness about grievance cell among the beneficiaries was poor. Workers who were unaware of the cell or toll free number was 78 per cent. Only 22 per cent workers were aware of it, though have never utilised it. Majority of workers, (81.50 per cent) were not aware of the right to compensation in the event of non-availability of work.

Empowerment

Participation in different activities related to the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS has a positive impact on the respondents. The level of empowerment (economic, political and social) was seen high among the respondents. Social protection through positive empowerment was ensured out through the livelihood assistance,

mainly through the provision of employment. Immediate improvement of work related income had its direct impact. Family consumption level has increased in the case of 92.83 per cent beneficiaries. Various sections like women, SC, ST and the elderly shared the same opinion.It was quite noticeable in the case of improving the health related matters (76.34 per cent), followed by food (68.17 per cent), clothes and education of the families of the respondents. The income received from the scheme has been utilised additionally for household necessities. In general, 68.17 per cent used the wage income for food, while the same among the SC and ST respondents was 70.75 per cent. Among the elderly workers, 59.51 per cent were using the wage income for food.

All the beneficiaries were of the opinion that the scheme was useful to them in different ways. Regarding the empowerment, 96 per cent said that the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS provided an opportunity for promoting collective action and companionship. Women, SC, ST and the elderly (persons above 60 years) sections shared the opinion that they were empowered through collective action. Those who responded that their family environment had improved after participating in the scheme was to 85 per cent. The scheme paved the way for increasing socio-political participation of the majority of respondents. A considerable share of marginalised sections like SC and ST workers (64.15 per cent) responded that the participation in the scheme resulted in their better socio-political participation. Economic condition also recorded improvement among the marginalised sections.

Table 4: Type of Empowerment through MGNREGA

Empowerment	Total		Women		SC & ST		Age 60 and Above	
	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
Companionship/ Collective action	575	95.83	553	96.01	202	95.28	120	95.24
Improvement in Family Environment	508	84.67	490	85.07	176	83.02	93	73.81
Better Socio-Political Participation	366	61.00	352	61.11	136	64.15	70	55.56
Better Economic Condition	414	69.00	401	69.62	154	72.64	74	58.73

Expenditure pattern of the income from Mahatma Gandhi NREGS workers showed different trends. Income from Mahatma Gandhi NREGS was mainly

used for day to day necessities. Meanwhile, some share of the income was spent for acquiring physical assets such as consumer durables like refrigerator, mixer grinder, pressure cooker etc. Part of money it was also used to procure livestock. Maintenance of house was another head for spending money. Among workers 60.67 per cent used a portion of wages to acquire physical assets. Among the SC and ST sections, 61.32 per cent and 46.83 per cent of the aged category spent money for buying physical assets.

Regarding the procurement of financial assets, it was seen that 45 per cent used their wages for the purpose. Women, SC and ST categories also spent 46 per cent of their wages. But the elderly people were not in par with the rest. Financial assets include insurance policies, joining in chit fund schemes, and deposits other than bank savings etc. Chit funds and insurance policies were the major investing segments. The workers also took insurance policies for their kids. In the category of persons above the age 60, nobody had taken insurance policies, but they were seen interested in chit funds.

Data on financial situation of rural families shows that majority of the rural population is debt ridden. They take money from local money lenders, local financial institutions as well as from SHGs or from neighbours and friends. According to the beneficiaries, 71.83 spent a share of their wages for the repayment of their debts.

The families of the respondents used to procure household provisions from nearby petty shops on credit. This credit incurred was paid back once the workers got wages. The respondents in FGDs highlighted the fact that the shop keepers changed their previous attitude of showing hesitation to buy provisions on credit. In a broad sense, this experience explains the general improvement of credit worthiness of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS participants at the local level.

Table 5: -Participation in Different Socio-Political Institutions (Percentage Share)

Institution	Total		Women		SC & ST		Age 60 and Above	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Kudumbasree	94.33	5.67	96.01	3.99	94.81	5.19	83.33	16.67
SHGs	12.33	87.67	12.50	87.50	9.91	90.09	7.14	92.86
MGNREGA Worker's Union	50.17	49.83	50.52	49.48	55.66	44.34	42.86	57.14
Political Party	6.83	93.17	6.42	93.58	6.13	93.87	4.76	95.24

The levels of participation of the workers in different social collectives remain an integral aspect of the scheme. This contributed in different ways in the planning

and implementation of collective activities. A major indicator was the workers' in Kudumbasree, which stood at 94.33 per cent of all respondents. A Category-wise participation analysis shows that 96.01 per cent of women, 94.81 per cent of SC and ST and 83.33 per cent of aged had actively participated in Kudumbasree. The reason for elders less participation compared to others is due to other family member's presence and participation in the Kudumbasree meetings. The data shows that other SHGs are also quite active in the district, controlled and operated by caste organisations, religious organisations and other sections. Among the respondents, 12.33 per cent had membership in these SHGs. An effort was also made to assess the participation of the workers in unions as well as their political affiliations. The Mahatma Gandhi NREGS workers union membership was availed by 50.17 per cent workers and 6.83 workers declared that they had political party membership.

Financial Inclusion through MGNREGA

Disbursement of wages through formal financial institutions has special relevance to the promotion of Financial Inclusion (FI). Inclusive growth is coined few years back along with the new development paradigm. This is evident in the text of the 12th Plan, which envisaged that the growth must be inclusive. It also says that financial institutions are also required to get investment from the larger sections, considering the fact that FI is a crucial factor in obtaining inclusive growth.

In spite of widely acclaimed improvement in economic development, the majority such as weaker sections of the society are not financially included. They are denied the opportunities and services provided by the financial system. Bank account is a key and foremost initiative for financial inclusion. In this context we need to understand the mandatory steps for wage payment of the NREGS since 2008. Through such change, all beneficiaries have become account holders either in post offices or banks. It opens the possibilities of the availability of the financial services to the rural people. By this process, the weaker sections can have the access to savings and other services of banks. The scale of financial inclusion across the country is growing, while we consider the bank/PO account. But the quality of FI could be fully realised once the credit requirements are made available at an affordable manner to the weaker sections.

As mentioned earlier, inclusive growth is coined along with the economic policy in the last decade, where financial inclusion is incorporated as an integral part. Majority of the population is out of the economic development. Weaker and marginalised sections who form the majority are excluded from the development processes. They live in rural areas, and the formal banking system is alien to them. There are several research studies indicating this gap. For example, the World

Bank – NCAER survey in 2003 showed the fact that 70 per cent of the rural population didn't have bank account and 87 per cent did not have access to credits from formal financial institutions. Their main financial interactions were with the local money lenders or private financial institutions. To include them financially into the overall growth was a tedious task. The government of India was providing opportunities to open zero balance account in banks through RBI initiatives. This account is for savings and withdrawals, failing to provide the actual spirit of the financial inclusion. We can argue that from the nationalisation of banks in 1969 onwards, the process of financial inclusion was in place. In the policy statement of the 2005-06, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) proposed to give 'no frills account' to include larger sections to the inclusive growth paradigm. Later, the central government appointed Rangarajn committee (2008) to make recommendations to promote greater financial inclusion. The Committee defined financial inclusion as the process of ensuring access to financial services and timely and adequate credit where needed by vulnerable groups such as weaker sections and low income groups at an affordable cost. It sought to provide 50 per cent of the rural households, which were financially excluded, the financial services by 2012.

Table 3 shows the significant developments in terms of proliferation of banking services, especially in the rural areas. The increase in number of bank branches across India during 2010 to 2012 showed 16.13 per cent. The rate of increase in other concerned sections as given in the table 6.1 is indicative of the overall development of institutional facilities for improving financial Inclusion. There is great progress in opening new accounts, rural branches of banks and 'no frill account' as a result of the earlier initiatives. Financial inclusion aims at attracting the marginalised sections to the organised financial system, which has multiplier effects such as investments and credits. By this, the government aims to transfer benefits to the targeted section of population.

Table 6: Progress of Financial Inclusion

Particulars	March 2010	March 2011	March 2012
Total number of Branches	85457	91145	99242
Number of rural Branches	33433	34811	37471
Banking outlets in villages with population >2000	37791	66447	112130
Banking outlets in villages with population <2000	29903	49761	69623
Total Banking Outlets	67694	116208	181753
Number of No Frill A/Cs (in million)	73.45	104.76	138.5
Amount in No Frill A/Cs (in million)	55.02	76.12	120.41

Source: http://www.rbi.org.in.scrpts/BS_SpeechesView.aspx?id=749.

By 2008, as a measure for promoting FI, the government of India made bank/ post office account mandatory to NREGS beneficiaries to avail wages. The wage payment through banks/POs has made it mandatory for the beneficiaries to open accounts and it is considered to be the first step for them to enter the formal money market. According to the NREGS website data, 90 per cent of the card holders have a bank or post office account. Obviously, some states had done better than others. For example, 73 per cent of the workers in Kerala are having individual NREGA bank accounts followed by Andhra Pradesh (61 per cent) and Tamil Nadu (49 per cent). The national average is 25 per cent. Figure 1 shows details of the national scenario on financial inclusion

According to previous studies on financial inclusion Kerala has achieved high financial inclusion even before the commencement of the MGNREGS.

Figure 2

Financial Inclusion in Pathanamthitta

Pathanamthitta district has huge number of non-resident Indians. Presently, the district has branches of all major international and national banks, and the frequency of branches is considered much higher than rest of the places in Kerala. The major actors of informal money market in Kerala, private financial institutions like the *Muthoot* financiers and *Popular* chit funds are originally from Pathanamthitta district.

According to our data, the State Bank of Travancore (SBT) is the lead bank in Pathanamthitta district with, 27.82 per cent of workers having their account in SBT. Federal Bank (13.67 per cent), Central Bank (12.17 per cent), Post office (10.50 per cent), South Malabar Grameen Bank (9.67 per cent) are the major financial institutions providing accounts to workers. Indian Overseas Bank, South Indian Bank, UCO Bank, Canara Bank, Syndicate Bank, SBI, Indian Bank and Bank of Baroda are also having accounts of the workers. Few workers (1.83 per cent) have accounts in Co-operative banks. It was also noted that 12.83 per cent of

sample workers in Pathanmthitta district were financially included prior to their registration.

Table 6: List of Financial Institutions by Percentage of MGNREGS Workers' Account

Name of Institution	Per cent
SBT	27.82
Federal Bank	13.67
Central Bank	12.17
South Malabar Grameen Bank	9.67
IOB	5.83
Canara Bank	5.17
SBI	4.00
South Indian Bank	3.17
Bank of Baroda	2.50
Co-operative Banks	1.83
UCO Bank	1.67
Syndicate Bank	1.50
Indian Bank	0.50
Total	100.00

Majority of workers (98.66 per cent) reported that they didn't face any problem in opening accounts. Negligence from bank authorities was cited as a problem by 1.17 per cent. Another notable thing is that 47.50 per cent did not receive any assistance to open accounts in bank /post office. Mates have been providing support to 31.16 per cent, panchayat officials have given support to 12.17 per cent, 6 per cent received help from friends/relatives and 3.17 per cent get support from SHGs.

The data on frequency of bank visits showed that the majority were visiting banks occasionally. They responded that they visited banks only to withdraw wages. 90.17 per cent belonged to this. Only very few, 1.33 per cent visited bank once in two weeks and 8.50 per cent visited once in a month. The beneficiaries having ATM card and cheque book facility are very low, i.e. 18.33 per cent only. Very few respondents (5.83 per cent) were reluctant to verify passbook on details regarding NREGS wage payments and other transactions, while the majority (94.17 per cent) were regularly checking the bank transactions .Only one person, among 600 samples, was seen to have not keeping the passbook under his own custody. Majority of the workers were withdrawing money by themselves, and they constituted 99.50 per cent and 0.50 per cent authorised other family members to withdraw money. This shows the

wage earner him/her self were handling the bank accounts and were arguably able to use money for their priorities, which was an important indication of economic empowerment at the personal level.

While analysing financial inclusion, the physical accessibility to the financial institution is a major factor. The distance from beneficiaries' home to bank varies - 54.33 per cent having financial institution within two kilometres. For 36.67 per cent of the respondents, the distance between home and bank /post office.was between 2 and 5 kilometres Those who reported distance between 5 and 10 kilometres was 7.667 per cent of beneficiaries and 1.33 per cent is living beyond 10 kilometres, away from their bank. The distance from the financial institutions shows the expenditure occurring for bank visit by bus or auto rickshaw. The amount was varying from Rs. 12 to more than Rs. 30. Those who were residing within the walkable distance constituted 36.83 per cent had no expenses for bank visit. But 43.33 per cent was spending below Rs. 13 and 7 per cent spent Rs. 13 to Rs. 19, 1.84 per cent spent Rs. 20 to Rs. 29 and 11 per cent spent Rs. 30 and above. Beyond this, the workers were losing a working day, according to them. The type of expenditure for bank/post office visit was auto or bus 50.17 per cent was spending money and 36.83 per cent had no expenses.

Bank account is the cornerstone of the financial inclusion. But other services from the bank to account holders were also vital and are inclusive. Regarding the other benefits, 78.84 per cent had not get anything, 1 per cent get loans, 19.83 per cent getting gas subsidy through their account and 0.33 per cent getting other government benefits. Enquiry on bank accounts of the family members of the beneficiaries showed that, 47.83 per cent didn't have accounts, 31.17 per cent had one account , 13 per cent have two accounts, 6.33 per cent have three accounts, 1.50 per cent have four accounts and 0.17 per cent have 5 accounts. The increase in number is due to the mandatory condition by the government to take bank accounts to receive benefits such as various educational scholarships, education loans, pensions etc.

The source of credit has changed after participating in the NREGS. SHGS were chief source of debt to 61.18 per cent, before it has grown to 78 per cent after NREGS enrolment. In the case of bank, 8.34 per cent depended earlier, to 4.34 per cent only after the MGNREGS. The dependence on local money lenders has decreased tremendously. Earlier 41.52 per cent workers borrowed from local money lenders (shifted to 19.83 per cent). Likewise the dependence on private financial institutions was decreased from 46.18 per cent to 28.50 per cent . Marginal increase in number of persons not availing any loans from any sources has also shown an increase in all categories considered.

Bijulal M.V.

Table 7: Major Source of Debt before and | After MGNREGA Participation (in Percentage)

Source	Total		Women		SC&ST		Age 60 and Above	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
Not Applicable	8.33	10.67	8.33	10.76	8.96	10.38	18.25	21.43
SHGs	61.18	78.00	62.16	78.83	65.1	80.67	55.55	64.27
Bank	8.34	4.34	8.15	4.17	10.38	4.25	7.94	3.96
Local Money Lenders	41.52	19.83	40.80	19.27	42.94	20.29	28.58	20.62
Private Money Lending Institutions	46.18	28.50	46.35	29.68	41.51	26.89	35.71	17.45
Friends	3.01	2.50	3.13	2.43	3.31	0.47	1.58	3.96

On awareness about banking transactions, only 27.17 per cent had knowledge about banking transactions before participating NREGS. Majority (72.83 per cent) had no awareness.

After joining MGNREGS this situations has changed, 79 per cent had equipped themselves with the skills for banking, which shows a great change in terms of acquiring skills as they participated in the MGNREGS. Regarding attending orientation classes on banking transaction, 90.83 per cent responded that they didn't receive any such things, 9.17 per cent reported that they got inputs on banking transactions.

Analysis on Financial Inclusion

Based on an analysis using an index of financial inclusion developed on the basis of 14 variables from supply side and demand side, the overall financial inclusion in Pathanamthitta district is assessed, with 91.17 per cent beneficiaries being shown as ranked as 'best'. The rest (8.83 per cent) had a 'high' financial inclusion. The results of the assessment are based on an index as explained below.

Index of Financial Inclusion

A set of varioables were specially selected to do an in-depth analysis of the major objective of the study; financial inclusion. The following is the list of variables, followed by the method devised to assess the financial inclusiveness of

the scheme, in Pathanamtitta district.

I. Parameters of Financial Inclusion (Supply side)

i) Opening of bank account
   a) In association with MGNREGA = 1
   b) Prior to MGNREGA = 0.50

ii) Problems in opening bank account
   a) Yes = 0
   b) No = 1

iii) Other benefits of bank account
   a) Yes = 1
   b) No = 0

iv) Delay in getting wages
   a) Up to two weeks = 1
   b) Between 2 and 4 weeks = 0.75
   c) More than 4 weeks = 0.50

v) Acquiring financial assets
   a) Yes = 1
   b) No = 0

vi) Source of credit
   a) Bank/Post office = 1
   b) Bank + SHGs = 0.75
   c) Bank + Other FI = 0.50
   d) SHGs + Other FI = 0.25
   e) Other FI = 0

vii) Expenses of bank visit/ Transaction cost
   a) No Cost = 1
   b) Below Rs. 13 = 0.75
   c) Between Rs. 13 to Rs. 29 = 0.50
   d) Rs. 30 and above = 0.25

viii) ATM facility
   a) Yes = 1
   b) No = 0

ix) Cheque book facility
   a) Yes = 1
   b) No = 0

II. Parameters of Financial Inclusion (Demand side)
   i)   Received assistance for opening bank account
       a) Yes = 0.50
       b) No = 1

   ii) Operation of bank account
       a) Self = 1
       b) With the help of others = 0.25
   iii) Knowledge on banking transitions
       a) Yes = 1
       b) No = 0

   iv) Received orientation for banking activities
       a) Yes =1
       b) No = 0

   v)   Frequency of bank visit
       a) Once in a 2 weeks = 1
       b) Once in a Month = 0.75

$$\text{IFI} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n_1} Xi + \sum_{j=1}^{n_2} Yj}{n} \qquad n = n_1 + n_2$$

$$\text{IFI\_SS} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n_1} Xi}{n_1} \qquad i = 1, 2, 3 \dots, 9; \; n_1 = 9$$

$$\text{IFI\_DD} = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{n_2} Yj}{n_2} \qquad j = 1, 2, 3 \dots, 5; \; n_2 = 5$$

$$\text{IFI\_DD} = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{n_2} Yj}{n_2} \qquad j = 1, 2, 3 \dots, 5; \; n_2 = 5$$

Financial inclusion index was constructed on the basis of 14 parameters comprising both supply and demand side. The figures are weights given to each

response of the beneficiaries. The weightage was given importance according to the responses for differentiating them. The weights are 1, 0.75, 0.50, 0.15 and 0. Based on these, three index was constructed, ie. Overall index of financial inclusion, index of financial inclusion supply side, and index of financial inclusion demand side. Total score is in between 0 and 1 and the details of ranking are follows.

1. 0.0 – 0.33 = low financial inclusion
2. 0.34 – 0.66 = medium financial inclusion
3. 0.67 -1.0 = high financial inclusion

The variables are divided into two sections, supply side and demand side. The supply side of variables covered the issues such as account opening and other benefits, ATM/cheque facility, delay, source of credits etc. and the demand side considered, financial inclusion, banking transactions, frequency of bank visits etc. The results on supply side showed that 11.50 per cent panchayats had high financial inclusion index, 85.67 per cent have average IFI and 2.83 had low IFI.

$$IFI\_SS = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n_1} Xi}{n_1} \qquad i = 1, 2, 3 \dots, 9; \quad n_1 = 9$$

The demand side analysis highlighted that 45.83 per cent panchayats hadg high IFI, 54.00 per cent panchayats had average IFI and only 0.17 having (one panchayat out of select 20 panchayats) had low IFI.

$$IFI\_DD = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{n_2} Yj}{n_2} \qquad j = 1, 2, 3 \dots, 5; \quad n_2 = 5$$

Table 8. Panchayat wise Index of Financial Inclusion

Panchayat	IFI Supply	IFI Demand	IFI Total
Chenneerkara	0.47	0.61	0.52
Elanthur	0.51	0.62	0.55
Naranganam	0.58	0.63	0.60
Kaviyoor	0.54	0.57	0.55
Mallappally	0.48	0.68	0.55
Nedumpuram	0.54	0.62	0.57
Peringara	0.51	0.61	0.54
Kodumon	0.51	0.59	0.54
Ezhamkulam	0.52	0.64	0.56
Pallikkal	0.56	0.65	0.59

Thannithode	0.48	0.67	0.55
Konni	0.54	0.60	0.56
Vallicode	0.55	0.59	0.56
Aranmula	0.56	0.68	0.60
Pandalam	0.50	0.67	0.56
Eraviperoor	0.53	0.55	0.53
Koipuram	0.50	0.64	0.55
Ranni-Perunad	0.53	0.62	0.56
Naranmoozhy	0.53	0.67	0.58
Seethathode	0.54	0.66	0.58

Select panchayat wise data showed that all the panchayats were financially included well, the lowest score was 0.52 and the highest score was 0.60 (Table 6.14). The Koduman panchayath (SC populated) with index(0.54 and, the Naranamoozhi Panchayath (ST Populated) 0.58 were near to the 'high' financial inclusion index. The performance of the NREGS was not repeating in the IFI. For example, the best panchayat, Pallikkal got 0.59 in the index while the low performance panchayat, Naranganam got 0.60 in the index (Table 6.). This is related to some other factors such as the influence of NRIs and the compulsion of Union government schemes through *adhaar* linked bank accounts.

While considering the financial inclusion (IFI Supply) status of the persons belonging to the SC and ST categories, it was seen that the percentage of those who were in the best category was 0.52 per cent and 5.26 per cent respectively. Those who got listed as 'good' and 'moderate' in the SC category were 49.17 and 48.83 per cent respectively. Among the persons from the ST community, those were recorded as 'good' status were 51.30 per cent followed by 48.19 who were identified as holding 'moderate' financial inclusion status (Table 7).

Table 9: IFI- Supply

IFI	Total	SC	ST
Best	2.00	0.52	5.26
Good	49.17	51.30	84.21
Moderate	48.83	48.19	10.53
Poor	0	0	0
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**

While considering the financial inclusion (IFI Demand) status of the persons belonging to the SC and ST categories, it was seen that the percentage of those who were in the best category was7.77 per cent and 15.79 per cent respectively. Those who got listed as 'good' and 'moderate' in the SC category were 75.50 and 17.67 per cent respectively. Among the persons from the ST community those were recorded as holding good status were 69.95 per cent followed by 22.28 per cent who were identified as holding moderate financial inclusion status. While 0.17 per cent of the SC category respondents were recorded as 'poor' in IFI demand, there was none from the ST category (Table 8).

Table 10: IFI- Demand

Index	Total	SC	ST
Best	6.67	7.77	15.79
Good	75.50	69.95	68.42
Moderate	17.67	22.28	15.79
Poor	0.17	0	0
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**

Conclusions

Direct and tangible impacts of the wage income through the scheme among 600 participant beneficiaries of the scheme revealed in the enquiry.. There lies an obvious gender dimension in these findings since 96 per cent of the beneficiaries were women, especially those with vulnerabilities both social and physical, amounting to a significant number. While the rural labour situation in Kerala is turning disadvantageous for women in general due to various labor displacement processes adopted in those sectors previously dominated by the women workforce, the availability of work and regular income under the MGNREGS was big relief to rural economies in Kerala. It is important to note here the non-economic capital dimensions as externalities due to participation of the scheme which are discussed in detail in the previous sections on impact of the scheme. However, the impact of wages has to be seen as harbinger of change in lifestyle which reduced drudgery of women as they invested money in modern household articles like pressure cooker, fridge etc. A notable share of wage income has also been spent to avail modern financial assets, like insurance policies, investment in chit funds etc. This has improved abilities to invest in savings and schemes for future generations. Social status of the workers also attained improved levels since their credit worthiness showed an increase. As active members of the scheme, social mobility of workers have improved as they became active members in different social organizations and

Bijulal M.V.

trade unions for MGNREGS workers . For a significant share of respondents the association with any public forum of political character was a first time experience as well. Furthering the argument in the line of acquiring of social capital by the women workforce, it is important to see that the women got more acquainted with advanced mechanisms for communication, banking and so on. The women workers developed electronic banking skills and got acquainted with banking practices as well.

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For Those Who Know Little or Nothing about Labour
Building Global Labour Solidarity Today

Kim Scipes

Kim Scipes (ed.) (2016): *Building Global Labor Solidarity in a Time of Accelerating Globalization,* Chicago: Haymarket Books.

Earlier this year, a collection of papers was published under the title of Building Global Labour Solidarity in a Time of Accelerating Globalization (Scipes ed. 2016). It was a strong effort by seven labour activists and scholars from different parts of the world to think out how workers today can support each other globally; initially so as to defend against attacks on workers' and their unions' power, but ultimately, to develop ideas on how we could more consciously develop our thinking and our organizations to move toward a more economically- and socially-just world.

This article is being written to share some of this thinking with people who don't know about efforts to transform labour globally, and/or who might not even care. Unfortunately, many activists in the United States and Canada today know little-to-nothing about the labour movements in these countries—or, if they know, it is only the bad points (on US labour imperialism, for example, see Scipes 2000b, 2010a, 2010b, 2012, 2016; see also Bass 2012; Buhle 1999; Cox and Bass 2012; Rahman and Langford 2014; Sims 1992).

Yet what has been generally lost in the non-interest or disgust has been the fact that a considerable number of progressive activists have devoted many years and considerable energy to reforming the US labour movement (see, for example, Earl, 2009; Fletcher and Gapasin 2008; for a more complete list, see Scipes "Contemporary Labour Issues" bibliography at http://faculty.pnc.edu/kscipes/laborbib.htm), opposing the labour imperialism of the AFL-CIO (http://faculty.pnc.edu/kscipes/LaborBib.htm#AFL-CIO_Foreign_Operations), and in trying to build international labour solidarity with workers in our own countries as well as with workers around the world (http://faculty.pnc.edu/kscipes/laborbib.htm#Grassroots); my friend, Fred Hirsch, has been doing all of this for over 40 years.

Why this is important, in my opinion, is that looking at the world from the position of progressive labour activists enables us to see and get clear on aspects of the world that are not readily observable or understandable from other positions. Understand, please, that I am not arguing that a progressive labour standpoint is better or more complete than others'—it has its own strengths and weaknesses, and labour obviously needs to learn from other movements and positions—but it is a position that enables us to see things that many others cannot. Making this point seems especially important in light of the lack of knowledge about the labour movement that is shared by many of today's younger activists.

So as to share some of the findings of our collection, I thought I'd go through the Introduction and each chapter to try to pull out in one place some of the most significant findings from the book. Ideally, this will inspire readers to get the book and try to understand the arguments in greater detail, but at very least, I thought I'd share some of the latest findings from these very experienced labour activists and make them accessible to a wider range of activists engaged in other struggles and movements. There is, to put it simply, much more to the US labour movement than the AFL-CIO leadership.

In the 'Introduction' I take advantage of the editor's prerogative so as to develop my thinking about some crucial issues—and I note this is my thinking, that other contributor's might not agree with some or even all of it, so you cannot assume they accept my thinking unless they specifically claim it.

Perhaps the most important part of the Introduction is that I disentangle the concepts of globalization and neo-liberal economics, about which there is much confusion. Influenced strongly by and following the work of the Netherlands-born scholar, Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1989, 2004, 2008, 2015), I argue that globalization has existed for a very long time—since the beginning of human migration—and precedes capitalism, modernity and "the West." In other words, it is not a new or a recent phenomenon, despite what many scholars suggest. I recognize that the processes of globalization have accelerated since the 1970s, but they are not new. Further, especially following the work of Vandana Shiva (2005) and Amory Starr (2005), I argue that globalization is not a monolithic force, sweeping the defenceless world like a raging flood of water, but rather is made up of two layers, featuring top-down processes and bottom-up processes: the top-down processes are based on the values of promoting the uninhibited spread of capitalism and particularly corporations around the world, along with the militarism (and related wars and military operations) needed to ensure that this is possible (thus trying to dominate the world), while the bottom-up is life-enhancing, seeking to build a world based on economic and social justice, and respect for all human beings and the planet. This bottom-up global solidarity is seeking another world, a better world, based on

global solidarity, ecological and economic sustainability, and economic and social justice. (For one discussion, see Scipes 2009a.)

Accordingly, Nederveen Pieterse's perspective that "globalization involves more intensive interaction across wider space and in shorter time than before" (2015: 8) must include the understanding of top-down versus bottom-up layers of globalization.

Neo-liberal economics, on the other hand, is a particular part of neo-liberalism, which is a philosophy that was designed to overcome the limitations of US capitalism that became obvious in the mid-1970s. Basically, neo-liberalism argues that profitability, or potential profitability, is the only value by which social situations should be measured: if something contributes to profitability, it is good; if it hinders profitability, it is bad. In other words, efforts to fight for clear air, or clean water, or to ban fracking, or for workers' health and safety are bad, because they reduce the chance for profitability.

Central to neo-liberalism is the neo-liberal economic program, which is its foundation. According to Richard Roman and Edur Velasco Arregui (2013: 7),

> The rise and triumph of the corporate neo-liberal agenda did not simply happen because of "market forces" or globalization. The most powerful corporations in the US—many of them the most powerful in the world—organized to make it happen; they developed their own consensus and mobilized their vast resources and network to make it happen (emphasis in original).

Key to their argument that the well-being of US corporations was central to the well-being of the US economy, and that the key to this was to eradicate any restrictions on US corporations. Their primary focus on was to eradicate unions in the workplace, or to defang them at least. And they have reduced the rate of unionism in the private sector to about 6.6 Per cent, approximately the same level in 1900.

Accordingly, to refer to "neo-liberal" globalization, as some do, we should limit it only to the top-down layer of globalization.

Building off this—and mentioning it in the introduction but elaborating in Chapter 1—I confront the issue of imperialism. Using earlier work by Nederveen Pieterse (1989), I present a much more robust understanding of the concept than the Leninist version of imperialism, which is generally used by the left (when it is addressed at all). Nederveen Pieterse starts with the Leninist idea of oppressor-oppressor nations, but goes beyond it, recognizing that some political communities—such as Native Americans in the US and Canada, the Palestinians in Israel, and the Kurds in Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey, as well as indigenous societies around the world—have been absorbed into other political communities. In other words, instead of ignoring these political communities, he includes them

in his understanding, so imperialism now is seen as domination across political community borders, with the stronger dominating the weaker unless the latter acquiesces on its own. Along with expanding the conceptualization thusly, he also recognizes there can be imperialist domination both above and below the nation-state level, such as United Nations troops policing Haitian squatter communities, or labour movements of imperial countries dominating those of developing countries; the latter which theoretically enables the establishment of the concept of "labour imperialism" (see Scipes, 2010a, 2010b, 2012, 2016).

Along with this, he rejects a dichotomy between politics and economics. Nederveen Pieterse recognizes the real issue is which is primary in any particular situation: in one situation, politics might be primary, with economics secondary, and in another, economics might be driving the imperial project, with politics secondary.

And finally, I discuss labour movements. I point out that labour movements need to be disaggregated, and recognized to be multi-faceted and heterogeneous, having multiple visions and approaches, and being chock full of contradictions. There is not one singular labour movement. And thus, when one disaggregates labour, one finds everything from business unions who generally care only about the interests of the dominant members of their union, to unions created by dictators to advance their interests, to unions designed to advance the interests of this political party or that, and yet, there are still a range of unions that want progressive social change, including those that want to change the entire social order and the global political-economic networks in which their country is enmeshed (see Scipes, 2014). The argument is that we need to identify the progressive unions and work with them to advance the interests of labour and other activist groups; they should not be ignored nor automatically written off.

All of this lays the groundwork by Chapter 1 by Kim Scipes, "Multiple Fragments—Strength or Weakness? Theorizing Global Labour Solidarity."

In this first chapter, I focus on three main themes. First, that we need to understand the real intentions of the elites in the US, and particularly that they have been and continue to try to dominate the world. I argue that the elites have developed a global empire, the US Empire, and that the United States is the heartland of the empire. Thus, we must use a robust understanding of imperialism to understand US activities across the world. Accordingly, we need to join with workers and allies around the world against US imperialism to ensure that the United States or no other country can dominate others.

I argue that the money the US elites are channelling to the war department—I refuse to call it "defence"—and its corporate allies is money that cannot be used to improve health care, expand free education, rebuild our infrastructure, address

climate change or meet other desirable social needs of the American people. I argue that Americans must choose whether their governments should continue trying to dominate the world, or to take care of Americans and good people around the globe: we do not have the resources to do both (see Scipes, 2009b).

I point out that labour movements can be key actors in creating social change, but in the United States, labour leaders have failed to mobilize labour to fight for a better world, whether having no way of imagining a better world, no idea of how to respond to the myriad of attacks on the labour movement since the early 1980s, or by conniving with US elites to ensure US domination of the world, basically forsaking the interests of their members. I argue that rank-and-file members as well as staff members and allies need to join together to recreate the US labour movement as a powerful "sword for justice" (in Richard Hyman's words) to fight for workers in the United States as well as workers and their allies around the world.

Second, I discuss solidarity, the traditional weapon of militant workers, and I argue that now we should refer to global labour solidarity instead of the traditional, and very limited, international labour solidarity. (Global labour solidarity seeks to build solidarity with workers around the world, and can be initiated by workers in any part of the world to help workers in any part of the world; international solidarity developed over time to be generally a one way flow of idea of ideas and resources from the stronger labour movements located in the Global North toward those, generally weaker, in the Global South, and these relationships were overwhelmingly clientelistic instead of solidaristic.) I discuss how international labour solidarity began, how there are a number of motivations for creating solidarity, that solidarity can emerge from different levels of domination, and especially discuss the scope of sub-state global labour solidarity, and the different levels of solidarity.

And third, I advance a theory of global labour solidarity that recognizes that this solidarity must be based on mutual respect and support, and which precludes concepts of clientelism, a one-way flow of money and resources, and domination of one labour movement over another. I draw out nine different types of global labour solidarity that has been created over the past 20-30 years, even though most of these efforts are not well known. It shows that much more has been going on than many people can imagine.

From there, attention shifts to Katherine Nastovski's "Worker-to-Worker: A Transformative Model of Solidarity—Lessons from Grassroots International Labor Solidarity in Canada in the 1970s and 1980s." Nastovski has a strong historical understanding of solidarity, but she turns to the work of Rebecca Johns (1998) to help her understand the implications of global labor solidarity. Johns developed the concept of transformative labor solidarity in her article, and Nastovski argues,

"It is this transformative potential, the way solidarity and can be a site for building strength and capacity to resist and for challenging hegemonic ideas and social relations that serve capital, that makes it such an important piece on the left" (Nastovski, 2016: 50).

Nastovski recognizes that not all cross-border solidarity is transformative and, after Johns, she compares this with accomodationist solidarity, which can actively help maintain privileged positions within the global political-economic system. (She dismisses forms of "labour imperialism" as not being even a form of solidarity.) This comparison helps work to illustrate what kind of solidarity is actually transformative.

From there, she describes "international solidarity" as practiced traditionally by Canadian unions. And grassroots international labour solidarity emerged to challenge this "traditional" Canadian labour imperialism, and Nastovski discusses these grassroots efforts:

The work of these activists posed a challenge to the existing international practice within the labor movement, engaging in efforts aimed at member education, mobilization, and action inside and outside the workplace. These included establishing solidarity efforts aimed at combating imperialism (for example, the movements against the war in Vietnam), supporting revolutionary movements, liberation struggles, and fledgling socialist governments (for example, in Nicaragua), as well as encouraging struggles combating internal repression and fascism (for example, in Chile and Guatemala) (Nastovski, 2016: 55).

Key to these efforts was the model they developed: worker-to-worker solidarity. In other words, they focused on building cross-border relationships with other workers. She labels this "grassroots labor internationalism," so as to include the many efforts in the earlier part of the twentieth century, instead of leaving them out as many more recent writings tend to do.

Key here, however, is a focus on "class-struggle" unionism. This "model" sees workers' and unions' struggles as struggles for liberation, far beyond just seeking improved benefits from collective bargaining. Obviously, they don't disdain the struggle for material gains for workers, but they don't limit it to such, either: they want unions to fight for a world where workers and their allies call the shots, not the capitalists.

To theoretically explain the importance of worker-to-worker, class struggle unionism, she turns to the thinking of Antonio Gramsci. Describing his concepts of "war of position" and "war of maneuver"—wars of position "are the battles over ideas that sustain capitalism, whereas wars of maneuver are those aimed at taking political power and transforming economic and social relations" (Nastovski, 2016: 57)—Nastovski argues that counter-hegemonic efforts such as she was describing were part of the wars of position:

These counter-hegemonic practices of the worker-to-worker model, which derive from class struggle models of union action, are what make this model transformative.... This orientation shapes the movements and types of struggles organizers choose to build solidarity with and the transformative impact this model of solidarity has locally via the strategies they employ. Critical to this transformative potential of this model of solidarity is the way it operates to support the goals and strategies of different international struggles that challenge the status quo of the global division of labor (and the particulars of the global socioeconomic status quo based on the legacies of colonialism and both past and existing imperialism) (Nastovski, 2016: 57).

With this theoretical framework now established, Nastovski then discusses some counter-hegemonic practices such as "worker power and direct action," "building relationships," and "anti-imperialism and class struggle." She then tackles some larger issues, discussing issues of class and nation, dependency theory and anti-imperialism, challenging labour imperialism and accomodationist solidarity, as well as worker control of international solidarity, how this resulted in new and revived unions, and openings within the labour movement in general. In short, she argues, "The worker-to-worker model operated as a significant counter-hegemonic force vis-à-vis the dominant context of institutionalized labour internationalism inside Canadian unions" (Nastovski, 2016: 69).

However, she also knows the barriers these efforts hit, and she doesn't shy away from taking a critical look at their weaknesses. There were limits to the counter-hegemonic practices, and limits to sustainability and institutionalization. She points out that "some of the factors continue to shape the conditions in which we organize today, including neoliberalism, uneven capitalist development, and ideological barriers such as white supremacy, racism, patriarchy, and nationalism. Examining practices of grassroots labor internationalism in more depth is critical to thinking through possibilities for transformative forms of worker solidarity and coordination across borders today" (Nastovski 2016: 77).

Katherine Nastovski has shown us how to do serious movement self-reflection and consideration of past practices. It is now time to focus on current efforts that might guide our efforts in the future.

Jenny Jungehülsing shares some preliminary research that is quite intriguing in Chapter 3, "Building Bridges Between the Labour Movement and Transnational Migration Research: What Potential for International Solidarity?" She recognizes the increasing flows of migrants across national borders and recognizes that they are staying in touch with people and organizations in their home country to a much greater and deeper extent than ever before. She wonders if activists could build upon this reality to build greater international labour solidarity...?

The key limitation she recognizes to building real international solidarity is the lack of what she calls felt solidarity between those trying to establish such efforts. She recognizes that most of the solidarity built has been between bureaucratized labour organizations, and that much of the so-called solidarity is really a statement here, a document there, but with no real, on-going human contact over time. She notes, "clearly some sort of shared identity or sense of togetherness is indispensible for stable solidarity relationships, also in the case of unions" (Jungehülsing 2016: 84).

She elaborates:

In practice, while not the only challenge, the lack of a felt solidarity often constitutes a serious obstacle to the formation of stable international solidarity relationships. The lack of a sense of togetherness among workers in different countries often hinders functioning solidarity relationships, as neither union members nor leaders are particularly willing to commit to the continuous support of their partners and assign significant amounts of resources to them (Jungehülsing, 2016: 85).

Recognizing this limitation, Jungehülsing conducted research in local unions of two international unions headquartered in the United States: SEIU (Service Employees International Union) and USW (United Steel Workers). ☐Most specifically, [the research] was conducted at two regional entities of these unions, as it is at the local and regional rather than at the national union level where the role of migrants (as members and low-level staff generally) most likely manifests itself☐ (Jungehülsing 2016: 88). The regions she chose were Region 7 of the USW, which covers the states of Illinois and Indiana, and the California-based United Service Workers of SEIU.

Jungehülsing focused on Mexican and Mexican-descended workers in Northwest Indiana, who were building solidarity with Los Mineros, the Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores Mineros, Metalúrgicos, Siderúgicos y Similares in Mexico, and with Salvadoran members and leaders of the United Service Workers, who had maintained connections with unions and political movements "especially the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberación Nacional" in El Salvador.

The findings—presented in much more detail in her chapter—were interesting. "… migrants' background and transnational identity allow them to establish personal relationships with members of the partner union more easily than their non migrant colleagues, thereby overcoming the notorious lack of personal relationships between workers in different countries" (Jungehülsing, 2016: 93). She claims it is the lower cultural barriers between migrant and those who remained in the home country that facilitated these connections.

She ends this very interesting chapter encouraged but cautious:

Insights from transnationalism and international labour research suggest that in the current era of transnational migration and an increasingly transnational union membership, migrants' transnational identities and social ties to their origin countries can have an impact on the prospects for international labour solidarity. Specifically, this chapter has argued that transnational migration can strengthen a felt solidarity and lend practical meaning to solidarity and thus help overcome one of the major problems in unions' international solidarity relationships.

However, given the exploratory character of this research, the results need to be treated with caution, and further research is needed. The findings in this chapter cannot be taken as grounds for euphoria. Nonetheless, they give some initial insights into the ways in which transnational migration may impact on international labour solidarity and potentially help overcome some of its obstacles (Jungehülsing 2016: 101-102).

From there, we go to Chapter 4, "Labour and Sustainable Development in Latin America: Rebuilding Alliances at a New Crossroads" by Bruno Dobrusin, which focuses our attention even further south. Pointing out that

The transnationalization of the local and national economies in the last three decades has pushed labour movements to increase their efforts in building transnational solidarity as a tool of basic self-defense in a context of advancing ideas and policies. The struggle for workers' rights has been reshaped in this context, and global solidarity became an integral part of building a movement that can challenge neoliberal globalization both at home and abroad (Dobrusin 2016: 103).

Dobrusin reflects on efforts that led to the continental-wide rejection of the 2005 Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), and then uses this understanding to suggest how the "Commodities Consensus" of the mid-2010s could be defeated. (As explained further below, the "Commodities Consensus" is a development "model" based on exporting primary commodities to further-developed countries, and gathering the proceeds to industrialize at home.) While recognizing the importance of international labor solidarity, he adroitly points out, "These two movements in recent Latin American union action are essential to understanding the ways in which regional and global solidarity can look according to different circumstances" (Dobrusin 2016: 103). To do this, he looks at how unions are building alliances with social movements across the continent, sometimes even regenerating themselves.

The struggle against the FTAA was relatively simple: US, Canadian and Mexican capital, and their respective states, sought to extend the neo-liberal 'benefits' of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) to the entire continent.

Alliances were built across the continent among social movements, community organizations, environmental movements and trade unions, and ultimately with the support of progressive governments "such as those headed by Nestor Kirchner in Argentina, Lula da Silva in Brazil and Hugo Chávez in Venezuela" they were able to defeat the FTAA.

The "Commodities Consensus" that emerged afterwards across the Continent grew out of efforts by progressive governments—including those listed above, it has also come to include those headed by Evo Morales in Bolivia and Rafael Correa in Ecuador—to develop their respective country's economic system. Working particularly with corporations from Brazil and China, the strategy was to use the royalties from primary commodities (intensive transgenic agriculture, mining, oil and gas) to redistribute some of the wealth to the poorer sectors of society while developing the economy overall. And this strategy worked during the first decade of implementation, but "it began to be resisted throughout the region once its impacts and limitations became obvious" (Dobrusin 2016: 107).

The question at hand is can an alliance similar to the one developed to defeat the FTAA be developed to defeat the "Commodities Consensus"? It is not a sure bet; Dobrusin discusses some of the issues at hand:

In the debate around the Commodities Consensus, the position of labour is harder to establish for two main reasons: unions are a central component of the structures supporting left administrations; and the environmental discussion places labour in a defensive mode, due to the presence of strong unions in the so-called dirty industries. Building transnational solidarity and cross-sectoral alliance has therefore become a challenging action, but one that can be achieved if certain conditions are met—chiefly, the return of social-movement unionism to its roots as a radical conception of labour movements, and the retrenchment from a government-dependent mobilization strategy (Dobrusin 2016: 107).

This article is a very in-depth examination of the forces and alliances that developed in the struggle against the FTAA, asking if similar alliances can be re-established in this new struggle. Interestingly, a new force on the continent is the formation of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA) in 2007, a continent-wide alliance of labour organizations that joins unions from previously-competing organizations and some that had previously refused to join any organization. Not only is this a new development, but it also influences the power dynamics within TUCA:

Unions that had been active in the struggle against neoliberalism and free trade were now integrated into a single organization, managing to reorder the direction of the main labour movement at the continental level. In terms of the Commodities Consensus struggle, what this has meant is that TUCA can now play a leading role

in re-creating a decades-old alliance, especially around the issues of development and sustainability. [TUCA] represents the only regional labour confederation in the world ... with the capacity to produce massive mobilization around issues that go beyond specific workers' demands. The associational capacity is an asset that is increasingly being incorporated into TUCA's strategies (Dobrusin 2016: 116-117).

And Dobrusin sees the trade unions and their multiple alliances with organizations across the continent as being central to the struggle in Latin America. From Latin America, attention shifts to Bangladesh. In Chapter 5, Timothy Ryan's "It Takes More Than a Village: A Case Study of Worker Solidarity in Bangladesh" focuses on the AFL-CIO's Solidarity Centre and its work in that country; work that Ryan, as Asian Regional Director of the Solidarity Centre, over sees. In a country where the people are very poor, and where the government has tied its shirttail to a single industry—the global garments industry—and which is the second largest garment exporter in the world (behind only China), the Solidarity Centre has been trying to support union organizing for decades.

Ryan illustrates the need for vibrant unionism at the beginning of his chapter: he describes the Tazreen Fashions factory fire in 2012, where 112 workers died. He then notes, "Since the Tazreen blaze, the Solidarity Center's Dhaka office has documented seventy fire-related incidents (including false alarms) in which at least fifty people have died and more than nine hundred women and men have been injured" (Ryan, 2016: 123). He argues that had these workers been members of a union, and had protested worsening working conditions, many of them would still be alive.

Ryan puts the workers' situation in Bangladesh in a historical context, starting under British imperialism. An important factor today is that many unions in that country are controlled by political parties that grew out of the struggle against the British, and which still put their party's interest ahead of their union members'.

The Solidarity Centre has been trying to enhance union organizing in that country, by providing technical training to independent unions in that country. (For another view of this, see Rahman and Langford, 2014.) Ryan contextualizes the struggle by pointing out the importance of external leverage, opportunism (in the "good sense," trying to take advantage of unexpected situations), and their long-term presence in the country, which he argues breeds established relationships. (And one thing the Solidarity Centre has done very well is insisting on developing women's leadership in the unions.)

Ryan suggests that, in his extensive experience, labour organizing in Asia is a slow process, requiring time and dedication. In an interesting application, he compares the processes by which companies' and governments' accept trade unionism to be similar to the "stages of dying" explicated by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

in her 1969 book, On Death and Dying: denial ("we don't have a problem); rage (this isn't fair!); bargaining (let's make a deal, while drawing these processes out longer); depression (oh, nothing can be worked out); and ultimately, acceptance (it's going to be ok). He uses this framework to talk about trade relations and labour organizing across Asia.

Ultimately, he argues that garment workers in Bangladesh are trying to develop a new approach to labor organizing in that country: "The unions organizing in Bangladesh today have used the political space created by the controversy [over workers' deaths-KS], the public shaming, the trade pressure itself, the governments' and brands' reactions, to push forward an active and aggressive organizing agenda" (Ryan 2016: 137). The big question on the table now, however, is whether the Bangladeshi government, companies, multinational suppliers, and brands will accept this or not.

Still focusing on Asia, attention shifts from Bangladesh to the Philippines, as I included my 2014 article—"Building Global Labour Solidarity Today: Learning from the KMU of the Philippines"—in this collection. Based on research spanning over 30 years, I argue the KMU Labour Centre is one of the most dynamic and developed labour organizations in the world (see Scipes 1996). In a country with little industry, KMU members have organized in what industry there is, as well as on agricultural plantations, in mines, breweries, department stores, as well as developed innovative organizing among transportation workers. They have survived since 1980, when the KMU was founded during the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos, and have withstood tremendous repression, including the arrest and imprisonment of 69 leaders across the country in 1982, the brutal assassination of their national chairperson in 1986, and many, many arrests with much torture and/or killing.

Despite this, they have developed a new type of trade unionism—social movement unionism—which is comparable to that developed in Brazil and South Africa in earlier days (and qualitatively different from the unionism given this name in North America—see Scipes, 2014): they recognize that to change conditions on the shop floor, that they must challenge the entire social order and the global political-economic networks in which their country is enmeshed (i.e., imperialism).

As I explicate, the KMU has developed organizationally several approaches that have been crucial to their very survival in my opinion. They have combined the traditional "vertical" organizational structure of national federations (and comparable to organization in North America) with creative "horizontal" organization structures that they call "alliances" at the geographic, industrial and conglomerate levels. The alliances allow them to educate unions' and allied organizations' members, to protect against repression, and to provide support

for their particular struggles, whether national political battles or individual local unions' collective bargaining efforts. They have established a detailed educational program, and have made sure to provide every member—not just shop stewards or leaders—the basic level of education. They have built strong connections with other sectoral organizations, such as peasants, women's, students, urban poor and youth organization: the epitome of this organization has been what is called the welga ng bayan or "people's strike." This begins with a general strike, but goes far beyond it: once launched, it includes shutting down all businesses and governmental offices in the affected area, fishing folks refusing to go to sea, and roads and streets being blockaded, so people can only pass after talking with the strikers and learning about their issues. In an archipelagic country, they have been able to launch several of these historically, although it's been a while since they could do this.

And combined with all of this, KMU consciously builds global labour solidarity. As part of a larger, six-part program (see Scipes, 2000a), they have developed what they call the "International Solidarity Affair" or ISA, and they've held this every year since 1984. They invite workers and labour leaders to travel to the Philippines, and experience the conditions of Filipino workers. While the program begins with formal events in Manila, the heart of the program is taking visitors out to the provinces to meet with workers, visit picket lines, talk with families, etc. This way, one gets to see the situations they face, learn from them, and then think about the unionism back at home (for a report on the 2015 ISA, see Scipes 2015.)

I suggest there is a lot to be learned from the KMU's experiences.

With that, we come back to North America for Chapter 7, David Bacon's "Building a Culture of Solidarity Across the US-Mexico Border." Bacon is a working journalist who has covered workers' struggles along the border, as well as in California and Mexico for decades, and here he shares his thinking about developments since the passage of NAFTA in 1994. He writes,

The growth of cross-border solidarity today is taking place at a time when US penetration of Mexico is growing—economically, politically, and militarily. While the relationship between the United States and Mexico has its own special characteristics, it is also part of a global system of production, distribution, and consumption. It is not just a bilateral relationship.

Jobs go from the United States and Canada to Mexico in order to cut labour costs. But from Mexico, those same jobs go to China or Bangladesh or dozens of other countries where labour costs are even lower (Bacon 2016: 154).

Bacon explains the changes for Mexican labour. It used to be included as an important sector under the governing PRI (Partido Revolucionario Institucional), but that changed after the 2000 victory of the PAN (Partido Acción Nacional): the

old corporatist system had fallen apart, and co-optation of labour was no longer deemed necessary. It continues today even under the resurgent PRI.

Bacon goes back to the struggle against NAFTA (North American Free Trade Act) in the early 1990s. The major Mexican labour centres lined up behind their government and supported NAFTA, and so unions in the US that had decided to oppose it had no one to ally with. They had to start building solidarity with smaller labour centres, such as the FAT (Frente Auténtico del Trabajo), and had to try to develop contacts with workers' support centres around the border; a key development was the creation of the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras (see Vogel, 2006). Bacon writes about the learning process of organizers:

> The worker rebellion at the huge Sony factory was the first major battle under NAFTA, and the first place where the false promises of its labour side agreement became obvious. Hundreds of workers were beaten in front on the plant in 1993 when they ran candidates in their CTM union's election. When that door was closed, they tried to form an independent union and were blocked by the company and the Mexican government in 1994, the year when NAFTA went into effect. The treaty contained a side agreement, the North American Agreement on Labour Cooperation, that backers of the treaty promised would provide a means for workers and unions to enforce labour rights. In a ritual that would be repeated over the next two decades, however, workers and unions in the United States, Mexico and Canada filed charges that Mexico was violating its own labour law in preventing workers from organizing independent unions, but after a series of hearings, the only available remedy was a series of discussions with Mexican government representatives that produced no results on the ground (Bacon 2016: 158).

Afterwards, Bacon then discusses the growing ties between US and Mexican labour—with a good overview of a number of struggles along the border—and writes about efforts to build support for struggles of workers along the border. He reports it has taken a while for US unions to recognize the importance of these struggles but, slowly, they are coming to better understand these situations.

Bacon then addresses the issue of immigration. He argues that US unions need to educate their members about what is happening in Mexico—and especially the labour repression—so they see Mexicans coming to the US not as people trying to "steal" their jobs, but as people who are trying to survive and support their families, and who are a potential source of support, experience and determination, who can help build the labour movement in their new country. Bacon argues that some of these immigrants have decades of experience as labour organizers in Mexico, and need to be recognized for the resources they are. He also reports of some of the efforts to overcome the distrust, efforts to try to build solidarity across the US-Mexico border.

And finally, we reach Michael Zweig's chapter 8, "Working for Global Justice in the New US Labour Movement." He starts by discussing the September 2013 national convention of the AFL-CIO in Los Angeles.

Zweig, a national co-convener of US Labour against War (USLAW), uses his wealth of experience to both report changes in the AFL-CIO's domestic work, and then to suggest that these experiences can be learned from so as to change its international work. He starts from the 1995 election of John Sweeney to the presidency of the AFL-CIO, leading to acceptance of immigrants into the "House of Labour" and then to recognizing the need to build much stronger ties with community organizations across the country.

At the same time that the AFL-CIO recognizes that it needs to build stronger connections at home, Zweig reports some of the changes taking place in its international work. To understand this, however, it must be placed within its historical context. Using works such as Sims (1992), Buhle (1999) and Scipes (2010a), he discusses some of this work. He argues that changes start with Sweeney, and especially with the disbanding of the AFL-CIO's semi-autonomous regional organizations such as AIFLD (American Institute for Free Labour Development—its Latin American operation) and AAFLI (Asian American Free Labour Institute) in Asia, and replacing them with the Solidarity Centre in 1997.

He particularly notes the help the Solidarity Centre has given USLAW in facilitating its solidarity work with unions of Iraq, even during the war. (He also notes, in a footnote, that "the Solidarity Centre and the AFL-CIO gave support to opponents of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez at the time of the short-lived coup against him in 2002….)

He talks about changes taking place within the union movement, such as efforts and resolutions passed against the war in Iraq, and then ultimately, to challenge the US's militarized foreign policy. (He notes that many labour leaders today came of age during the Vietnam War, as well as during the wars in Central America during the 1980s, and are not as trusting of the US Government as many of their predecessors were.) He states that union leaders are increasingly becoming aware that we live in a global economy, which is one—instead of one for the developing countries, and still another for the developed countries. He sees the development of new priorities, moving from a militarized economy to one that provides jobs and high tech skills for workers.

Conversion of military to civilian production is only one example of the more general transition required to create a just and sustainable economy. We need conversion from fossil fuel to renewable energy; from low-wage contingent jobs to secure, well-paying employment; from hyper individualism to mutual regard; from strangled governments serving the needs of their corporate strategists to democratic governments attending the needs of all people; and from an economy that funnels wealth to the very top to one that share prosperity. All these elements of transition reflect and bolster one another. All require the concentrated attention and political mobilization of working people (Zweig 2016: 189).

Building off of comments about USLAW's work with Iraqi trade unions, Zweig talks about the development of solidarity between US unions and others in different counties. He then notes, "All of these examples indicate a significant potential for the development of a coherent labour foreign policy that promotes global justice" (Zweig 2016: 192).

In short, Zweig sees the emergence of a new union culture in this country, and argues that labour must develop a strategic vision that addresses all of these aspects. He points out the need for labour leadership to develop a broader vision of labour's agenda; the need to actively educate union members; and the need to reform unions internally so as to encourage "bottom-up member activity and the democratic norms that allow for member initiatives" (Zweig 2016: 193-194).

Importantly, however, Zweig recognizes the central role of labour's foreign policy: "Redefining labour's foreign policy must be integral to the reorientation of the labour movement as a whole." And he argues the time is now: "The context, history and institutional capacity for this purpose are at hand" (Zweig 2016: 197).

With this, we come to the end of this account. What I hope I've been able to convey is that there are some important activities and good thinking taking place among labour activists today, in the US and in countries around the world. I hope, through this process, I've encouraged those outside of the labour movement to recognize the important work being done, while encouraging activists to go further.

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The last name of the author and the year of publication are inserted in the text at the appropriate point. For example,

There is a view, however, that the agreement is, in fact, a continuation of the process of the last few decades (Bajpai 2005).

If the name of the author or the date appear as part of the narrative, cite only missing information in parentheses. For example,

Writing on a hypothetical possibility of India threatening to proliferate, Perkovich (2005) writes, "…..China proliferated to Pakistan and Pakistan proliferated to Libya, Iran, and North Korea. Nor does proliferation that occurred before the NPT was negotiated justify promiscuous proliferation behaviour today."

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When a work has two authors, always cite both names every time the reference occurs in the text. In parenthetical material join the names with "&". For example,   as has been shown (Vanaik & Bidwai 1989)

In the narrative text, join the names with the word "and."

as Vanaik and Bidwai (1989)demonstrated

When a work has three, four, or five authors, cite all authors the first time the reference occurs. For example,

Srinivasan, Grover, and Bhardwaj (2005) found

In all subsequent citations per paragraph, include only the surname of the first author followed by "et al." and the year of publication.

Srinivasan et al. (2005) found

Works by Organisations, Government Agencies, etc.

The names of agencies/organisations that serve as authors (corporate authors) are usually written out first time they appear in a text reference as follows:

(World Trade Organisation (WTO) 2006)

When appropriate, the names of some such authors are spelled out in the first reference and abbreviated in all subsequent citations. The general rule for abbreviating in this manner is to supply enough information in the text citation for a reader to locate its source in the Bibliography/References without difficulty.

(WTO 2006)

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When a work has no author, use the first two or three words of the work's title (omitting any initial articles) as your text reference, capitalizing each word.

Encyclopaedia Britannica (2007)

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(Srinivasan, Grover & Bhardwaj 2005: 5183-88)

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