# Crossing Conceptual Boundaries VII

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Articles

# 24hour nurseries: the never-ending story of care and work

Camille Barbagallo

> 'Childcare' has the ring of something closed-off, finished, which some people - mostly mothers - know all too much about, and from which other people shy prudently away.
>
> Denise Riley, *The Serious Burdens of Love?* (1983a)

In June 2012 the Russell Hill Road Day Nursery in Purley opened its doors, registered to provide care for 56 children from six months to five years old. However, unlike other childcare settings, Russell Hill is registered to provide overnight care for up to 12 children per night (Morton, 2012). The nursery's overnight services run from 7pm-7am, which in effect means that the nursery provides 24-hour childcare. For those familiar with the history of British feminism and the demands of the Women's Liberation Movement in the early 1970s, the news that 24-hour childcare is finally available, nearly 40 years after feminists first raised the demand, could be noted as yet another 'win' for the feminist movement. In many ways, the availability of 24-hour childcare is testament to the significant impact that feminism has had: we have, as is often claimed, 'come a long way'. At the same time, the provision of 24-hour childcare delivered via the ever-growing privatised for-profit care market, points to complex contradictions at play in what appear as choices, but are often experienced as less than ideal solutions for working parents, and in particular working mothers. These tensions are at the centre of this chapter, which tells a story, in three parts, detailing how both feminism and neo-liberalism have reconfigured the practices and processes of caring for children as well as the organisation of work and family.

The story begins at the 24-hour nursery and asks why would any parent want or, probably more accurately, need a 24-hour nursery. The increasing necessity for 24-hour care disrupts the notion of choice that is often implied in childcare provision that provides 'flexibility'. This is because when the operation of choice is structured within the context of wage dependency, the only 'real' choice becomes work. It seems relatively uncontroversial to posit that 24-hour childcare speaks to the ever-increasing reality of women's waged work under neo-liberalism. Within parents' need for 24-hour childcare, we find that the wage has saturated ever more aspects of life, seeping into all hours of the day and night, under conditions that are ever more precarious, often for low wages, and in low status jobs.

The second part of the story also begins at the 24-hour nursery, not as a childcare service, but as the echo of a demand made four decades ago. The four original demands of the Women's Liberation Movement were; Equal pay, Equal educational and job opportunities, Free contraception and abortion on demand, and Free 24-hour nurseries (Sisterhood and After). In the second part of the story told here, there is an echo in which we can hear the chants of the Women's Liberation Movement, as well as the long discussions about childcare as central to the struggle for women's economic and social autonomy, and the drafting of working papers about the family and capitalism. What context produced this demand and who drafted it? What has been lost in the passage from its articulation – when the demand was for free, state provision of 24h childcare – to now?

The third part of the story takes place in the aftermath, at a nexus from which to examine the conflicts that emerge at the intersection of neo-liberalism and feminism. As Wendy Brown (2003) stresses actually existing neoliberalism is a far cry from the infamous *laissez faire* ideas that animated classical liberalism. Neoliberalism is usefully conceived of as a constructivist project (Gilbert, 2013), one in which the market functions as the model of all social relations extending beyond the economic to include also the political and social functioning of the state. The market exceeds the economy: the role of political and economic action is to extend and disseminate 'market values to all institutions and social action' (Brown, 2003:7).

The gap between the historical desire for and current necessity of never-ending childcare speaks to some of the gendered conflicts that are at play within neo-liberalism and to a moment when feminism, and specifically liberal feminism, has reached an impasse. On the one hand women's increased access to waged work has produced significant and sustained transformations in gender relations, not only in relation to women's financial autonomy from men but also in the possibilities for women's subjectivities. However, women's access to decent, well-paid and meaningful waged work has been highly uneven, and has in fact reproduced and reinforced hierarchies of race and class. These divisions between women, whilst not new, have only deepened during the last forty years of neo-liberal governance. They present a real problem for contemporary feminist politics, which, on the one hand, seeks to continue and extend the gains that women's movements have made in the terrain of work, while at the same time, attend to the terrain of the family and the politics of reproduction. Whilst some women may be able to 'have it all', it is clear that this is not an option available to the majority of women.

Through investigating the feminist demand for 24-hour childcare and the current provision of such care via the privatised childcare sector we are able to grasp some of the gendered and racialised dynamics of neo-liberalism, specifically the continued tensions between women's long fought for desire for economic independence, the realities of waged work, and the gendered characteristics of care. These tensions also reveal a process of co-option, in that the original demand for 24-hour childcare was for community controlled and state funded care. However the emergence of 24-hour childcare has moved in a different direction, in that it has been developed via the privatized childcare sector where individual parents pay for the costs of care. Within the context of the privatization of care, 24-hour childcare has been stripped of its previously imagined radical potential to undo the sexual division of labour. Having been emptied of its utopian desires it is useful to consider what feminist potential remains within 24-hour

childcare, to locate the discussion of childcare within broader discussions of social reproduction and to explore 'the dual characteristics of reproduction' (Federici, 2012b). In doing so we are able to conceive of the work of making and remaking people as one that produces the most important commodity of all - labour power, while *at the same time* it reproduces life and has the potential to undermine the smooth flow of accumulation of profit, by producing autonomous subjects who can and do resist the rule of capitalism

## Part I – Home and Work

> The relationship of capitalism to the family is contradictory: it tends both to destroy it and maintain it – Irene Bruegel (1978) *What Keeps the Family Going?*

So, why would any parent want or need 24-hour childcare? In media reports at the time of the opening of Russell Hill Road Nursery, the owner Natalie Salawa explains that her motivation for providing 24-hour childcare came about after parents in the area who work shifts and weekends expressed the need for extended hours (Morton, 2012). In another media article parents' need for flexibility was again stressed 'it is not just single parents and shift workers who need the £53.52-a-night service in today's 24-hour work culture' (Croydon Advertiser, 2012) the nursery owner continues, '[w]e also have couples who are perhaps bankers and lawyers and one is working away and the other is on a case – it gives them that flexibility'(Croydon Advertiser, 2012).

Leaving aside the question of whether middle-class professional couples would use a 24-hour nursery as opposed to the services of a domestic servant, nanny or *au pair*, a common feature that emerges is the question of extended and atypical work hours. In responding to parents' requests for extended childcare, the provision of 24-hour care at Russell Hill confirms the statistics: the UK has the highest rates of atypical working in Europe and UK-specific research demonstrates that there are very high levels of atypical working conditions among parents (Lyonette, 2011). Put simply, working atypical hours is now more common in the general population than working a standard 9 to 5, Monday to Friday week, (Statham and Mooney, 2003). A 2002 study by La Valle et al., using information from over 5000 randomly selected households with children, found that 53 per cent of employed mothers frequently work atypical works, compared to 20 per cent who do occasional atypical work and only 27 per cent who don't work atypical hours. For employed fathers, 79 per cent frequently work atypical hours, 14 per cent do occasionally and 7 per cent never do so. The combined working patterns of couples showed that in 43 per cent of dual-earner households both parent frequently work atypical hours. In just 12 per cent of dual-earner households neither parent works atypical hours.

It is not just that workers are now working different hours, in 2015 73.3 per cent of people in Britain aged between 16-65 were in work; the highest rate of employment since comparable records began in 1971 (ONS, 2015). Of the nearly three-quarters of the adult population who are in work, 78.1 per cent of men were in work, together with 68.5 per cent of women. The statistics of female rates of employment, like those of overall employment rates were the highest rates since comparable records began in 1971. The dramatic increases in female employment has been largely driven by increases in women with dependent children entering the workforce, so much so that the employment rate of

women with dependent children (69.6 per cent) was slightly higher in 2014 than the rate for women without children (67.5 per cent).

The scale of the transformation can be grasped in comparing mothers' employment rates; the 1961 Census shows that only 12 per cent of women with preschool children were working, a number that has jumped to nearly 70 per cent five decades later. Jane Lewis (2008) argues that childcare has become a more pressing policy issue for governments due to rapid and dramatic changes to households, with families increasingly comprised of and dependent on 1.5 earners (one full-time and one part-time wage) or two full-time earners. The phenomena of 'dual earning' households, in which all adults are in work is no longer an emerging trend; rather it is the overwhelming reality for families in Britain (Dex, 2003). In 2014, the number of families in which all adults were working for wages reached 55.3 per cent, compared to the 28.8 per cent of families that the Office of National Statistics classifies as 'mixed households' where one adult member works for wages and the other does not (ONS, 2014). The remaining 15.9 per cent of families are households in which no adult is in waged work.

With atypical working hours fast becoming the norm for many parents, it is unsurprising that Russell Hill is not alone in providing 24-hour childcare. Reporting on a new service established by Brent Council in 2014, Zoe Williams highlights the changes to employment, specifically that work is

> less secure, contracts are zero hours, people are taking part-time jobs not because they're more convenient but because they can't get full-time work. This is what's driving unusual hours, the sheer precariousness that leaves parents unable to set terms' (Williams, 2014).

The difficulties that dual earning and lone parent households are currently facing in the new 'flexible' and 'atypical' labour markets has been highlighted, especially in relation to the implications for the care of children and effects on family life (Rutter and Evans, 2012; La Valle et al., 2002; Barnes et al., 2006). Some of the common issues faced by parents working atypical hours include: not being available to eat evening meals together (59per cent of mothers who frequently worked at atypical times said that their job prevented them from sharing an evening meal with the rest of the family), not being available to go on family holidays and other activities such as reading and playing with children and helping with homework, nor being able to take children to after-school, sport activities or visiting family and friends (La Valle et al., 2002).

La Valle et al. (2002) argue that whilst there is no agreed definition of what constitutes atypical working hours, particularly as work outside the standard Monday to Friday, 9 to 5 week has become increasingly common, their study adopted a definition of atypical work as 'work at the weekend and work during the week before 8.30am and after 5.30pm' (p. 3). Barnes et al., (2006) also point to a number of issues that arise in attempts to define what is considered 'normal' and 'atypical', however their research also posits work at atypical times is now the norm rather than the exception. The problem of choice also emerges in relation to 'flexible' and atypical work. The research by La Valle et al., (2002) shows that a large majority of mothers (75 per cent) said that atypical hours were a requirement of their job, rather than a choice and a majority of mothers working atypical hours said they would prefer to work different hours (2002:15). Lone mothers were more likely than mothers in a couple to say that their working hours were a requirement of

their job (83per cent and 73per cent respectively). The image that emerges from flexible and extended childcare services is one of working mothers increasingly needing childcare services during times of the day and night which previously would be have been considered 'family time' or at times of the evening when many workers are in fact, or should be, asleep.

It is useful to consider that in Britain, women's increased participation in waged work has occurred alongside other significant social changes such as changes to divorce laws, access to contraception and abortion and shifts in the social stigma associated with co-habitation and single parenthood (Thane and Evans, 2013). From this perspective it is possible to generalise that more people, particularly more women, now have more choice, freedom and opportunities in respect to relationships, reproduction and – perhaps in more limited ways - the kind of contributions they make to families (Lewis, 2006).

However, women's increased access to waged work, rising sharply in the UK from the 1970s and hence tracking the emergence and rise of neo-liberalism has occurred alongside considerable transformation in the role of the state, as well as a reconfiguration of how publicly funded social services such as education, care, health and welfare are delivered and funded. However, it is not that the state has disappeared or even that the welfare state has 'withered away' (Timmins, 2001).

The changes that have occurred to labour and gender relations to meet the demands of an increasingly 24-hour economy and the corresponding increase in atypical hours have produced profound reconfigurations in how families structure their working patterns and care responsibility (Lewis, 2008; 2013). However, in highlighting these transformations, specifically families increasing reliance on formal and institutional childcare provision, it is also equally important to note the things that have not changed. In that the centrality of the family and informal care provided by immediate and extended family members continues to dominate care arrangements in Britain. Research has shown that parents who work at atypical times generally rely on partners/ ex-partners or grandparents to meet their childcare needs (La Valle et al, 2002; Woodland et al, 2002). In fact, both among two-parent and lone-parent working households, irrespective of hours worked, families more often use grandparents for childcare than other types of formal or informal provision (Woodland et al., 2002:33).

The relatively high cost of formalised childcare, especially care provided outside of 'normal' hours is certainly one of the considerations that informs families care arrangement. In some ways the 'rational' choice of seeking the cheapest option for childcare, which in Britain is facilitated overwhelmingly by grandparents, in particular by grandmothers (Grandparents Plus Report, 2009) follows the neo-liberal suggestion to undertake decision-making using a cost benefit analysis. To be sure, many families do choose this option, with grandparents providing the largest source of childcare in Britain after parents themselves. Furthermore, the value of the childcare care provided by grandparents is estimated at over £3.9billion per year (Grandparents Plus Report, 2009). However, it's important to also draw out that alongside the economic benefits of the 'free' childcare provided within the family, there is a reaffirmation of care provided for within the family and also of traditional gendered role for women, in this instance of grandmothers in providing care.

Women's increased employment contextualised within the emergence of neo-liberalism can then be further understood in so far as the progressive aspects of women's increased access to wages have in many instances been undermined by a deepening of women's dependence on work outside the home, in conditions of increasing precarity that leave many parents, particularly mothers unable to 'set [the] terms' (Williams, 2014) of their employment. The contradictory relationship between desires for financial autonomy and women's dependency on the wage are further complicated by the reduction in male employment, particularly the destruction of the 'family' wage that had once been sufficient to support working class families (Gill and Scharff, 2011).

Beginning in the late 1960s, long-term and uneven economic, legal and political reforms and reconfigurations occurred which have increasingly shifted the British economy to one based primarily on knowledge, finance and services and away from an economy based on manufacturing production (Harvey, 2006; McDowell, 2013). Alongside new job creation in high-skill, high-wage professional and managerial occupations, the last two decades in the UK has also seen a reduction in middle-wage occupations and the growth of lower wage service occupations, a trend towards the polarisation of the economy into high quality and low quality jobs (Goos and Manning, 2003). Sissons identifies the trend as 'a gradual hollowing-out of the labour market' (2011:4).

The process of labour market change from manufacturing to knowledge and service industry jobs has not been gender neutral, with female employment growth in professional occupations and strong growth in personal service occupations (Sissons, 2011). The trend of polarisation towards 'lousy and lovely jobs' (Goos and Manning, 2003) has developed alongside transformations in household earnings, with families increasingly dependent on two earners. In this sense, women's waged work is a way that the family has absorbed the deindustrialisation and decline in male wages (Hochschild and Machung, 2003). Lewis notes that 'women have changed the nature of the contribution that they make to the household considerably by increasing their employment rate and hours of work, but men have not increased their hours of childcare and housework to compensate (2008:499).

What these statistics indicate is that beyond the now common observation that more women are working for wages, is that the so-called 'traditional' male earning and female caring household contributions that men and women were expected to make to families have changed dramatically and these changes have impacted on the organisation of work that takes place within households. While some domestic arrangements have emerged when both men and women are working for wages, including more equitable distribution of household tasks or the contracting out undesirable household work to service industry, overwhelmingly the division of domestic and care work remains 'women's work' both inside (Hochschild and Machung, 2003) and outside (Anderson, 2000) the home.

It is useful to note that the much celebrated traditional family model never completely matched social reality: significant numbers of women have always worked for wages, lone parents, mainly lone mothers have raised children and men could not always be relied upon to provide for their families (Thane and Evans, 2013). Lewis (2001) argues that rather than being generalised historical formation, there were specific historical periods in some countries and for some social classes for which the traditional male earning / female caring model held more true: for example for many families in the

middle and working classes in the years following the Second World War in most Western countries. The post-war period was, as Thane and Evans (2013) argue a historically unusual time of near universal marriage, with average marriage ages exceptionally low. However, they make the point that this supposed 'golden age' only lasted until the 1970s when divorce and cohabitation rose dramatically.

Theories of post-colonial and black feminists (Collins, 2000; Mohanty, 2004; Davis, 1983) have consistently argued against the use of gender as a primary lens through which to make sense of women's lives and for an intersectional framework. While it is useful to think of the emergence of 24-hour childcare in Britain as having been produced by and at the same time as producing significant transformations to gender relations, such transformations have been uneven and even at times contradictory. One of the reasons for this is that transformations of gender relations have intersected with changes to how class and race are experienced and structured. An engagement with these tensions requires interrogating both the racialisation and class dynamics that have structured and been structured by profound changes to the labour market.

Lone parents, of whom 92 per cent are lone mothers (ONS, 2012a), women of colour and migrant workers, continue to be disproportionately represented in the 'lousy jobs' category, mostly in the service sector with low wages, precarious employment contracts, and without union involvement (Wills et al., 2010). The concentration of lone mothers in low-paid precarious employment has profound and structural implications, considering that 26 per cent of households with dependent children are lone parent families (ONS, 2012a) and that the poverty rate for children in lone parent families where the parent works part-time is 30 per cent, and 22 per cent where the parent works full-time.

In answering the question of which parents need 24hour childcare, it is primarily dual-earning and lone mother households, increasingly working atypical hours that need flexible and extended hours of childcare. There is nothing particularly new about men working non-standard hours. As Lyonette (2011) argues, atypical working hours were relatively invisible as a problem when the male breadwinner / female unwaged carer model was the dominant form of organisation of gender and labour. In so far as combining work and care has always proved to be a challenge, at times one that is insurmountable for lone mothers (Thane and Evans, 2013), for many so called 'traditional' households, the organisation of labour both outside and inside the home meant that one parent, usually the mother, was available for childcare. It is the shift to dual-earner households, with sharp increases in maternal employment that has precipitated an increase in the provision for atypical - and increasingly 24-hr - child-care. Furthermore the increasing need for never-ending childcare points to a landscape, that is, after nearly forty years of neo-liberal dominance saturated with work (Gershuny, 2000). The ability of work to seep into literally every hour of the day and night and for the market to organise so many of our interactions, exchanges and activities has been structured by transformations in where and who does the work of making and remaking people and specifically who does the work of childcare. Of course, the relationship between gender, employment and care has a long history, however forty years ago the articulation of 24-hour childcare was one that gestured toward a utopian feminist future.

**Part II - Back to the future and the demand for 24hour nurseries**

'Kids are a full time job? No, but they can stop you getting one' – Working Women's Charter poster (1976)

The Women's Weekend held at Ruskin College in February 1970 was initially intended to be a women's history conference, but when almost 600 women expressed a desire to attend, it was adapted to address women's issues more broadly (Sisterhood and After). This first national gathering of the emerging Women's Liberation Movement became 'an opportunity for women concerned about women's oppression in this society to come together to discuss their common situation'(Conference document, 1970). Between 1970 and 1978 there were eight national Women's Liberation Movement conferences. At the first gathering at Ruskin four demands were discussed. These demands were passed at a subsequent national conference held in Skegness in 1971. The demands were; Equal pay, Equal educational and job opportunities, Free contraception and abortion on demand, and Free 24-hour nurseries (Sisterhood and After)[1].

In the first edition of *Red Rag (1973)*, a socialist feminist magazine produced by participants of and for the Women's Liberation Movement, Florence Keyworth writes that the four original demands were

> the things women must have if they are to take hold of their own lives and develop as independent human beings instead of being prisoners of the family and half-pay wages slaves - pushed into unskilled jobs and forced to stay in them' (1973:3).

It is the fourth demand, that of free 24-hour nurseries that animates this chapter. To understand how 24hour childcare became one of the original demands of women's movement it is necessary to both situate the demand within a wider analysis of the post-war family and women's confinement to the domestic sphere and also to consider the context in which the demand was made and who it was that was demanding 24hour childcare.

To do so it is necessary to delve a little further back, into post-war Britain. That is, to look to an era when many of the women who were to become active in the Women's Liberation Movement were still being cared for at home by their mothers. Pat Thane (2011) makes the important point that it was not common for children of *any* class to be looked after exclusively by their mothers until after the Second World War. Not only is there nothing natural or essential about intensive full-time mothering, it does not have a particularly long history. In 1953, John Bowlby published *Child Care and the Growth of Love (1953)*. The book is credited with having created the phenomena known as 'Bowlbyism', synonymous in the post-war period with the promotion of the centrality of the mother-child relationship and with 'keeping mothers in the home' (Riley, 1983b:100). The book was highly influential and widely read with the first edition published in 1953

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[1] In later years three further demands were added: Legal and financial independence for all women (Edinburgh, 1974): The right to a self-defined sexuality. An end to discrimination against lesbians (Edinburgh, 1974): Freedom for all women from intimidation by the threat or use of violence or sexual coercion regardless of marital status; and an end to the laws, assumptions and institutions which perpetuate male dominance and aggression to women (Birmingham, 1978). At the Birmingham conference, amid some controversy, 'the right to a self-defined sexuality' was split off and added as a preface to all seven demands (Sisterhood and After).

reprinted six times in ten years, and the second edition published in 1965 was reprinted fourteen times.

Jane Lewis goes as far as to argue that in the post-war years Bowlby's ideas of continuous mothering 'seemed to have achieved the status of essential truth' (1992:22). In addition to Bowlby's insistence on the centrality of the mother-child relationship, his work also 'reinforced the view that the two-parent family was the bedrock of a stable society and any deviation should be condemned' (Thane and Evans, 2013:85). In *Working Mothers and Their Children* (1963) Yudkin and Holme argue that 'there can be little doubt that among the major contributing factors to the general disapproval which our society extends to mothers of young children who work outside the home, and the corresponding guilt of the mothers themselves, are the theses of Dr. John Bowlby' (in Comer, 1972:29).

The feminist criticism and critique of Bowlbyism grew throughout the 1960s and 1970s, decades that saw important shifts in behaviour, employment patterns and attitudes. The proportion of extramarital births rose, as did the divorce rates even before the change in law came into effect in 1969. After this, divorce rates dramatically increased, rising from 37,657 petitions for divorce in 1961-5 to 162,481 in 1976-80 (Thane and Evans, 2013:120). From the early 1960s contraception was more easily available, however it was neither free of charge nor available to unmarried women until the Family Planning Act, 1967 (Thane and Evans, 2013).

Many in the Women's Liberation Movement criticised and questioned Bowlby's research methods and analysis, highlighting that the book's findings were based on a report that was a study of institutionalised children and then extrapolated to a generalised theory of care for all children. Feminists raised serious concerns that his theories had led to 'instilling guilt and suffocation in a generation of mothers' (Riley, 1983b:100), and that he denied the independent life of the mother with his exclusive stress on maternal care without taking seriously the question of alternative forms of childcare.

One of the papers *Child-Rearing and Women's Liberation (1970)* presented by Rochelle Wortis at the first Women's Weekend at Ruskin College in 1970 provides a useful insight into the emerging feminist critique of theories of maternal care and the notion that '[w]omen are conditioned to expect that their major responsibility to society and to themselves is as wives and mothers' (Wortis, 1970). Directly connected to the dominance of Bowlbyism, the paper highlights that 'it is popularly assumed that the individual home provides the best environment for raising healthy children' and furthermore that 'the domestication and subordination of women is perpetuated by modern psychology' (Wortis, 1970). The paper argues that no matter how egalitarian society becomes with respect to educational and job opportunities, women's ability to participate in society 'depends on a change in child-rearing practices and in family responsibility' (Wortis, 1970).

Shelia Rowbotham (1989) explains that the idea of the demand for 24hour nurseries was initially gained from the attempts, admittedly unsuccessful attempts to get campaigns for more nursery provision started in the early 1970s. She writes 'the 'campaign' was a non-starter. But we did learn, green as we were, that there was more to it than nursery school' (1989:127). In speaking to mothers Rowbotham reports that a common complaint was that women couldn't go out in the evening and that there was no flexibility in the childcare that was offered. Riley recalls a similar motivation behind the demand, 'the

wish for some unchallengeable flexibility for mothers' (Riley, 1983a:133). Here the desire for time appears not so much as time so as to be able to work but in recognition that mothers, particularly during the Bowlby years of intensive mothering, needed some time off and away from their children.

As much as the demand for 24hour nurseries encapsulated desires for flexibility, there is also something quietly dystopian and perhaps deliberately disturbing in its articulation. One can assume that in the 1970s this was even more pronounced as the demand disrupts the economic and social role of women as full-time intensive mothers and housewives that prevailed in the post-war period. In the 1971 edition of *Enough*, the Bristol Women's Liberation Journal, Angela Rodaway articulates a direct criticism of the demand for 24-hour nurseries, asking 'did we really imagine under-fives being delivered at ten [in the evening] and collected at six when women came off shifts? Did we want 24-schools?' (quoted in Rowbotham, 1989:132).

From the outset there was considerable disagreement about how to approach and tackle the question of childcare both within the Women's Liberation Movement and more broadly in trade union campaigns that addressed discrimination against women in employment and pay conditions. Reflecting in *Red Rag* on attempts to initiate a national campaign around the demand for 24-hour nurseries, Valerie Charlton (1975) writes that the 'demand for 24 hour nurseries in common with the other demands was intended to cover the immediate needs of the most hard hit women including women night workers' (1975:6). However she notes that whilst the concept of socialist childcare was crucial for the women's movement, as an isolated demand 'plonked onto an alienating capitalist [system], it created formidable contradictions' (Charlton, 1975). Women's labour-market participation was only starting to slowly increase in the 1960s, and hence 'women outside Women's Liberation frequently argued that all the problems of caring for children in the isolation of their own home were preferable to the daily grind of some rotten job, given that money wasn't the deciding factor' (Charlton, 1975). Charlton argues that one of the problems with the demand was that it was asking for more of what already existed and hence 'had limited appeal for those with a remnant of choice, both in and out of the movement' (Charlton, 1975).

Despite repeated clarifications and the continued attempts by feminist scholars (Riley 1983a, Rowbotham, 1989) to provide considerable evidence to the contrary, the charge of feminism's betrayal and disinterest in motherhood prevails. In part the image of feminism being against motherhood is borne from a profound suspicion of early feminist attempts to unravel the mythologies of motherhood. The nuances and shifts in register, between 'woman' and 'mother' as discursive formations and ideological constructions and that of the materiality of women with diverse and specific care responsibilities are often lost. Women in the early days of the Women's Liberation Movement were indeed critical and loudly dissatisfied with dominant constructions of motherhood, but for them this did not mean that they were attacking women with children; it was motherhood not mothers that was the problem. This conflict with motherhood also points to the tensions and limits present in the aspiration of women's independence. Here the aspiration of independence, as something to be achieved as much for women with children as those without, is caught in tension with the resistant desire for autonomy and ability to exceed the constraints of the role of motherhood. The demand for 24hour nurseries, as clunky and impersonal as it was, managed to capture, to take hold off one of the central contradictions of gender subjectivities under capitalism. The disquiet it produced, from

misunderstandings to downright rejection is testament to the affective dynamics of the demand, in that it takes hold of biological reproduction and explicitly attempts to shift the work of childcare from the realm of the private to a terrain in which the care and responsibility of children is socialised.

Considerably different political perspectives regarding work, motherhood and women's oppression existed within the women's movement and it was around the problem of childcare – what it was, who and what it was for – that some of these tensions emerged. One approach to the question of caring for children, and one that differed from making demands on the state for more or better nursery services, was the establishment of self-managed radical projects, such as the Dartford Park Children's Community Centre which opened in 1972 and was initiated by members of the Camden Women's Group. In *Childrens Community Centre: our experiences of collective childcare* (1974), a booklet of parent's experiences in establishing Dartford Park Children's Community Centre, the authors write that

> The first idea for the Centre came from a group of women in the Women's Liberation Movement, some of whom had worked unsuccessfully on the campaign for 24-hour nurseries and who realised that the only way they would get nursery provision before their own children went to school would be to start their own nursery (booklet, 1974:3)

In addition the authors note that 'examples of the emotionally deprived 'latchkey' child, the child brought up in institutions, are there to convince us that the ideal environment for the emotional stability of a child is one in which the relationship with its mother plays a dominant part' (booklet, 1974:10). A similar booklet, *Out of the Pumpkin Shell* (1975) produced by 'a group of women and men, parents and non-parents in the Women's Liberation playgroup in Birmingham'(1975:1) argues that 'women's identity is ... very bound up with her role as a mother and this makes it very difficult to criticise that role' (1975:3). Pointing to structural implications of constructions of women as always already mothers, they continue that 'this over-intense inter-dependence of the mother and child seems to reflect a family structure which has more to do with the needs of capitalism for unpaid domestic labour, small units of consumption and mobility of labour than it had to do with what is good for the mother, father or child' (ibid).

There was a clear tension. On one hand there was a vision of prefigurative forms of childcare that rejected traditional nurseries 'as hotbeds of sexist ideology and authoritarian organisation' (Charlton, 1975) and imagined childcare that would address the isolation of mothers and challenge the structures of the nuclear family and the sexual division of domestic labour. On the other there was the argument that childcare enabled and was needed for women to choose whether or not to go out to work. During the 1970s the tension between these two approaches persisted and Rowbotham writes that whilst 'in later years they were to merge pragmatically but remained theoretically unresolved' (1989:132). In tracing the connections and discontinuities between the two parts of the story we have heard so far - the feminist demand for 24-hour nurseries and the provision of 24-hour care by the privatised market - the complexity of both the provision and the consumption of care emerges as an issue that needs to be addressed.


**Part III – We've come a long way**

I never wanted to be equal to a wage slave – Silvia Federici (2012a)

To claim that feminism has transformed the everyday lives of families, changed who does what in the home and also produced significant adjustments in the world of work is not to argue that all the demands, desires and dreams of a supposedly unified feminist project have been fulfilled. Far from it. Not only has there never been a central agreed upon notion of what feminism constitutes, but the changes and gains that feminism can lay claim to did not start in the 1960s, but also involved the 'first wave' that included thousands of women and many men active in the late 1800s and early 1900s in the long and bitter struggle for female emancipation and legal reform in Britain (Ramelson, 1967).

To make visible the complexities involved in reproductive labour, particularly in care work, is to note that the work of reproduction involves caring for bodies and relationships; at this most basic definition it involves producing and maintaining people (Glenn, 1992). However the reproduction of people does not occur in a neutral or abstract way. Framed another way, would be to speak of the 'dual characteristics of reproduction' (Federici, 2012b).

To emphasise the duality of reproduction as feminist scholar Silvia Federici (2012b) does, is to draw attention to the tensions and contradictions at the centre of the processes and practices of social reproduction: a tension that is directly related to what reproduction does within capitalism and how it operates. In societies dominated by capitalist social relations, people are reproduced as workers. It is through multiple processes of reproductive labour both within the family, in communities and in institutions like schools, nurseries and the hospital that we are educated, maintained, disciplined and trained as workers. However, the duality of reproduction that Federici (2012) outlines points to a simultaneous moment occurring alongside the production of labour-power. Humans are reproduced not as labourers, but as people whose lives, desires and capabilities exceed the role of worker. People are not reducible to their economic role. People struggle, are involved in conflicts and are capable of resistance. In this way reproductive labour can be said to have two functions: it both maintains capitalism in that it produces the most important commodity of all - labour power, while *at the same time* it reproduces life and has the potential to undermine the smooth flow of accumulation of profit, by producing autonomous subjects who can and do resist the rule of capitalism. The contributions and insights from autonomist Marxist feminist such as Federici (2004; 1975), Dalla Costa (1995; 1975) and Fortunati (1995) regarding the gendered dynamics and characteristics of reproduction under capitalism were initially gained from their involvement in the Women's Liberation Movement and in particular in the Wages for Housework campaign.

Returning to the contemporary provision of 24hour and extended childcare, we find a cluster of care work that has been emptied of its utopian and socialist vision of 'unchallengeable flexibility for mothers' (Riley, 1983a:133). Instead we find that it is mothers who are being required to be ever more flexible, to withstand the demands of working day and night, whilst also having to pay other women to care for their children. Gone too are the desires for prefigurative forms of childcare that would undo much of the nuclear family structure, care that was to be provided free of charge and under community control. Moving in a different direction the contemporary provision of 24hour childcare is and increasingly continues to be provided via the for-profit market. At the same time that the formalised childcare sector has increased significantly since the

late 1990s in Britain (Lewis, 2013), women's increased participation in the waged labour-force has also relied and been facilitated by childcare provided by grandparents, in particular on the care work provided by grandmothers (Grandparents Plus Report, 2009). In both instances of workers in formalised childcare (98 per cent are women) and grandmothers, the work of caring for children remains one that is overwhelmingly done by women. Which begs the question that perhaps we, or at some of us haven't come that far after all.

The emergence of 24hour childcare demonstrates how neo-liberalism attempts to develop along what appears as 'progressive' lines by capturing (some) women's desires for equality in the workplace. In doing so, neo-liberalism has increased women's access to the wage, while rerouting the processes of transformation via market mechanisms. This process of capture can be understood as one in which at the same time as women have demanded and gained economic, legal and social autonomy from men, capitalism has embarked on a global project via structural adjustment in both the global North and South of setting 'free' and capturing feminised labour-power.

These transformations intersect with changes to the domestic sphere, in that women have demanded and in limited but real ways gained freedom from the conditions of unwaged and 'unfree' reproductive labour in the home, only for that work to be 'contracted out' to other women in the waged service and care industries. These divisions, hierarchies and inequality between gendered subjects, have entrenched other hierarchies and modes of exploitation. The growing inequality between women, has led some women of colour and migrants rights activists to talk about liberal feminism benefiting some women and not others (Glenn, 1992; Romero, 2002; Anderson, 2000). One of the fault lines that emerges in struggles for improved labour conditions in the care, service and domestic industries is the questions of who has to and under what conditions do the social reproductive work of making and remaking people (Barbagallo and Federici, 2012).

Such transformations, from both 'below' via social movements and 'above' in neo-liberal policies, have necessitated uneven and long-term reconfigurations of class, race and gender relations. These changes have been unfolding for the last four decades, and have been fundamentally shaped by the choices (and lack thereof) available to mothers with regard to childcare. The complex contradictions and conflicts that structure and produce reproductive labour within capitalism produce equally complex possibilities and limitation for parents, particularly for mothers.

On the one hand, the 24-hour nursery is a site in which capital is maintained in so far as it creates the conditions for the wage relation to structure labour in increasingly atypical and precarious ways and also operates as site in which private providers can and do accumulate profit from providing care. On the other hand, it is also a site that is crucial if we are to reorganise the nuclear family and the sexual division of labour and hence it is a site that moves the gendered dynamics of care towards greater autonomy. Rather than oversimplifying the 24-hour nursery into either the recuperation of feminism by neo-liberalism or alternatively as an expression of choice and flexibility, the more complex and in many ways difficult task is to maintain the nursery as a site of struggle, which can be neither celebrated or condemned and crucially is a space in which the work of women's liberation continues.

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# "We live in changed times" Smallholder farmers perceptions, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change in Sidama, Ethiopia

Seyoum Hameso

## Abstract

Climate change is one of the most complex problems of our time presenting unique challenges for societies. For developing countries such as Ethiopia, it complicates existing challenges of development. The problem is aggravated for Sidama's smallholder farmers' who depend on rain-fed agriculture to produce coffee for global market and Enset for subsistence. Yet the farmers' understanding and responses to climate change have not been seriously acknowledged nor empirically studied.

The doctoral thesis explores perceptions, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change. More specifically it seeks to explore, document and analyse perceptions of climate change, examine vulnerability of farmers and their adaptation strategies as well as the state of mainstreaming climate change adaptation to development policy in Ethiopia. This paper in particular reports on Ethical and practical challenges to do climate change field research as well as the conclusions of the research project.

The study deployed comparative case study research design to analyse climate change in three agroecological zones: highlands, midlands and low lands. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods are used for data collection and analysis. Data collection targeted farmers, policy makers, weather stations, field observation and documents. Fieldwork research took place from January to May 2012 involving a survey with 120 farmers, focus group discussion with 30 farmers, semi-structured interviews with 15 farmers and 17 policy makers. Data are analysed through modified form of sustainable livelihoods framework as analytical tool to investigate vulnerability context, livelihood assets, institutions enabling or hindering adaptation.

Findings reveal increased temperature, high rainfall variability and inter-annual and intra-seasonal variation. Farmers clearly perceived climate risks based on their experience and knowledge of their local environment. They also took a number of measures to adapt to climate change within their capacity. They need informed public policy and research to help create enabling conditions for sustainable livelihoods and increased resilience.

Key words: Adaptation, adaptive capacity, climate change, farmers, livelihoods, perceptions, impacts, vulnerability, Sidama, Ethiopia, Enset or Weese, Coffee.

# 1. Introduction and researcher positionality

This research drew inspiration from personal observation of farmers in deep rural areas of Sidama[2] who spoke about troubling changed times referring to climate change. With a curiosity of a scholar who, for the last two decades, focused on development themes with close understanding of the socio-political and economic context of Sidama, I decided to take the inquiry a step further by examining the evidence. The rekindled interest eventually lent inspiration for this doctoral research when financial support became available later in the year.

My position in this study resembles what Sultana (2007) referred to as tentative 'insider' and 'outsider' which requires further reflexivity. After a long stay in UK, I returned 'home' in 2008 with cautious optimism and solid determination to make a difference. I then joined Hawassa University with joint roles of teaching and corporate communications. Part of my responsibility in the latter role was expanding the university's partnerships with international education and research institutions.

In 2010, an opportunity has dawned to meet a group of distinguished scientists studying climate change, agricultural economics and food security. The cohort from the University of Hohenheim, Germany, conducted a seminar from 7-8 April 2010 in ILRI-compound (Addis Ababa) on the theme of Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change in agriculture in Eastern Africa: research priorities and research approaches. The seminar was followed by fact-finding trips to different areas in southern Ethiopia including Sidama. The prime aim of the field trips was to select suitable sites to research climate change and its implications on small-scale agriculture. I joined the cohort on their visit to different parts of the region. Time and again, I observed farmers in deep rural areas speaking about troubling changed times referring to climate change. With a curiosity of a scholar who, for the last two decades, focused on development themes with close understanding of the socio-political and economic context of Sidama, I decided to take the inquiry a step further by examining the evidence. The rekindled interest eventually lent inspiration for this PhD research project when financial support became available later in the year and the study commenced in February 2011.

In the course of the study, I met many people from different walks of life who retrieved their experiences and intimated their stories that need documenting and analysing. This is the context from which the research developed.

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[2] Sidama is located in Southern Ethiopia. It has a total population of over 3.6 million (CSA, 2007) and total land size of 6972 square kilometres. Its population density of 506 people per square km makes it one of the highly dense parts of the country with the average for Ethiopia being 83 persons (CSA, 2011). Ethiopia's population in 2011 was 85 million and expected to be 92 million in 2014.

## 2. Theoretical background and research objectives

Climate change is a global problem. Arguably, it is dubbed as one of the most urgent and complex challenge for societies and economies (Corner *et al.,* 2012; Giddens, 2009; UNDP, 2007). For developing countries, it complicates existing challenges of poverty eradication (Hassan, 2010; Hope, 2009; Adger *et al.,* 2003) and the realization of Millennium Development Goals (Sachs, 2007; Sumner and Tiwari, 2009). Left unaddressed climate change contains the potential to reverse progress on development and to compromise the wellbeing of the current and future generations (World Bank, 2010b, p.37). While adaptation to climate change is necessary for all countries that seek to reduce the current impacts of climate change and increase resilience to future impacts, it is highly relevant for developing countries whose societies are already struggling to meet the challenges posed by existing climate variability (Yamin *et al.* 2005; Adger *et al.,* 2003). For these countries, adaptation has grown from a minor environmental concern to a major challenge for human development and a crucial element in eradicating poverty (Davies *et al.,* 2008).

The IPCC made a case for more extensive adaptation by expressing the need for deep understanding of options and barriers to adaptation which are not fully understood (IPCC, 2007, p.14). Other scholars recommended in-depth studies into farmers' adaptation noting that existing studies on adaptation in Africa produce very general results at a highly aggregated level and consider few adaptation options (Dinar *et al.,* 2008). Moreover, the dominant discourse of adaptation is top-down managerialist approach starting with international bodies cascaded to national authorities through negotiations and financial transfers whereby national and international climate policy regimes fail to reach the poor and vulnerable or they tend to plan interventions for communities instead of supporting initiatives led by communities (Yamin *et al.,* 2005). To be effective, global efforts need to be aligned with local realities and focused 'on how policy can support the adaptive capacity and resilience of vulnerable communities' (Adger, 2003a, p.192). In other words, successful adaptation requires synergy at different levels (BASIC, 2007) starting at the grass roots level, in this case, smallholder farmers who use predominantly family labor and for whom the farm provides their main source of income and livelihood.

Smallholder farmers are most affected since their livelihoods are directly dependent on climate sensitive economic sector, namely, agriculture. In the case of Ethiopia, 95% of agricultural activity (which is primarily smallholder farming) is dependent on rainfall to the extent that the country's GDP growth rate is closely associated with the pattern of rainfall distribution and agricultural production. Studies link annual rainfall with crop yield and GDP growth (World Bank, 2006).

In agrarian economies such as Ethiopia, smallholder farmers are subjected not only to health and related impacts of climate change but also to forces of globalisation – hence 'double exposure' (Leichenko and O'Brien, 2008; Morton, 2007; Adger, 2004). Thus it is imperative to explore responses to environmental change in the context of wider socio-economic change brought on by economic transformation and globalisation (Kent & Dorward, 2015). Globally, smallholder farmers form a vital part of the wider agricultural community, yet their role is often ignored and they are hard hit by climate change impacts that are locally specific and hard to predict (IFAD & UNEP, 2013). Thus it is particularly essential to examine how they develop worldviews and cultural values, how they generate and share knowledge on climate change.

Given the impacts of climate change on livelihoods, response efforts to address them contain two vital steps.[3] The first is to perceive the risks of climate change; the second is to decide on adaptation measures and both steps involve risk management and decision-making (Maddison, 2007). Peoples' perceptions are contextual, grounded on complex set of social, political and environmental settings. Perceptions about climate change and especially about its causes are filtered through local knowledge, values and moral norms. The IPCC (2007, p.14) recognised that perception about climate change is about human behaviour, which is one of the least understood components of the climate system. Therefore it is important to understand how differently situated communities perceive, interpret and act on climate change (Litre et al., 2014).

Whilst in agreement with Deressa et al (2009) that Ethiopia remains the least studied, the case of Sidama, a region with a population of over 3.6 million, is even more wanting. While Sidama's smallholder farmers are heavily vulnerable to shocks, their perceptions and vulnerability are largely undocumented and least studied (Hameso, 2014b). The paucity of studies on Sidama is in contrast to growing literature in other parts of the world, for example, Roncoli et al (2002) on Burkina Faso, Taylor et al (2014) on UK, Crate and Nuttall (2009) on northern hemisphere, Mortreux and Barnett (2009) on Tuvalu, Petheram et al (2010) on Australia, and Abid et al (2014) on Punjab, and Juana et al (2013) on Sub-Sahara Africa. Apart from perception of climate change, there is a lack of comparative assessment of vulnerability of different social groups and ecosystems resulting in poor understanding of vulnerability to climate change. This study aims to deepen understanding of smallholder farmers' vulnerability and adaptation to climate change by comparing three agroecological zones AEZs) of Sidama, namely the highlands, midlands and lowlands.

Given the magnitude of the challenges of direct and indirect impacts of climate change, business-as-usual approaches fall short of dealing with existing climate vulnerabilities let alone increased levels of risks or the emergence of new risks in the future (Yamin et al., 2005, p.2). In order to reduce vulnerabilities of smallholder farmers to climate change, the application of appropriate coping and adaptation strategies is indispensable. These strategies need to tune to complex adaptation needs of smallholder farmers due to the variety of crop and livestock species involved compared to commercial farms with more restricted range of crops that have access to irrigation and mechanization. Further empirical research is needed on the circumstances under which current strategies to cope with extreme events foster or constrain farmers' longer-term adaptation (Morton, 2007).

The significance of this study lies in its topicality and relevance. The contemporary world is experiencing social, technological and environmental change at unprecedented pace, across a variety of scales and possible pathways of change (Leach et al., 2007, p.1). Moreover, the climate change processes under study are dynamic and interact in complex ways. Within the context of changes, studying perceptions, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change is current and important as global warming poses significant challenge to already existing problems of poverty and development (Adger et al., 2003; Davies et al., 2009). For as long as climate change is occurring and more change is anticipated with significant vulnerability of societies and systems to

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[3] Adaptation in particular requires people to notice the change in climate (Maddison, 2007) followed by identification of adaptation measures and implementation.

its impacts, gaining deeper understanding of the subject is timely and critical across communities, space, and disciplines.

## Research objective and questions

The aim of this study is to explore perceptions, vulnerability and adaptation of smallholder farmers to climate change in the context of sustainable livelihoods. The specific objectives are:

- to find out how people in Ethiopia and particularly smallholder farmers of Sidama perceive climate change,
- to examine comparative vulnerability of different rural households to climate change,
- to analyse response strategies pursued by smallholder farmers to adapt to climatic change,
- to investigate barriers and institutional changes required for greater resilience and increased adaptive capacity,
- to assess policy and institutional measures undertaken to mainstream climate change in development policy, and
- to recommend measures that contribute toward sustainable livelihoods.

Based on the above-mentioned objectives, the study poses the following questions with a view to answer them:

- How do people in Ethiopia in general and smallholder farmers of Sidama in particular perceive climate change?
- Which categories of farmers are more vulnerable to climate change?
- What strategies are pursued to adapt to climate change?
- What are the factors that support farmers' adaptation to climate change?
- What are the barriers and institutional changes required for greater resilience to climate change?
- What is the state of mainstreaming climate change adaptation to development policy in Ethiopia?
- Are there any positive opportunities for smallholder farmers from climate change?

The implications of the research include, among others, a better understanding of the perception of smallholder farmers and the pursuit of bottom-up approach in assessing who/what is vulnerable to climate change in order to support national and international efforts in adapting to climate change. Besides the research intends to make a contribution toward conceptual approach integrating perceptions, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change via sustainable livelihoods framework. Finally, the study creates and develops information base for policy on vulnerability, adaptive capacity and resilience.

# 3. Research design and methodology

The study seeks to locate its epistemological position in comparative case study research design with a view to compare and analyse livelihood systems in three agroecological sites. As one of the tools of empirical enquiry, a case study 'investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context', and it is particularly suitable for answering the 'how' and 'why' questions (Yin, 2003, p.110; Baxter and Jack, 2008).

The study uses mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) as complementary tools to provide different perspectives and help answer the research questions. The qualitative method takes the form of focus group discussion and semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions intended to 'evoke responses that are meaningful and culturally salient to the participant unanticipated by the researcher as well as rich and explanatory in nature' (Mack *et al.*, 2005). Fieldwork[4] followed UEL's ethics clearance. Like other plans of field research, this phase involved site selection, sampling and data collection (Bailey, 2007).

## Sampling, data collection and analysis

The criteria to select research sites are predicated on two factors. The first rests on spatial difference, which links to the fact that vulnerability and impacts of climate change vary from place to place. The spatial difference dictates that different AEZs are selected, representing semi-arid lowlands, sub-humid midlands and alpine highlands. The spatial difference also accounts for variations in the livelihood systems, representing, enset, coffee, maize mixed with livestock.

The second factor in site selection is predicated on availability of climatic data and the existence of weather stations. The availability of comprehensive, accurate and reliable climate data in Ethiopia is limited. Many weather stations[5] in remote rural areas are poorly equipped and served. This meant not all stations have complete data required for cross-site comparison. Three Kebeles in close proximity (about 10-20 kilo metres) to these stations with similar altitude were systematically selected.

Besides the two factors mentioned above, the decision on site selection was supported by initial fact-finding visit. The assessment trips in January-February 2012 covered nearly all districts of Sidama and they proved extremely useful to scan the physical environment and the context of the field research.

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[4] It is important to note that fieldwork was carried out a year after severe drought of 2011 affected parts of southern-most Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa region.

[5] Weather stations in Ethiopia are categorized into four classes depending on the instruments they use and weather elements they record. First Class Stations or Synoptic Stations record all weather elements and receive satellite data. Only 2 Synoptic Stations exist in the SNNP region, one in Hawassa and another in Arba Minch. Second Class or Principal or Indicative stations record temperature, rainfall, humidity, sunshine and some other weather elements. Third Class or Ordinary Stations record temperature and rainfall. Fourth Class Stations record rainfall only (SNNPR; NMA; http://www.ethiomet.gov.et/stations/regional_information/).

The choice of samples and data collection methods was predicated on the nature of the research questions. While questions on perceptions and vulnerability were conveniently dealt with the help of qualitative data, questions related to livelihoods, adaptive capacity and household characteristics were dealt with quantitative data, as illustrated in Table 1. The table summarises the research objective and questions and the corresponding data needs, data sources and data collection methods.

Table 1: Research objectives, questions and data sources

| Research objectives | Research questions | Data needs | Data sources & collection methods |
|---|---|---|---|
| Survey the perceptions of people about climate change | How do people in Ethiopia in general and smallholder farmers of Sidama in particular perceive climate change? | Socio-economic shocks<br>Climate shocks<br>Trends<br>Seasonality | Qualitative (Semi-structured interviews with farmers, FGD)<br>Quantitative (Climatological data) |
| Examine comparative vulnerability of different rural households to climate change | Which categories of farmers are more vulnerable to climate change? And why? | Vulnerability indicators<br>Household characteristics | Quantitative (survey, Climatological data)<br>Qualitative (FGD) |
| Analyse response strategies pursued by SHFs to adapt capacity | What strategies, if any, do farmers pursue to adapt to climate change? | Adaptation strategies<br>Household characteristics | Qualitative (FGD, Semi-structured interviews)<br>Quantitative (Survey) |
| Investigate barriers and institutional changes required for increased adaptive capacity | What are the barriers faced by farmers for successful adaptation? | Livelihood assets<br>Household characteristics<br>Institutions | Household survey<br>Qualitative (Semi-structured interviews with farmers and policy makers) |
| | What are the factors that support farmers' adaptation to climate change? | Institutions | Qualitative (Semi-structured interviews with policy makers, FGD)<br>Quantitative (Survey) |
| Assess policy and institutional measures undertaken to mainstream climate change in development policy | What is the state of mainstreaming climate change adaptation to development policy? | Development policies<br><br>Adaptation strategies | Policy documents (Laws, policies)<br><br>Qualitative (Semi-structured interviews with policy makers) |

In addition to primary data collection, secondary data are collected from published documents on policies, laws and practical measures relating to climate change in the Ethiopia. Limited amount of data is also gathered in the form of direct participant and field observation which was recorded during the field visits.

The selection of samples for data collection depended on the method. For qualitative data collection, 30 farmers were selected for focus group discussion while additional 15 farmers and 17

GO & NGO participants[6] were selected for interviews. Moreover, quantitative data involved 120 heads of households for household survey.

The selection of participants for semi-structured interviews with farmers was based on purposive sampling with the aim of including participants with knowledge of the area and specific demographics (gender or inclusion of female household heads. According to Bulmer and Warwick (1993, p.128), adopting purposive sampling is justified in 'many subjects of enquiry where the variables concerned are difficult to locate and identify.' In this research, it enabled capturing required characteristics such as gender and other socio-economic determinants. The choice of 17 participants from GOs and NGO[7] for semi-structured interviews was predicated on the positions held by participants within their organisations and their relevance to climate change policy-making or implementation.

Participants for quantitative survey data were selected through systematic random sampling technique. The total list of residents was acquired from Kebele managers/chairs and samples were drawn according to the above technique. A total of 120 household heads (40 individuals from each AEZ) were selected. The choice of household-level research is predicated on the recognition that it yields important local-level insights into climate adaptation strategies in the agricultural sector (Wood *et al.*, 2014). Research also established that, at the household-level, the decision to adapt to climate change is individual and based on subjective factors such as risk perception and other factors such age, gender, personal preferences and social status (Litre *et al.*, 2014; Di Falco *et al.*, 2011). Noting that households in the rural settings are basic economic units who make decisions on production and consumption, individual heads of households are assumed to form the unit of data collection and analysis.

Once the sample is determined and participants are selected, different data collection methods were used. Qualitative data collection took the form of FGDs and key informant interviews with farmers and expert opinion of policy makers. FGD were held with the aim of exploring farmers' views about climate change. The *focus* of the discussions was on perceptions, vulnerability and strategies of climate change adaptation. Since so little is known about farmers' perception of climate change in Sidama, the FGD method is chosen as a first step in generating empirical data.

Quantitative data collection took the form of survey questions to heads of households from smallholder farmers. The survey was preceded by a pilot study that involved 8 household heads in Wonsho District. This phase of study enabled pre-testing survey questions for validity, veracity and consistency. Research process during the pilot study phase involved recruiting enumerators, meeting with key informants and the translation of questions to Sidamuafo (the language Sidama farmers speak). Some modifications to the questions were made on the basis of discussions and comments from participants. However, the results of the pilot trial are not included in this thesis. The revised questionnaire was divided into themes that include general household characteristics, demographic and social characteristics, farmers' perception of climate change, livelihood assets,

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[6]Different terms are used to describe people providing information during data collection. They include subject, participant, respondents, interviewee, and stakeholders. The term participant recognizes the active role that human beings in the research process as contributors. Hence it is used in this study's qualitative data while respondent is used for the survey data.

[7] They are 4 Federal or Central government officials, 2 Regional Government officials, 1 Sidama Zone official, 3 District officials, 2 Development workers, and 4 NGO officials.

agricultural production and vulnerability to climatic risks, adaptation, adaptive capacities and strategies, and institutions and markets.

Other data collection methods included obtaining observed climate information from weather stations and data from secondary sources in the form of published documents on Ethiopian legislature, government policies, laws and practical measures relating to climate change. The main purpose is to explore the links between theoretical pronouncements and practical adaptation measures to quiz if climate change is mainstreamed into development policy. Moreover, limited amount of data were collected by way of participant and field observation. Data from field observation was recorded in field notes during or soon after the visits. Where farming locations and landscape were deemed significant, pictures were taken to capture information about geographic features and people's livelihoods, land use and landscape to account for land degradation, soil erosion and population density as well as visual explanation of current vulnerability to climate change. Examples of such pictures included flooded crop farms, soil erosion, land degradation, local markets, and adaptation actions used by households.

In order to complement qualitative data with survey data, historical weather and rainfall data on local meteorological satiation was collected from National Metrological Agency.[8] The use of multiple sources helped data triangulation through interviews, field observations, and literature reviews to validate findings.

**Data analysis**

Analysis of data is informed by research questions and sustainable livelihoods framework.[9] The framework holds multiple possibilities for cross-sectional and in-depth analysis and by adapting it to fit the specific needs of climate change research, it helps to investigate vulnerability context, livelihood assets, how assets are utilised for adaptation as well as institutions enabling or hindering adaptation to climate change. Initially, the framework was applied in poverty reduction, wellbeing and development contexts, but only rarely used in climate change studies.

Analysis of qualitative data started with transcribing 35 (3 FGD and 32 semi-structured) interviews worth 28 hours of audio recording. After depth reading, the transcripts were loaded onto Nvivo 10 to develop codes (nodes). [10] At the time of committing data to Nvivo, and in line with research ethics and to maintain participant privacy, the names of participants were anonymized and a separate metadata file was created. Data is analysed through thematic approach. Key emerging themes, meanings and discourses of climate change were explored through the deployment of Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Fleming and Vanclay, 2011). It is

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[8] Formerly known as National Meteorological Services Agency.

[9] The framework emerged from the works of Chambers, Scoones, and Conway in the 1990s and moved beyond quantifiable monetary variables to incorporate assessments of vulnerabilities and social exclusion. It is rich in presenting the main factors that affect people's livelihoods and relationships between vulnerability context, livelihood assets, structures and processes, strategies and outcomes (DFID, 1999). Different aspects of the livelihoods approaches had been applied in developing countries in the context of poverty reduction, wellbeing and rural development (Chambers and Conway, 1992; Ellis and Freeman, 2004; Solesbury, 2003, Knutsson, 2006; Scoones, 2009). Later, bilateral and multilateral donor agencies such as DFID, CARE, Oxfam and UNDP upheld the principles of the framework for their international programmes (Carney *et al.,* 1999).

[10] NVivo is one of the Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS). For an example of a PhD work using this software, see O'Neill (2013).

argued that, while a researcher could have ideas based on literature review and empirical research, one would prefer to engage deeply with the data, read the transcribed text and tease out what is happening (Strauss and Corbin 1990, 1994). In this case, NVivo, like other computer applications, helped with the process of coding, but the role of the researcher is critical. As Gibbs (2002) rightly noted, software is no substitute to one's own 'close reading of and a thorough familiarity with the text'. Using both NVivo codes and relevant literature review, different themes emerged along the lines of perceptions of climate change, causes of climate change, impacts of climate change, adaptation to climate change and institutional framework of support to deal with impacts. On the other hand, survey data was cleaned and analysed through descriptive frequencies using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to compute and analyse relationships and causations of factors by using descriptive statistics and chi-square test.

Results are discussed using different analytical tools such as descriptive statistics. Chi square test is used to explore the significance of association between household's livelihood assets across the AEZs. Frequency tables, pie charts, bars, graphs, pictures and boxes are also used to visualise results.

Finally, the process of collecting and analysing both qualitative and quantitative data involved important ethical issues and practical challenges to be discussed in the next section.

## 4. Ethical issues and practical challenges

In the course of the research process, ethical issues were considered in a number of ways. The first relates to the recognition that the position of the researcher (and of participants) has influence on social inquiry (Scheyvens and Storey, 2003; Sultana, 2007). So far as the researcher's position is concerned, as a researcher in the field and as a person with lived experience of the region, I shared my experience and knowledge on the challenges of development and climate change with participants. I also explained my professional background and motivation to undertake the study. For readers of this thesis, I also stated my research positionality at the beginning.

The second ethical issue is related to the appreciation of the fact that development research, which may entail 'a confrontation between the powerful and the powerless, a relationship fraught with possibilities of misunderstanding and exploitation' (Beazley and Ennew, 2006). Besides I heeded Sultana's (2007, p.375) advice that:

> Conducting international fieldwork involves being attentive to histories
> of colonialism, development, globalization and local realities, to avoid
> exploitative research or perpetuation of relations of domination and
> control. It is thus imperative that ethical concerns should permeate the
> entire process of the research, from conceptualization to dissemination,
> and that researchers are especially mindful of negotiated ethics in the
> field.

In the face the above and related criticism levelled against development fieldwork as one in which 'a relatively privileged Western researcher travelling to a Third World country to study people living in poverty' (Scheyvens and Storey, 2003, p.2), I maintained sensitive attitude toward marginality, equity and justice. I also applied these principle on matters dealing with people marginalised due to their economic status, gender and ethnicity. In the case of gender disadvantage, the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2013) recognised that the role of women in response to climate change has been undervalued or undermined. In the case of Africa, it is particularly stated that women make up the majority of the poorest marginal farmers (Kent and MacRae, 2010). This study makes conscious choice of purposeful sampling to include female-headed households.

Keenly aware of these and related issues, I adhered to key principles of research ethics including explaining the purpose of the research to participants, seeking and obtaining informed consent, ensuring voluntary participation and confidentiality and determining access and data storage. During the recruitment and interview phase, I provided participants with explanation about the project, its aims, and procedures while due diligence is made to the protection and the rights of participants.

The research process also ensured the consent of participants by rendering their involvement voluntary. Participants were interviewed only after they were asked and granted full willingness to take part. The fact that findings of the research might be presented to different stakeholders was also mentioned. In order to dispel doubt, participants' queries in relation to the research were answered openly and honestly. In a society that became prone to shocks (social, economic, political and ecological), people may develop expectations for immediate outcome such as aid.

The message that the study may not directly and instantly benefit participants is clearly conveyed alongside the possibility of indirect benefits that its findings may help contribute to knowledge about the area and the people with the view to attract attention and policy redress.

Confidentiality of participants was another issue that required serious consideration, which is ensured by handling personal data in a sensitive manner. For example, people's real names were rendered anonymous or changed along with other identifiable information in the survey questions before committing response transcripts to NVivo.

The ethical dimension of research pertaining to principles of 'Do no harm' and 'Do good' is ensured by assuring participants that the information they provide would be used for the purpose of the study with proper access and storage, and without reporting personal information. Due regard was also given to the possibility of research posing risk to participants and to the researcher. This would specially be the case in situations where researchers face potential risks linked to personal health and safety (e.g. accommodation, weather and state of roads) and importantly political conditions that require thoughtful reconsideration and possible resolutions. These risks needed recalibration and re-evaluation at all stages of fieldwork research. The researcher repeatedly informed participants that the study is an academic exercise.

All of the above considerations were governed and informed by a number of ethical frameworks including The Economic and Social Research Council's *Framework for Research Ethics* and the University of East London's *Code of Good Practice in Research*. In addition, basic regulatory frameworks such as Data Protection Act 1998 were also observed. Besides, approval of the UEL Research Ethics Committee was sought and secured before the commencement of the fieldwork, as part of the requirement of ethics clearance for field research involving human participants.

Apart from ethical issues, practical challenges are ever present in development field research (Desai and Potter, 2006). They start with translation of survey questions into different languages and extend to logistic and the recruitment of research assistants for they play useful role in the conduct of the research. In the fieldwork phase of this study, transport facilities and communication tools proved hugely important; and sometimes their lack presented difficulties.

In order to facilitate data collection from various sources, permission was sought from zonal government administration and approval was promptly granted. Subsequently, planning meetings were arranged with officials from target districts and Kebeles. Considering the difficulty of travel on roads during the rainy season, I decided for early start and finish of field trips before the onset of rains. This decision proved critical to avoid logistical and other problems. There were also times when I needed to adjust my field visit dates to the availability of vehicles allocated for university researchers and fellow PhD researchers. All travels involved 4 Wheel Drive vehicles allocated for university researchers (from Hawassa University, then my home base) while a driver and research assistants[11] who knew the areas well did accompany me to research sites. The survey questions were initially drafted in English and translated to the language spoken by farmers and policy makers, namely Sidamuafo and Amharic, respectively.

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[11] Research assistants were present on the assessment visit and later on piloting of survey questions in Bokaaso town, Wonsho District. Research assistants were also instrumental at the translation and re-evaluation of survey questions.

Equally important was negotiating access to data sources and maintaining relations and momentum to carry out what is needed of fieldwork. When different gatekeepers are involved access to data sources is a challenge. This is highly relevant to research into marginalised communities as it attracts attention from authorities. In such cases personal security of the researcher needs careful consideration. For example, a researcher could face difficulties to conduct critical research under watchful eye of authoritarian regimes that are unprepared to tolerate critical scrutiny. In the case of this study, the existence of networks of neighbourhood civilian informers was reported. The networks regularly report to 'political cells' that belong to local level of the political organisation of the current ruling regime. The 'cells' are explicitly political entities and their existence was confirmed by key informants. Farmers were organised into units of five – known as '1 to 5' structures. The nature of these structures is corroborated by a recent report entitled '*Securing communities for development: community policing in Ethiopia's National Regional State*' from Overseas Development Institute (ODI). The study funded by DFID revealed that 'every five households is represented by one individual at the local committee level, and similarly, every committee will be represented by a number of its members at the next highest committee using the 1:5 ratio, and so on up the hierarchy' thus simultaneously serving two purposes: ensuring representation in administrative processes while 'providing the government with grassroots reporting structures that can be utilised as a surveillance system' (Denney and Kassaye, 2013). The same report disclosed the establishment of a number of structures in the community including 'Advisory Councils, Conflict Resolving Committees, family police and the use of shoe shiner's and other trade associations as police informants' (*ibid.,* p.iv).

Reference to similar surveillance systems, yet more stringent and explicit, is made in a recent PhD research based on Iraqi refugees in Syria which noted 'pervading atmosphere of fear, anxiety and suspicion for carrying out research within the constraints set by a repressive police state … [whereby] occasional praise of the government is indicative of the anxieties that vulnerable populations have' (Zaman, 2012). In such a setting, the situation is one in which the state has the power to refuse renewing or even to rescind food hand-outs and other necessities of life. 'The hospitality of the state is always conditional and temporary', adds Zaman. The political background is very much characterised by successive generations of authoritarian rule having 'pervasive impact on the structuring of the humanitarian field' resulting in 'a much constrained environment for religious networks and NGOs' (Zaman, 2012, p.226). While the context of farmers in this study differed in important ways from displaced people in Syria, the broader framework is still relevant as the state in Ethiopia controls the supply of agricultural inputs, including seeds, fertiliser and, more importantly, land. For example, a recent study into agricultural extension policy in Ethiopia found tension between the objective of stimulating agricultural growth and extensively penetrating society and winning elections which may reduce the returns to this investment on agricultural extension programme (Berhanu and Poulton, 2014).

According to David Turton (2009, quoted in Debelo, 2011) the Ethiopian state uses the notion of 'wilderness' in peripheral south as a mechanism of state building, control of the people and territories, and for building legitimacy through so called development and conservation schemes. Given such scenarios, a researcher may encounter difficulty to function in fear inducing atmosphere that may in effect impact on authenticity of responses. In order to resolve such challenges one has to carefully negotiate the realms of politics and academic research. Yet the challenge remains an important one for similar cross boundary and cross-cultural research. I managed the problem by carefully observing any hint of political instability to minimise risk and harm to all people involved in the research. In the case of data authenticity, if one method of data collection is compromised, extra effort was exerted to elicit robust responses through FGD and

semi-structured interviews. However, for a successful field research, an environment of co-operation and support between researchers and officials or policy makers is essential though not necessary. The rationale for supportive framework is based on mutual benefit from the findings of the research that inform different stakeholders including academic/research interest and policy-making community. Additionally one has to support smallholder farmers to reflect on their practices safe in the knowledge that the information they share is not used against them.

Finally, toward the completion of the fieldwork comes the task of sitting down and transcribing and translating interviews. This stage proved time consuming given that an interpretive act in three languages was involved. The researcher's passion and stamina to make sense of data and derive meanings and themes from the interviews is a factor that keeps the effort going. Repeated listening to interviews is beneficial to clarify meanings and better understand the context of the interviews (Hameso, 2014b).

It has to be said that while the fieldwork proved an enriching experience, it was also undoubtedly a challenging one. At all times, it called for meticulous planning, regular flexibility and constant communication with stakeholders. Following on a word of advice from Brydon (2006), an ethical researcher has to be readily responsive to any situation that might come up. For there will always exist uncontrollable variables including the political environment for which little can be taken for granted, but to which one must be in constant guard, especially following the events of what is now known as the 'Arab Spring' of 2011. With unforeseen political events and especially in unstable regions, research plans can easily and quickly go awry. Some unforeseen circumstances did indeed unravel in this research too, but adhering to robust risk assessment regime and ethical guidelines as well as constant communication with key research team proved critically important and useful. It was also important to have a plan of action and a PhD journal to document progress and processes. Moreover, works that involve technology tools could suffer ever present mishaps. This includes the state or quality of audio and potential loss of data related to with computer glitches. Having frequent and regular data backup, preferably in different media, is a must; and it certainly helps avoid disappointment should disaster(s) strike. In sum, despite the abovementioned challenges impacting data collection, the analysis of data is supported by analytical framework which is presented in the next section.

# 5. Findings and conclusions

This doctoral study explored perceptions, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change in Ethiopia focused on smallholder farmers. The study was motived by anecdotal evidence, casual observation and conversations with smallholder farmers during my trips to rural areas of Sidama. My training in development economics also lent additional impetus to examine development-environment nexus. In the discussion and presentation of findings of the study, I drew from relevant literature, first-hand field experience and data collected through household survey, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews.

The study is informed by sustainable livelihood framework as analytical device and supplemented by research questions that focused on four themes representing critical phases in response to climate change. The first theme surveyed, documented and analysed farmers' and policy makers'

perception of climate change. The second theme examined impacts and vulnerability to climate change of smallholder farmers who produce enset for subsistence and coffee for global market. The third theme examined the strategies used to cope and adapt to climate change. The fourth theme investigated mainstreaming adaptation in development policy in Ethiopia.

The study commenced with the proposition that a) climate change is the major environmental problem facing the world, and b) the impacts and vulnerability to climate change are felt differently across space and time. Drawing on from broad scientific consensus that pointed to climate change as unequivocal, the study noted that the predictions of future climate and its impacts on people and their ecosystems are profound. In developing countries, the problem is aggravated for deprived and marginalised people who depend on natural resources. Smallholder farmers in Sidama make stark example of dependence on rain-fed agriculture. Even among smallholder farmers, the impacts of climate change are differential, localised and context-specific.

Different ecozones face varied impacts of climate change and response measures to reduce vulnerability differ from context to context. Generally, two responses are known to address climate change. One is mitigation and the other is adaptation. In both cases, decision-making is involved requiring in-depth understanding about how the problem is perceived by different stakeholders. Based on smallholder farmers involved in Enset-Coffee livelihoods, the study arrived at a number of conclusions.

Regarding the question of how climate change is perceived in Ethiopia and especially by smallholder farmers of Sidama, results showed that perceptions of climate change – and especially its causes – involve dualistic outcomes at micro and macro levels. At the micro household level, the emerging picture presented mixed results. On the one hand, farmers clearly identified the indicators of climate change. According to the survey results, 76% of the farmers perceived climate change with some areas facing climatic hazards unique to their context. On the other hand, farmers' explanations of the causes and partly their responses to climate change are in marked contrast with perceptions by policy makers as well as with scientific understanding of the problem. Farmers' perceptions are the result of their experience with the local environment and their worldview are largely confined to the local world, often delinked from the global space. For instance, they hardly linked climate change with global warming or green house gas emissions, except stating river pollution caused by local coffee processing plants. Within the locally-bound perception, the most cited attribution of causes of climate change is either human-induced or the work of God.

Some farmers recognised that climate change is caused by land use changes, deforestation and overpopulation. Other reported abandonment of past traditions or practices, declining moral values, the collapse of customs and traditions as causes of climate change. Reference to God is ubiquitous among those who believed climate change has more to do with nature and the supernatural. These findings are in agreement with previous research findings that farmers make sense of the world around them by drawing from the local beliefs, values and moral responsibilities and cultural interactions with nature (Roncoli *et al.,* 2002; Bulkeley, 2000; Moghariya and Smardon 2012). What is interesting in the context of this study relates to the strength of religious and cultural beliefs in opinion formation. The preponderance of religious rationalization and ever growing faith-based networks can be linked to what one may refer to as *spiritual capital*, which can complement the notion of social capital. Study participants seem to invest in faith and religious beliefs to provide psychological buffer against the impacts of climate change or, according to some, the work of nature. To advance the notion of spiritual capital

further, one can explore the links between contemporary religion and development, which is beyond the scope of this study.

At the macro level, policy makers displayed highly advanced perceptions about climate change indicators, causes and impacts and the ways of addressing the problem. They clearly linked climate change to global warming. They seem to be particularly aware that climate change poses a challenge through development-environment nexus. At stake is how to address climate change without compromising development efforts for poverty reduction and economic growth.

In terms of perception of *impacts* of climate change, farmers recognise that their challenge is not only the changed climate but also the unpredictable nature of the changes. Epitomizing the livelihoods of rural societies elsewhere in the world, smallholder farmers in Sidama face multiple stressors, climate change being an important one. They believe that the 'changed times' have impacted their livelihoods, and eventually their wellbeing, crops, livestock and ecosystems. For most of the farmers who depend heavily on rain-fed farming, increasingly unpredictable rain and increased temperature negatively affected their crops and livestock. Both coffee and enset are impacted by climate change. As the predicted 2 ℃ average temperature rise would reduce the production of Uganda's Robusta Coffee, limiting it to highlands, similar trajectory is possible for Sidama coffee in the midlands. Yet it remains unknown how future production of coffee from highlands will compensate for the losses from the midlands, both in quality and quantity. It is possible that while consumers of coffee, near and far, may embrace changed quality of coffee, producers in the midlands may loose income.

Apart from change on coffee production, increased heat waves and spread of diseases is also reported to affect human, plant and animal health. These impacts directly translate to food insecurity and sometimes to hunger conditions. These results concur with findings from Africa (Mubaya *et al.,* 2012; Mengistu, 2011) that climate change impacts are pronounced among multiple stressors. However, findings from studies on South America that farmers placed higher significance on volatile market prices over climate variability (Eakin *et al.,* 2005; Bacon, 2005) that are not supported by the results of this study. On the other hand, results from Sidama confirm the finding of studies that perception of climate change is significant among farmers living in the highlands than the lowlands (Deressa *et al.,* 2010). This result appears contrary to conventional wisdom to expect lower sensitivity to climatic hazards among farmers from lower altitudes known for dry conditions.

In the case of the national policy makers, the discourse on impacts of climate change is dominated by sectoral considerations. In their list and priorities of sectoral susceptibility to climate change, they cite agriculture, water resources, biodiversity and human health as the most vulnerable sectors. Apart from sectoral priorities, they seem to place emphasis on mega projects, which resulted in waning focus on smallholder farmers due to diversion of resources. Local government and NGO participants, on the other hand, prioritise the impacts of climate change on the livelihoods and communities.

In terms of vulnerability context, several factors are at play facing smallholder farmers. The study examined climate change related shocks, trends and seasonality such as drought, floods, wind, water scarcity, and diseases. Climate data showed an increase in temperature, high rainfall variability and inter-annual and intra-seasonal variation. These factors are juxtaposed on socio-economic vulnerability of smallholder farmers. The study found that most respondents held less than a hectare of land. Farmers recognise that increasing population size (reported higher family

size with an average of 7 people per household), ever shrinking land holding and primeval farming technology did not only contribute to decline in livelihoods, but also risked sustainability. Without important changes, the continuity of smallholder farming in Sidama as the way of life remains precarious, if not at risk.

The threat to the way of life emanates from the vulnerability context shaped by poverty. The fact that most respondents live in poor conditions indicates the depth of endemic poverty, which compounds vulnerability to climate change. These people derive their income from the sale of crops, coffee and Wesse products, indicating that any climatic hazards directly affect their livelihoods. Their expenditure pattern too is dominated by expenses on basic needs such as clothing, food, debt payment, health and ceremonies. Such a tight budgetary allocation hardly leaves room or flexibility to adopt innovative methods and technologies for sustainable livelihoods. On the other hand, drought and extended dry seasons exacerbate malnutrition and hunger. Vulnerability in the study areas was worsened by lack of development infrastructure such as functioning roads, markets and credit facilities.

In terms of livelihood assets, ownership of social and human capital is relatively higher than other forms of capital, the least one being financial capital. Membership to social networks contributes to social capital.

In spite of the abovementioned vulnerability context, people reported taking a number of adaptation measures to cope and adapt to climate change. One such measure is diversification of livelihoods such as crop and livestock production and off-farm activities. Examples include farmers engaging in early maturing crop varieties and growing drought tolerant plant varieties such as enset. Combining *Wesse* with maize, coffee and perennial edible trees helped in adapting to climate change. It also resulted in positive livelihood outcomes such as increased income, improved wellbeing and resilience to shocks. The role of agroforestry as a response to climate change is widely noted, yet the drive to secure income from *khat* and eucalyptus trees attracted many farmers to what in the long-term could prove to be mal-adaptation to climate change, given its impact on soil and surrounding ecosystems.

In terms of AEZs, this study established different adaptation strategies in different sites. The midland areas focused on planting edible perennial trees, agroforestry, planting trees, limited irrigation along river basins, growing khat and coffee under trees or enset, and mixed cropping. The highland areas deployed diversification of crops, growing new crop varieties such as apple, growing bamboo for income generation, and planting eucalyptus trees. The lowland areas applied different crop varieties, modified their planting date, used small scale irrigation, planted trees and engaged in off-farm activities.

The study results also found that not all respondents took adaptive action; some have indeed conjured up fatalistic views, withdrawn or looked up to God and Government for assistance to solve problems engendered by 'changed times.' Some reacted by planting hazardous trees, or involved in unsustainable resource use that would result in negative livelihood outcome in the long run.

For policy markers, climate change is a major concern, next to development. Interviews with government officials at different levels provided important insight into national framework of adaptation to climate change in Ethiopia. Efforts at building development infrastructure such as roads and dams seem to absorb resources and attention. So are climate finance negotiations and

efforts to coordinate actions of different stakeholders. Other adaptation measures at macro level took the form of improving the forecasting and distribution of weather information to increase public awareness about climate change. Moreover, the government's early warning systems supported coping with disasters in the face of droughts and food insecurity. However, significant barriers exist hampering effective adaptation at local levels. Among them are ineffective institutions and processes, top-down, statist approaches and authoritarian tendencies that curtail free and voluntary local actions.

It is clear that public policy plays a vital role in mainstreaming climate change into development planning. In Ethiopian context, the Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy is exemplary attempt at mainstreaming climate change. At the time of the research, the CRGE was at an early stage of development. Part of it, or the mitigation component, was published but the adaptation component was incomplete. The real challenge for the CRGE rests not in the design phase but in implementation phase, which challenges the readiness of implementing bodies to convert the plan into reality. The CRGE is informed by GTP, which envisaged boosting agricultural productivity by scaling up technology while replicating good practices of *model farmers* to the rest of country's smallholder farmers. It also hoped to expand commercial agriculture, strengthen the industrial base, and foster export growth. However, the optimistic view about the capacity of smallholder farmers who are still using old-style technology bears the risk of missing the GTP targets.

## 6. Future research

Having detailed the findings, contributions and limitations of this work, it is finally time to pinpoint areas of future research. First, this research focused on perceptions, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change. Yet agriculture has also the potential to mitigate climate change. In as far as agriculture and smallholder farming contribute to climate change, they are also responsible to reduce GHGs through sequestration through soil, water, forest and crop management practices. The subject of carbon markets and linked mitigation measures by small-holder farmers in Sidama and Ethiopia, or even Africa, are not well developed and not covered in this study. This is an area for further research.

Secondly, within the context of adaptation, the relationship between environmental stress and human mobility is left without conclusive result. This study could not establish solid link between migration and climate change. Farmers are not seen flocking to towns or other areas due to climate change. Future studies may explore both themes in the context of 'environmental refugees'.

Third, the incidence and impacts of drought, heat waves and floods on human nutrition, floods and waterborne disease require further research. So far, the changing patterns of malaria transmission are well studied although studies on the incidence of malaria in the context of climate change in Sidama are seriously lacking. In this research, attempt is made to include the government's health policy guidelines and documents. Visits to Kebeles also enabled personal observation of the state of health extension service. What is observed in terms of health service provision showed that a lot remains to be done. Further research could include the Ministry of Health to explore its plans for climate change adaptation.

Finally, challenges as complex as climate change and development require a multi-disciplinary approach in theoretical design and multi-agency co-operation in practical implementation. Further research could benefit by involving all stakeholders thus involving more structures and institutions than included here. For example, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) plays a key role in formulating macro policies; it also coordinates the country's finances for development and climate change. Moreover, sectoral ministries that formulate policies in their respective areas need to be engaged. The inclusion of stakeholders will enrich research on climate change policy in Ethiopia.

## Acknowledgements

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# Theoretical spatial exploration

Gergana Alzeer

## *Introduction*

In this paper, I discuss a particular aspect of my PhD dissertation that explores spatio-educational experiences of Emirati female learners in a single gender context and the role of space in learning. Namely, I present here the theoretical framework of my study, which focuses on social theories of space and Lefebvre's triad of perceived conceived and lived (1991). To that end, and for the benefit of the readers, I start first by briefly introducing my research focus.

This PhD research project started as a response to my intellectual curiosity about the unique way Emirati female students used and appropriated the university campus space, stemming from my long-life interest in space and learning as an interdisciplinary educator with architectural background doing social research on space. While working at a federal university in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) where national male and female students are spatially segregated, "I have often observed how Emirati female students have their unique way of appropriating and utilizing campus space, in and outside the classroom" (Alzeer, 2014, p.1). Female students enjoyed sitting in groups on the floor — even on the cold tiles — despite the availability of chairs, whether inside or outside the classroom. (Figures 1–4). To my surprise they often choose the most unusual private–public spaces to occupy, like the space for the water coolers (Figure 3), under the library staircase or behind the lockers (Figure 4). As an educator in social sciences and trained architect, such observations including others have ignited my intellectual curiosity, inspiring me to plan and conduct a systematic study to further explore the spatial experience of Emirati female learners and the role of space in learning.

**Figure 0:** Class discussions on the floor at the back of the class (Gergana Alzeer 2013).
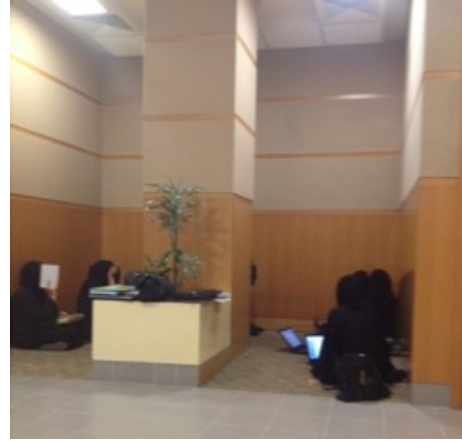


**Figure 1:** Students sitting in a niche (Gergana Alzeer 2013).

Studying architecture has given me a heightened awareness and appreciation of the role of space in our everyday life; its design, formations, construction, causality and influence; and the relationships between people, places and spaces. Mahnke (1996, p. 47) pointed out that "it must be our goal to create places and spaces that will not unnecessarily burden the mental and physical well-being of their inhabitants, we will have to look further into the subject of emotions and how they are important in psychosomatics." The way spaces influence societies, how they are constructed and shaped by space, and the other way round, constitutes a particular interest of my research.

As an educator, I am interested to understand how spaces shape and construct the educational milieu, and the possible role of space in learning. In particular, I aspire to enhance the learning experience of my students, who are uniquely challenged by the constant change and development of a young, emerging state like the UAE (Bristol-Rhys, 2011, Khelifa, 2010; Alsharekh and Springborg, 2008; Davison, 2005).

Therefore, this interdisciplinary study of students' spatiality offers a unique exploration of the 'intersectional' relation between the domains of space, gender and learning, in terms of female higher education students' experiences, in order to unravel the complex cultural formations and dimensions informing the spatial realities of Emirati female learners.
 (Figure 3).
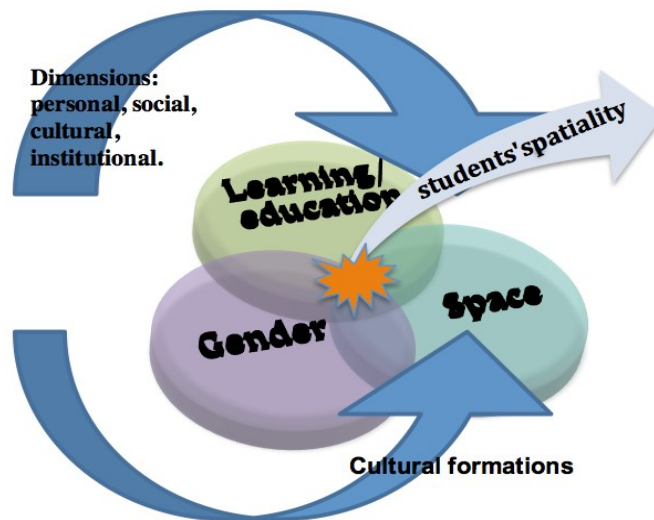
**Figure 3:** Interdisciplinarity and intersectionality.

As space constitutes the backbone of this research into spatio-learning experiences, understanding its meaning, definitions, characteristics, and historical development as a field of study, including trans-disciplinary discourses about it, is imperative. Therefore, in the following sections I review the relevant literature on space presenting the study's theoretical framework. In doing so, first I engage chronologically in a conceptual dialectic with several scholars and key thinkers on space whose work has strongly influenced and guided the development of spatial thought. Next, I discuss explaining the meaning and multiple definitions for the entity of space. The paper concludes with my chosen framework, based on the social construction of space and the spatial trilogy of the French philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre in his influential work *The production of Space* (1991)[12].

## Spatial Histories

This section traces the historical development of the study of space in social sciences to pave the way for our understanding of it by providing the diachronic context for its development while also linking it to its specific utilization in this research.

Historically, interest in space has been characterized by a cycle of intense activity and intellectual eruptions followed by hibernation. Since there are many such cycles of spatial exploration and de-exploration across civilizations, I can only highlight the work of a few of the key thinkers whose work and ideas have transformed the way we currently think about and conceptualize space. Nevertheless, we should note that spatial thought has not developed in a vacuum; rather, it is a cumulative construction, based on a dialectic between the varied and, in many cases, contradictory positions across disciplines, and epistemologies (whether spatial or temporal

[12] The first edition was published in French in 1974 by Editions Anthropos.

diachronic) of key thinkers, mostly within the academic and institutional structures (Hubbard et al., 2004, quoted in Guslon and Symmes, 2007b, p. 7). Furthermore, although these developments might appear linear, they are far from it because consensus has never been achieved; rather, the issue of space has been continuously debated as ideas have emerged and, in many cases, contradicted each other.

Thinking about space started thousands of years ago with ancient scholars and philosophers theorizing about the universe and its entity. At that time, space was conceived as an abstract and passive milieu of mathematicians and scientists, such as Descartes's mathematical space, which Lefebvre called the "mental" space (1991). For many centuries, space continued to be viewed by many as a realm of stasis, lacking movement, dynamism and dislocation; for example, Laclau (1990) viewed space as a static system where either nothing happens or any change happens only within the spatial system without any change in the system itself. Even in the 1950s and 1960s, space was still seen from a positivist perspective; and geographical theory, considered as space's traditional domain, was being associated with statistical analysis, which applied quantitative approaches to space (Gulson and Symes, 2007a, p. 100).

This abstract conceptualization of space as a passive milieu, a setting for all living and nonliving things, has continued despite its increased utilization and inclusion in many different disciplines (Lefebvre, 1991). This perspective has also always considered space as monodisciplinary, viewed and analyzed within each discipline in relation to that single discipline only (Gulson and Symes, 2007a, p. 101). Space continued to provide the milieu for each specific discipline and follow its rules, whether in literature, language, architecture, urbanism, or mathematics; it was never categorized as an independent field, as 'spatiology', for instance (Lefebvre, 1991). Thus, until the late Nineteenth Century, space seemed to remain the exclusive domain of geographers. Only in the 1970s was its transdisciplinary nature (being viewed and analyzed across disciplines and in relation to more than one discipline) revealed (Ferrare and Apple, 2010; Gulson and Symes, 2007a).

Even after space was finally emancipated from earlier monodisciplinary approaches and became transdisciplinary, for decades it was still subordinated to time, with primacy being given to socio-temporal relations.[13] This primacy of time over space explains the concept of 'historicism' unveiled and conceptually unpacked in Soja's work (1989). Historicism refers to the notion of how history associated with time, that is often described as organic, alive, dialectical and more amenable to change and dislocation (specifically political change), became more important than geography, which is associated with static, passive and incorrigible space (ibid).[14] The same concept was reflected in Marx's choice of words: "the annihilation of space by time" as a representation of the vast waves of time-space compression during the industrial revolution (Warf, 2006, cited in Graham, Warf and Soja, 2006, p. 815). This view also strongly resonates with contemporary references such as "the 'death of distance' and the 'end of geography' in light of global telecommunications" (ibid. p. 215). In short, time has been privileged intellectually over space in the humanities and social sciences.

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[13] Middleton (2013), Ferrare and Apple (2010), Gulson and Symes (2007a), Massey (1994), Harvey (1990) and Soja (1989) among others, including Lefebvre (1991, 2004) stated, discussed and often criticized the primacy of time over space prior to the spatial turn.

[14] Many scholars confirmed Soja's (1989) concept of historicism, see the scholars above in footnote 2.

In western thought, this view of space was also gendered, with time coded as masculine and associated with history, politics and civilization, and space coded as feminine and associated with depoliticization, stasis and inflexibility (Massey, 1994, p. 6). This foregrounding of the diachronic (temporal) over the spatial occurred also in education, the research context for the spatial experiences explored in this study. That is, the historical dimension of education studies has dominated and still dominates the geographical (spatial) dimension (Middleton, 2013, p. 3), as clearly pointed out by Gulson and Symmes:

> While educational history is a long established field, which has chronicled the way educational systems have developed (e.g., Barcan, 1980), educational geography—its spatial equivalent— remains relatively underdeveloped and 'unnamed' though a few have identified themselves as practitioners. (2007a, p. 100)

By the 1970s, however, a shift in the conceptualization of space had begun, in which space was no longer viewed as static; instead, the assertion was that all spatial processes are constituted through social relations (Massey, 1994), with space now considered as socially constructed and constituted. Yet, this new perspective was itself criticized for presenting space as the outcome of social relations, being reduced to just an end product (ibid. p. 254). In the 1980s, space conceptualization evolved into one that asserted how social relations are spatially constituted as well, so that spatial organization matters and influences the way society works, a concept supported and developed by Lefebvre (1991) years before others adopted it.

In his last work, Elements of Rhythmanalysis, Lefebvre asserted that space and time "need to be thought together rather than separately" (2004, cited in Eldon, 2004c, p. vii).[15] This new perspective empowers space, seeing it a contributor to the production of history. With the emergence of such spatial determinism, it becomes clear that spatial organization makes a difference in the way society functions. That is, space, alongside time, becomes an important factor in the production of history so it "must be conceptualized integrally with time; indeed that the aim should be to think always in terms of space-time" (Massey, 1994, p. 2).

As a result of these intellectual revolutions in spatial thought, there has been a 'spatial turn' towards the end of the Twentieth Century, with space being resurrected in the discourse of scholars and 'key thinkers'[16], whose ideas have dominated thinking about space and place and transformed the way we analyse and conceptualize space (Hubbard and Kitchin, 2011). Henri Lefebvre's work on the production of space is considered particularly ground-breaking. Within his overarching Marxist theoretical framework, he views space as more than just a static milieu or a mental space; but as a triad of spaces (1991, Stanek, 2011). He considers space as a social construct shaped by societies (modes of production in Marx's terms) while transforming them

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[15] *Elements of Rhythmanalysis* was the last book Lefebvre wrote, although it only appeared after his death. The first edition was published in French in 1992 (Elden, 2004c).

[16] These key thinkers and scholars on space include but are not limited to Lefebvre (1991), Foucault (1984), Soja (1996, 1989), Tuan (1977), Harvey (1990) and Massey (1994, 2004, 2005). For a concise and holistic review of their work, among many others, on space refer to (Hubbard and Kitchin, 2011).

(1991). Space becomes both the constructor and the construct (Milieu) of our existence, thereby taking a more active role in the development of social theory.

This proposition of space as social construction was reasserted later by Massey (2004, p. 5), who pointed out that, in considering the "relational" construction of the identity of place, space, like identities, is relational, meaning that spaces are constructed and constituted through relationships and social engagements on different levels, from local to global. Space is thus not a passive milieu; instead, "space is conceived as the product of cultural, social, political, and economic interactions, imaginings, desires and relations" (Singh et al., 2007, p. 197). Deleuze also advocates a dynamic space with infinite spatial possibilities that fold and unfold in an evolving continuum (1993).

Another important intellectual development comes from Soja's (1989) brilliant yet highly criticized work, which reasserts the importance of spatiality in social theory. He offers an emancipation of space, equating it with time by opposing the concept of historicism. Partly coinciding with Soja's ideas, scholars like Thrift (2006) and Massey (1993) caution against separating the idea of space from time, as one of the reasons for some scholars' focus on space is to move beyond the hegemonic concepts of developmentalism and historicism, however "the fact remains that space without time is as improbable as time without space" (Crang and Thrift, 2000, quoted in Guslon and Symes, 2007b, p. 100). Later, in another brilliant work, Soja (1996) moved even beyond the modern and postmodern polarization of conceptualizing space, liberating it by offering a new way of thinking about our spatiality, in what he named the "Thirdspace".

One other spatial development in social theory is the new mobility paradigm discussed by Sheller and Urry (2006, p. 209). Their paradigm represents a new 'mobility turn' in social science, whereby spaces and places stretch beyond their geographical borders through the flow of people, products, technology, risks, dreams, and so on. According to Sheller (2011), mobilities research investigates the meaning, ideologies and complex relational dynamics associated with such mobilities including its relations to im-mobilities, thus connecting both "social and spatial theory in new ways" (ibid. p. 1). Such concepts of mobilities, flows, connections and relational networks lie in the centre of the social network analysis (SNA) methdological approach recently proposed by Larsen and Beech (2014) for spatial analysis in comparative and international education research. This approach argues for the use of new spatial theorizing for the study of comparative education. It tries to overcome what they see as limited and conflicting conceptualizing about the binaries of space and place by focusing mainly on the relational aspect and productive capacity of space, through analyzing mobilities, flows and networks. SNA as a methdological approach "focuses on mobilities and movement to demonstrate how spaces are enacted in relation to one another (ibid. p. 205). This development once again demonstrates how spaces have transcended their earlier conceptualization as fixed geographical terrains or isolated containers of social processes.

The work of the thinkers of space outlined here along with others, has set the foundation for the new shift known as the spatial turn, in which an increased interest in space is being shown by many social scientists, educationists, geographers and others, asserting that 'space matters' (Ferrare and Apple, 2010, Thrift, 2006). Although the notion of homogenous spaces, or of "one space in which one God created the world remains deeply rooted in the consciousness of western societies" (Lefebvre, 1991, cited in Löw, 2006, p. 120), it is currently being contested, with space being reconceived as relational, heterogeneous and socially constructed and reconstructed. Thus,

'space', according to Massey, is the best suited term to "express the spheres of juxtaposition and coexistence" (1999, cited in Löw, 2006, p. 120) because it allows for the simultaneous existence of multiple, heterogeneous, interlaced spaces:

> In this sense spaces are, first, an expression of the possibility of pluralities; second, they point to the possibility of overlapping and reciprocal relations; and third, and for this very reason, they are always open and indefinite with respect to future formations. This applies no less to national territorial spaces than it does to the microspaces of everyday life. (Löw, 2006, p. 120)

In sum, the new late Twentieth Century spatial turn has taken a postmodernist approach to space, treating it as transdisciplinary. Space is moving beyond its traditional domain of geography across increasingly fading disciplinary borders. Space is also being treated as a social construct rather than a given abstraction, with social relations spatially constituted as well, emphasizing its relational, relative, non-absolute nature.

## *Dialectic on the meaning of space*

Space has long evolved beyond its strictly geometrical meaning of an empty area (Lefebvre, 1991). There have been many definitions and interpretations of space, and in relation to place and environment, there seems to be a lack of consensus among scholars and social scientists on its meaning. Massey believes that "[b]uried in these unacknowledged disagreements is a debate which never surfaces" (1994, p. 250) on the meaning of space. In fact, many established scholars and thinkers have failed to define its meaning clearly, despite the prominence of space in their arguments (Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 1994). Foucault (1984) for example, categorized spaces into 'utopias' (imaginary and unreal places) and 'heterotopias' (real places, but with a function different from what they imply); however, he did not unpack the entity of space. "Foucault never explains what space it is that he is referring to", or even how it is produced (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 4).

Since space, historically, has remained attached to separate disciplines, as discussed in the previous section, the emergence of its different meanings can be explained through the distinct disciplinary perspectives that influence the ways we perceive and define space. This is simply and clearly manifested in the various definitions of space in general or discipline-specific dictionaries. In Collins English Dictionary, for example, there are different definitions of space that follow its general limited definition of being "the unlimited three-dimensional expanse in which all material objects are located" (Space, no date). These further definitions are associated with particular disciplines, defining space in psychology, mathematics, astrology, music, telecommunication and others. From an architectural perspective, for example, space has always been perceived and understood through the design process as physical (material) space, embodying "the physical manifestations of architecture [that] accommodate human activity" (Ching, 1979, p. 10). Thus, in his book *Architecture: Form, Space and Order*, read by almost every architecture and design student, Ching discusses space through a vocabulary of architectural design that includes the primary elements of physical form (point, line, plane, and volume) (ibid. p. 18), which define space, mark its borders, envelope and shape it, and therefore produce it.

In other disciplines, however, many refer to nonphysical space, like psychologists, who focus on inner space, or linguists, who refer to the abstract notion of space in language and literature. Currently, many disciplines link inside and outside space, as through Durkheim's anthropological lens, through which space is viewed "as an external projection of social and mental processes" (Hanson and Hillier, 2001, p. 5).

In the social sciences, many definitions of space refer to its relation to place. For example, according to Tuan (1977), space and place are very much intertwined, as the former is more abstract; we get attached to a place that is security, and we long for space because it represents freedom (ibid. p. 3). Many argue that, due to the complexities of the current era of time-space compression (globalization), people long for security, which might be partially fulfilled through a strong sense of locality, a place of their own to help them feel rooted. Therefore, while time is equated with progress, movement and unavoidable dynamism, "'space'/'place' is equated with stasis and reaction", and "romanticised escapism" from progress and history (Massey, 1994, p. 151). Human geographers have also focused on place as a central theme, looking at emotional responses and how an ordinary place becomes significant through being experienced by people (Rose, 1993). Although this partly coincides with my research focus on the experience of learners, this view is limited as it focuses only on place, excluding space and the intertwined relationship between them. This notion of space as abstract and place as more meaningful, which is partially adapted by Tuan and fully by many others, has been opposed by Massey. In her paper, "Geographies of responsibility" (2004), she argues for the meaningfulness of both space and place: space is not abstract but a node in the global geometry, which in turn is anchored to local place. Space and place are thus intertwined: the global cannot exist without the local, and vice versa. The question of where local place stops and becomes global space is still very much debated, which resonates with the question posed by Bruno Latour, of whether the railway should be considered "local or global" (1993, cited in Massey, 2004, p. 8).

Lefebvre (1991) presents a powerful definition and unpacking of the entity and meaning of space in *The Production of Space*. He assumes a theoretical double triad of "the perceived, the conceived and the lived" (ibid. p. 39) that can be translated into a spatial triad of "spatial practice" (What do people do in those spaces?), "representations of space" (How are the spaces presented and represented?), and "representational spaces" or "spaces of representation" (What is the actual experience of those spaces?) (1991, p. 33). This well-known triad has been discussed, analysed and utilized by many[17]. In Lefebvre's theorization, space becomes a social construct (product), constructed socially through the movements of our bodies and the social relationship that both appropriate space and emerge from the link between the perceived and conceived space. As space is a temporal intersectionality of social relations (Lefebvre, 1991; Ferrare and Apple, 2010; Soja, 1996), the elements of spatial causality, time and the social construction of space, which were included in the earlier interpretations of space, all seem too important and intrinsically profound to be excluded from this process of exploration of the spatio-educational experiences.

Since Lefebvre's work coincides with my own understanding of space and resonates with many aspects of my field findings and observations, the social construction of space and his spatial triad will be adopted as the theoretical framework for my study and for analysis of the spatio-

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[17] Many scholars discussed or engaged with Lefebvre's triad including Middleton (2013, 2011, 2010), Ferrare and Apple (2010), Harvey (1990), Stanek (2011), Singh et al. (2007), Zhang (2006), Watkins (2005), and Elden (2004).

educational experiences at the university campus in the UAE. To prepare for this, in the following section I present a more in-depth exploration of the Lefebvrian triad.

## *Lefebvre's Triad and this research*

Lefebvre (1991) managed to ascend space above monodisciplinary perspectives when he posited that space is a social construct; that is, it is socially produced, constructed and engineered; and social relations are always constituted relative to space (ibid). Despite this, I believe he (as a sociologist, Marxist intellectual and philosopher) still confined it to the social sciences to some extent. He also offered a very abstract, non-specific representation of space. On the one hand, this has allowed many interpretations and utilizations of his concepts by other scholars in a range of disciplines. On the other hand, it has, in some cases, made it difficult to connect his abstract ideas to practical work experiences from the field.

According to Lefebvre (ibid. p. 11), there are three separately apprehended fields of space: The "physical" (the world of nature and the cosmos that can be defined by practical sensory activity and the perception of physical reality around us); the "mental" ("including logical and formal abstractions" as defined by philosophers and mathematicians); and the "social" (defined by social engagements). Of the three fields, Lefebvre regarded the mental space as the most dominant historically because of the historical western tradition of considering space as the abstract space of the mathematicians and scientists (ibid. pp. 38-39). Since abstract science has contributed to the explanation of many unknown phenomena across the line of history, the study of space tended to be viewed from that mathematical-scientific (positivist) perspective (ibid). Consequently, space has been viewed as an absolute, passive locus — the abstract space of scientists. Lefebvre realized that this reductionist view of space offered a very limited, hence problematic, understanding of space. Additionally, the dominance of the mental space tends to envelop the physical and the social, leading to the marginalization of the socially-constructed nature of space (ibid. pp. 5-6); therefore, space was perceived as just the passive setting (the envelope) for our existence, rather than the structure that we help to construct (ibid). In response to this, Watkins (2005, p. 220), among others, calls for balance among the three fields of space in his paper, which introduces Lefebvre's triad into the field of organizational analysis.

In Lefebvre's (1991, p. 11-39) quest for a "unitary theory" of the three fields (physical, mental and social space), a "spatial code" that would offer some order to the interpretation of the three fields and would also allow space to be read and constructed, he assumes his conceptual double triad of perceived, conceived and lived and "its 'translation into spatial terms': spatial practice, representations of space, and spaces of representation" (Stanek, 2011, p. 128) as explained below:

1. Spatial practice, which views space as perceived, represents the physical aspect of social practice that "secretes the society's space […] propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interconnection; it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 38). Thus, it represents "the material manifestation of social practices (Thompson, 2007, p. 113), which produces the perceived aspect of space. In other words, it is the space of everyday habitual practices, including the use of our senses and hands, our body movements and our interaction with the sensory world around us (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 40). Spatial practice can also be defined as certain social practices that produce and give meaning to a space through activities that involve production and reproduction, appropriation, control,

movement and utilization of space (Stanek, 2011, p. 84). Spatial practice ensures cohesion and continuity in terms of the competence and performance of each member of a society in relation to that space to allow for production and reproduction (Lefebvre, 1991, p.33). As such, spatial practice joins with the other two elements of the triad to provide the cohesion and continuity required for the everyday functions of a society (Watkins, 2005, p. 210). In the context of my research, the perceived space will include the physical aspects of campus space and its users, delineated through the students' spatial practices.

2.  Representations of space, which view space as conceived, are the mental constructions and abstract conceptualizations of space, "the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdivides and social engineers, as of a certain type of artist with a scientific bent" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 38). This field produces theoretical knowledge, for example in the way space is represented in fields like mathematics, architecture, literature or philosophy. "It is the space constructed through the discourse by city planners and bureaucrats" (Chen, 2006, p. 64), who conceptualize and represent space according to their distinct disciplinary structures (Shields, 1999, p. 161). It is the space produced through epistemological and theoretical means, rather than an ontological representation of the lived experience, which also makes it the dominant space in any society (Lefebvre, 1991) as discussed earlier. This space is tied to the relations of production and constructed out of symbols, codes and signs that "allow such material practices to be talked about and understood" (Harvey, 1990, p. 218). As the conceived space represents the manifestation of mental constructions based on our rational and abstract understanding of space, this can, in the context of my research, be translated into abstract signs, codes and mental images, as well as the discursive language used by campus users and professionals to describe the campus space in my field site. It also includes spatial representations that may appear in the form of signs, maps or any sort of linguistic landscape[18] that links to how the Emirati female students mentally conceive and construct their learning spaces and how those spaces are represented for them.

3.  Representational spaces or spaces of representation,[19] which view space as "directly *lived* through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users,' but also of some artists and perhaps of those, such as a few writers and philosophers" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 39, italics in original). These refer to the social field of our mental projections and products of desire, symbols and imagination. They are considered "mental inventions […] that imagine new meanings or possibilities for spatial practices" in our daily life (Harvey, 1991, p. 219). In other words, they are about the production of meaning; as our mental creations and imagined spaces manifest through daily spatial practices, representational spaces produce the lived space. Thus, we 'live' spaces by attributing historical, emotional, symbolic or genealogical meaning to them (Middleton, 2011, p. 7). In my research, the lived space plays a prominent role, representing the social space as the outcome of spatial practice and the representation of space, involving forms of metaphor or other tropes, and the site of spatial experiences.

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[18] The linguistic landscape includes the various uses and formation of language spatially in a public space like signs, graffiti, displayed names or advertisements.

[19] Some scholars like Watkins (2005) use 'spaces of representation' to refer to Lefebvre's third spatial element of 'lived space' instead of the original translation offered by Nicholson-Smith, which used the term 'representational spaces'.

Although Lefebvre's initial theorizations about space seemed to equate physical and social space with reality as opposed to the mental and theoretical space of philosophers, where space is treated as an abstract monodisciplinary concept, he later, in his triad, offered a broader definition that integrates the three through a dependent and dynamic process (1991). In this latter definition, social spaces are the lived experiences that emerge as a result of the dialectical relation between spatial practice (perceived) and representations of space (conceived) (Lefebvre, 1991; Stanek, 2011, p. 129). Lived space thus stands between the two poles of the perceived and conceived, while incorporating both (Zhang, 2005), which establishes space as more than just a passive locus of social relations. Lefebvre (1991) points out that space is fundamental to our existence; in his triad, space takes a more active role that integrates all spatial aspects rather than focusing on a particular element of space (Watkins, 2005). Lefebvre thereby transforms space from being a mental, passive locus into an active process that embodies our engagement with the world.

There has been a lot of discussion, interpretation and utilization of Lefebvre's double triad[20]. Despite these scholars' different focuses in applying Lefebvre's triad, they agree on the meaning of each moment (perceived, conceived and lived) and the relationship between the two triads (Stanek, 2011). I have developed my own interpretation of the triad, based on the many on-going discussions of the double triad, specifically Schmid's[21] (2005, cited in Stanek, 2011, p. 129) and Elden's (2004, cited in Stanek, 2011, p. 129), which integrate Lefebvre's spatial concepts of perceived, conceived and lived with the physical, mental and social fields.

At this point, it is important to note that Lefebvre developed his theories during critical historical moments and that they evolved in association with events around those moments (Middleton, 2013, p. 14). The development of his work and theories therefore needs to be understood within the context of his whole intellectual journey. This assertion about the need to contextualize his work to understand it is shared by many of the scholars who have discussed, interpreted and applied Lefebvre's double triad, notably Middleton (2013), Elden (2004a; 2004b), Shields (1999), Soja (1996) and others. For example, Stanek believes that Lefebvre's formulations of the three moments of spaces was very much influenced by his engagement with the work of the Institute de Sociologie Urbaine (ISU) in the 1960s and 1970s on the practices of dwelling (habitation) (2011, p. 81). Therefore, Lefebvre's reading on the triad, if taken per se, is not self-evident as it needs to be understood within the whole context of his life and the development of his research and published work; that is, a panoramic understanding is required of the whole intellectual terrain of Lefebvre's work (Shields, 2011; Stanek, 2011; Zhang, 2006). Soja, similarly describes Lefebvre in his life journey as a "restless intellectual nomad" who "'chose space' as his primary interpretive thread and, beginning in the 1960s, insistently wove space into all his major writings" (1996, p. 7). These views, especially Soja's, confirmed my own feelings and mirrored my initial frustrations in reading Lefebvre's work, in that his introduction to *The Production of Space* was well-organized, "solid and convincing" while the rest seemed contradictory, scattered and inconsistent

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[20] E.g. Middleton (2013, 2011, 2010), Stanek (2011), Zhang (2006), Chen (2006), Schmid (2005, cited in Stanek, 2011, p. 129), Watkins (2005), Shields (1999) and Harvey (1990).

[21] Chrisitian Schmid discussion about the triads of space is considered the most advanced and can be found in the book *Stadt, Raum und Gesellschaft: Henri Lefebvre und die Theorie der Produktion des Raumes* (2005, cited in cited in Stanek, 2011, p. 129).

with earlier arguments (ibid. p. 8). At a later stage, it occurred to Soja that Lefebvre had possibly treated his text as a "polyphonic fugue", spatializing and freeing it from the linear temporal order of introduction, body and conclusion; rather, key concepts were introduced, then changed and manipulated throughout the text (ibid. pp. 8-9). This knowledge was comforting for me in accounting for the difficulty I had encountered while trying to understand and interpret Lefebvre's work, specifically, the body of *The Production of Space*, as stated above.

Lefebvre's humanistic approach to space was also very appealing to me in terms of its role in reinstating the "'individuals' and communities' 'right to space'" (Smith, 1984, cited in Shields, 2011, p. 282), the social construction and production of space, and the dialectical relation between space, society and culture. Even more appealing was Lefebvre's refusal to finalize his thesis and offer specificity, as his way of opposing and resisting the controlling forces of capitalism that dehumanise individuals and communities and flatten differences (Shield, 2011). Lefebvre's open-ended, abstract theorization has allowed many scholars to apply his theories and offer their own interpretations of them. Applying his abstract framework to a specific context like a university Campus in the UAE seemed both challenging and emancipating at the same time. On the one hand, his spatial triad did not offer a clear defined map for the study of space in its specificity for my research as its physical attributes of shape, area, colour, interior and furniture arrangements, or even the concept of gendering of spaces offered; in fact, Lefebvre has been criticized by Shields for failing "to understand the importance of gender roles" (1999, p. 134, cited in Middleton, 2013, p. 24). On the other hand, his abstract open-ended work allowed me the freedom to generate my own theory in the analysis to fit my unique context. Thus, although his work has been criticized as 'Eurocentric' (Middleton, 2013, p. 24), I side with Middleton among others who believe that Lefebvre's work can be applied across contexts and disciplines as indicated by the increasing number of studies drawing on his theories and conceptualization of space[22].

Lefebvre's work has provided me with a point of departure, a spatial push represented in his triad and the overarching understanding of space as a social construction, and a means to utilize space as a relational, dynamic and active product and producer of social relations. This liberating concept of space gives a new sense to the relation between the space, individuals and society that produces spatial experiences. Space influences our lived experience of the world, with every experience consisting of Lefebvre's spatial triad. The triad generates many questions and offers directions for my research into the spatial experience of learning, while also providing a more concrete definition to discuss space and understand Emirati female students' spatiality, with all its codes, significations and cultural formations. However, an important point to clarify is that Lefebvre's triad only offers a point of departure for my study of space, a tentative, flexible and overarching framework to guide my methodological and analytical choices, and emerging ideas. My research findings will not be bound by any limitations or impositions created by the triad. It is intended as an inspirational and heuristic choice that offers a beginning and not an end.

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[22] For a review of these studies, please see Middleton (2013, 2011, 2010), Stanek (2011), Ferrare and Apple (2010), Singh et al. (2007), Zhang (2006), Watkins (2005), and Harvey (1990).

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# "Deliberative Democracies in Global Justice Movements: an Ethnomethodological Approach"

Haworth, John

## 1.0.    Introduction: Social Movements, Democracies & Ethnomethodologies.

The title of the forthcoming Manchester Social Movements conference, "Alternative Futures and Popular Protest", is in many ways a summary of what I'm trying to do with my research. Whatever their claims about other worlds being possible, social movements often come in for criticism for having no clear objectives or coherent critique of neo-liberalism, and for being potentially as authoritarian as the types of societies which they're trying to replace.

As I shall explain in more detail below, writers such as Georgescu-Roegen (1971/1999) and Daly (1992) have developed ideas of steady-state economies: O'Neill (2011) has developed qualitative indicators of social well-being, such as the Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare (ISEW) and the Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI), Lawn (2006) has attempted to use indicators such as these to identify points at which economies reach their optimal scales and Lawn & Clarke (2010) have developed a contracting threshold hypothesis as an ecological basis for world development.

My research takes this a stage further to address the second of these criticisms, that social movements may be as authoritarian as the societies they're trying to replace.  In this article, I shall thus explain what I see as the role and importance of social movements under neo-liberalism.  I shall continue by looking at some theories of deliberative democracies and at their application to social movements.  Finally, I shall look at some methods of studying these democracies and at the role in this of ethnomethodologies and conversation analyses.

## 2.0. Social Movements: Ecologies, Economics, Politics, Ideologies, Interactions.

*2.1. Introduction: Social Movements, Political Parties & Social Formations.*
First, I should make some basic observations.  Since so many people ask me, I'll explain what I see as the difference between the roles of political parties and social movements.  For me, then, political parties are associated with periods of relative social consensus, such as the 1940s and 1950s.  Here, political parties attempt to bring about social changes through the use of conventional political institutions.  Social movements are associated with periods of relative social crisis, such as the 1960s crisis of Keynesianism and the present crisis of neo-liberalism, where a

crisis of confidence has arisen in conventional political parties and political institutions, and where communities have formed social movements to bring about changes outside these institutions and in the wider public sphere.

Also, while political parties operate at the political level, social movements operate at all of these levels of the social formation, and that a political struggle can be seen as one of a series of such struggles. Thus, at the present time, social movements may be involved in ecological struggles against hydraulic fracturing or fracking, economic struggles against transatlantic trade agreements, political struggles to win seats in political institutions, ideological struggles against the presentation of realities in the popular media, such as asking questions about the desirability of free trade or about who government deficits are owed to, and interactionist struggles about vertical and horizontal democracies.

Finally, social movements most involved in practical and short-term struggles are likely to be those finding it most difficult to adopt horizontal democracies. Just as armies fighting wars and businesses competing in markets don't use horizontal democracies, social movements involved in relatively immediate problems such as fracking and transatlantic trade agreements will have relatively little time for debating things to a consensus, while those involved in longer-term ideological and interactionist struggles will be more concerned to maintain these types of objectives.

## 2.2. Ecologies: Environmentalisms & Ecologisms.

Dryzek (2005) presents environmentalist approaches such as free-market environmentalism, ecological modernisation and sustainable development. These approaches, widely taken up by national governments and by international organisations, rather than seeing the economic level as relatively autonomous of the ecological level, tended to see the ecological level as autonomous of the economic level, and arrived at out of a struggle with economic interests at a compromise which set out to solve ecological problems within the limits of neo-liberalism. Thus, free-market environmentalism set out to impose economic costs on polluters, ecological modernisation set out to use an environmental Kuznets curve to establish a point at which economic growth could be achieved without ecological costs, and sustainable development, once a radical Southern discourse, was institutionalised by international organisations to emphasise economic development rather than sustainability.

In contrast, writers such as Cudworth (2003: 36-66) explain the contradictions identified by deep ecology, social ecology, eco-socialism and eco-feminism between the economic and ecological levels of the social formation. Here, deep ecologists saw this contradiction as a straightforward one between humanity and the environment, or between anthropo-centrism and eco-centrism. Social ecologists, such as Bookchin (1991), saw it as a contradiction between the environment and social hierarchies such as states. Eco-socialists, such as Kovel (2002), saw it as a contradiction between the environment and capitalism. Finally eco-feminists seemed to see it as a contradiction between the environment and science.

Thus, in practical terms, ecologist, as opposed to environmentalist, approaches to the environment have identified strategies which go beyond neo-liberalism. Thus, writers such as O'Neill (2011) have developed qualitative indicators of social well-being, such as the Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare (ISEW) and the Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI), to replace quantitative indicators such as the Gross National Product (GNP). Others, such as Lawn (2006)

have attempted to use indicators such as these to identify points at which economies reach their optimal scales and to conclude that the Australian economy reached its optimal scale sometime in the 1970s. Finally, in an excellent contribution to the economics of the global South, Lawn & Clarke (2010) suggest that economies which industrialise late reach their optimal scales earlier than economies which have industrialised earlier in what they call a contracting threshold hypothesis. From this point of view, if economies such as Australia reached their optimal scales in the 1970s, the authors call for an immediate transition to steady state economies in industrialised northern countries (plus Australia), while the economies of non-industrialised southern countries are given a chance to reach their optimal scales.

## 2.3. Economics: Long Waves & Regulations, Economic Rights, Currency Areas.

Years ago, economists such as Harris (1988), in attempting to come to terms with the period of neo-liberal restructuring of the 1970s and 1980s, identified a series of previous periods of economic restructuring, based on the coming of new technologies, such as steam technologies and railways, electricity and telegraph communications, large-scale assembly line production and computer technologies and genetic engineering. These periods of restructuring Harris (1988: 27-29) explains by means of Kondratiev's long-wave theories, and he goes on (1988: 32-35) to explain how the regulation theories of Aglietta associate these technological periods with specific systems of regulation or state intervention.

On this type of theory, we would expect these technologies and their systems of regulation to have led to a new period of economic growth since the 1980s. But ethnographies of social movements so often start with references to living standards having fallen and inequalities having vastly increased over the last 35 years. First, there is no guarantee that new technologies will always be found to sort out economic crises. Second, periods of technological innovations previous to Keynesianism didn't actually lead to the wealth and full employment associated with it, and these previous periods were still associated with mass poverty and with high levels of economic inequality. Third, the specific technologies associated with neo-liberalism, were considered to need much more flexible markets and systems of regulation. Fourth, computer technologies facilitated the rise of economic globalisation, which increasingly undermined the economic regulatory instruments available to national governments. Writers such as Van Apeldoorn (2001) have explained how, under the influence of powerful lobby groups such as the European Round Table of Industrialists, Keynesian regulatory instruments, such as taxation and public spending, had been replaced by neo-liberal instruments, such as exchange rates and interest rates, threatening to take us back to pre-Keynesian economics,.

Neo-liberalism, and capitalism in general, thus seems to be long on political rights, as Britain prepares to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta, but short on economic rights, as a succession of neo-liberal politicians have called on workers to get on their bikes, suggested that unemployment is a price worth paying, and left migrant workers to get lifts, not on bikes, but on dodgy boats crossing the Mediterranean, on board container ships and under the wheels of lorries. Thus, members of global justice movements have thus been at the forefront of movements to develop ideas of the importance of use values as opposed to exchange values, economic rights, such as basic or citizen's incomes and rights to affordable housing, and the reduction of the working week to an estimated 20 hours. Global justice movements are also in favour of regional economies and optimal currency areas, as suggested in the seminal work of Mundell (Woodin & Lucas, 2004). Having said this, Woodin & Lucas are not suggesting that the entire European Union, or even the Eurozone, could become an optimal currency area, rather

that the Union, to meet Mundell's criteria, would have to consist of several such areas.  Also, these smaller areas don't necessarily correspond to nation-states, but would presumably be of a similar size, and ecological economists are thus not campaigning for a return to nation-states as with some right-wing movements, such as the UK Independence Party, but rather seeking a more rational system of organising a European economy.

## 2.4. Politics: Globalisms & Dominances, Consensuses & Antagonisms.

Keynesian regulatory instruments have been constituted at the political level, and carried out by relatively accountable organisations such as governments, while the neo-liberal instruments had been constituted at the economic level, by relatively unaccountable organisations such as independent central banks, and that, from this point of view, neo-liberalism could be said to have involved what Althusser would have called a displacement of dominance to the economic level. Similarly, Keynesianism left governments with a certain amount of choice in determining levels of taxation and public spending, while neo-liberalism and integrated economies left governments committed in advance to supporting systems of regulation, which would support the roles of their economies in a system of comparative advantage, leaving, again to take up the debates of the 1960s, the relative autonomy of the political level much diminished.

Several writers have explained the role of the European Commission and other unelected institutions in this displacement of dominance and undermining of the political level.  Here, Thus Drahokoupil (2009) explains how some eastern European states have restructured themselves as competition states in order to attract western investment.  Vliegenthart & Overbeek (2009) explain how the European Commission, in co-operation with some eastern European states, restructured the tax systems of these countries in favour of low and indirect taxes.  Horn (2009) explains the influence of the High Level Group of company lawyers in restructuring European company law along capital market lines.  Finally, Bieling & Jaeger (2009) explain the influence of world central bankers in developing the so-called Basel 02 accords, which arguably prepared the way for the banking crisis of 2008.  But, as Bieling & Jaeger (2009: 104) point out, the changes were "deemed to be technical" and "no reasons for broader political participation were seen".

From this point of view, national politicians such as Tony Blair saw themselves as acting within serious political limits.  Thus, Wigmore (2014: 31) has made this point very recently, thus: "Mainstream parties have accepted that their power is limited by larger forces in the modern world.  When Tony Blair said that politics was no longer about using the directive hand of government, he was accepting limits on what he could achieve".  But there are two strange things about this.  First, these constraints were somehow seen as inevitable, not imposed by anybody, and independent of any sectional interest.  Thus, writers such as Beck (1997) and Giddens (1998) saw them not as the strategy of a specific economic elite, but as some sort of inevitable process of "reflexive modernisation" taking us "beyond left and right".  Second, the constraints were seen as having gained the acceptance of the mass of the population, when, in actual fact, large sections of these populations abandoned not only the mainstream parties, but even the electoral process altogether.  Thus, people often say to me: "We didn't vote for austerity", as if governments had some sort of alternative; the point is rather that there was very little else to vote for.

Thus, far from being beyond left and right, this concentration of political parties in the centre of the political spectrum has opened up a considerable space, both on the left and on the right, for social movements to represent groups of people feeling excluded by this supposed consensus.

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On the right, there are nationalist parties such as the UK Independence Party and hard-line religious movements such as the Islamic State, and on the left, the Socialist Workers Party's *Unite the Resistance* movement, the Coalition of Resistance's *People's Assemblies*, political parties such as the Green Party and the Trade Union & Socialist Coalition, and the various Global Justice and *Occupy* movements dating from the 2011 occupations of the area outside St Paul's Cathedral and elsewhere. Interestingly, these movements have tended to complement each other, with *Unite the Resistance* conducting an economic struggle by support works in industrial disputes, the *People's Assemblies* and political parties conducting a political struggle against a specific government and the Global Justice movements conducting a more general ideological struggle against neo-liberalism in general.

Mouffe (2000) has been a leading critic of the type of consensus being engineered by neo-liberalism, stressing the inevitability of antagonism and the need for a public sphere where these antagonisms may be recognised, and stressing the dangers of Fascism and right-wing extremism where these public spheres don't exist. At the political level, the antagonisms between neo-liberalism and Global Justice movements are over precisely this, the need not for a consensus but for the recognition of a variety of social and cultural identities in a public sphere. Social movements writers such as della Porta (2005a, 2005b) have gone on to study the recognition of these antagonisms in political institutions such as the European Social Forum.

## 2.5. Ideologies & Myths: Free Trade, Africa, States, Deficits, Movements.

If Global Justice movements are seeking to establish a public sphere to recognise antagonisms, I'll now go to consider what these antagonisms might be. Of course, some of these I've already mentioned, such as the need for steady-state economies, economic rights and regional economies, but what I see as the crucial ideological task of Global Justice movements is the exposure of antagonisms or fallacies, which are presented in neo-liberal discourse as uncontroversial propositions, about which there cannot be any antagonism, and which are thus excluded from the neo-liberal media or public sphere.

First, then, free trade is presented as uncontroversial and as in the interest of all countries. Thus, Cox (1981) explained how free trade has become sufficiently widely accepted as to attain "common sense" status, when, in reality, free trade is in the interests of countries in the best position to trade. Second, and related to this, the idea of African countries joining the European Union is presented as inconceivable. Thus, if free trade can be discursively constructed as common sense, then Cox's perspective allows understanding how the dominant views of Africa are those of poverty, refugees, basket case failed states, people in need of our help and Bob Geldof appealing to us to give to Live Aid. What there's no suggestion of here is that African people have rights, comparable to those of Europeans. Third, neo-liberal states are presented as being concerned with the interests of all citizens when, from a more historical point of view, they can be seen as the outcome of struggles between economic elites and absolute monarchies. Fourth, neo-liberalism tends to reify the creditors of western European governments. Thus, the media constantly talk about a need to cut a government deficit, without ever specifying who the money is owed to. But these creditors, who have to be compensated, appear to be some of the same people who would have been paying taxes under Keynesianism. Thus, it could be argued that these creditors are imposing a structural adjustment programme on the British and other governments. Finally, neo-liberalism likes to suggest that members of Global Justice movements are bunches of anarchists, extremists and troublemakers, when, as I've tried to suggest here, these

members are bunches of highly intelligent and educated, if somewhat alienated and dissident, individuals standing in a position of antagonism to neo-liberalism.


**2.6. Interactions: Verticalisms & Horizontalisms.**
As I've suggested above, organisations involved in the most immediate and short-term struggles at the economic and political levels of the social formation will be those most likely to continue with traditional and hierarchical systems of decision-making. Thus, NGOs at the London European Social Forum of 2004 employed staff on traditional employment contracts, while Trotskyist political parties have long used systems of so-called democratic centralism, where strategies are subjected to democratic debates and then voted on, but, once decided, these strategies are considered to be binding on all members, and then expected to unite behind the decision. By contrast, Global Justice movements have thus attempted to abolish hierarchies, and to establish decision-making procedures based not on voting, but on establishing a consensus. What this seeks to do is to establish strategies based not on the most popular, but rather on the least unpopular, options, thus securing the consent of the largest possible number of members. This may not be the most efficient way of doing things, and is not particularly suited to organising short-term campaigns, but it does show a commitment to an inclusive organisation, and pre-figures a society, such as a steady-state economy, which would be concerned with this inclusivity within communities rather than with shorter-term economic objectives.


**3.0. Democracies: Aggregative & Deliberative; Agonistic Pluralisms.**
When I first got involved with *Occupy* in the Summer of 2013, the website contained an interesting explanation of how *Occupy*'s systems of democracy were supposed to work. *Occupy* didn't do any voting; instead majorities debated things with minorities until a consensus was arrived at, based on the least unpopular, rather than most popular, outcomes. From this point of view, this system was comparable to a preference system of voting in relation to a first past the post system. This type of democracy, then, sets out to arrive at good decisions rather than majority decisions, and this is why I've called it a qualitative democracy rather than a quantitative democracy, or why political theorists call it a deliberative rather than an aggregative system.

These political theorists were very often concerned with the poor quality of modern democracies. In the 1950s, writers such as Schumpeter (1947/2012) and Downs (1957/1985) suggested that, as larger quantities of consumer goods came on the market, modern voters were more interested in economics than politics and tended to leave things to politicians, who then appealed not to political theories and ideologies, but to electoral majorities through appealing to popular ideologies developed on the television and other mass media. Under neo-liberalism, these writers have been concerned with the types of problems which Occupiers are only too familiar with, a change in systems of regulation from taxation and public spending to exchange and interest rates, the increasing influence of multinational companies through single markets and threats by these companies to concentrate investments in the least regulated economies. From this point of view, this poor quality of modern democracy is a question of what I call the displacement of dominance from the political to the economic and ideological levels of the social formation. Early theorists of deliberative democracy included Rawls (1993/2005) and Habermas (1996). Habermas in particular is well-known for promoting the idea of a public sphere of debate, which has been much diminished under neo-liberalism.

Habermas tended to suggest that some sort of consensus could be achieved through a rational debate, much as the *Occupy* website suggested. Other writers have picked up problems with this. Thus, Young (2002) pointed out limitations to the type of rationality promoted by Habermas, suggesting that it excluded the rationalities of ethnic minorities and of other disadvantaged communities. Mouffe (2000) pointed out the limits to the extent to which a consensus could be achieved, suggesting that there will always be some sort of antagonism between ideas, the one of which can't be demonstrated to be better than the other. Mouffe especially picks up the inevitable antagonism between freedoms and equalities, which can't be settled in advance, but a combination of which has to be sorted out in specific debates in concrete social formations.

The problem is, of course, that multinational companies don't really want to debate things with us, and studies of deliberative democracies have all too easily degenerated into studies of consultation exercises such as citizen's juries and others, about the details of neo-liberalisms. Thus, I've found the ideas of Habermas and Mouffe most useful in studying organisations, which set out to have members of an equal status, such as the global justice movements I talked about earlier. Della Porta (2005a; 2005b) is a pioneering writer about deliberative democracies in global justice movements, having done some extensive studies of the European Social Forum in the 2000s, done mostly on surveys and interviews. From a more radical point of view, Juris and Khasnabish (2013) have pioneered the ethnographic study of social movements, something which I'm just getting into.

**4.0. Ethnomethodologies: Stages & Resources, Philosophies & Methods.**
**4.1. Introduction:**
In this section, I'll develop what I see as my main contribution to knowledge here, the relationship between philosophies of empiricism, interactionism, structuralism and ethnomethodology in terms of their levels of abstraction and levels of the social formation, and go on to describe my basic research design. But first, I'll identify some research stages, which I consider to be common to all research methods, and some resources, which I consider to be common to all qualitative methods.

**4.2. Research Stages & Resources: Documents, Ethnographies & Interviews.**
Many research books, such as Silverman (2011) make distinctions between types of disciplines, such as the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities and between types of research methods, such as quantitative and qualitative methods. What I'm looking for here are not the differences, but the similarities between, or structural narratives of, these methods, which I consider can be analysed into at least six stages. First, there is a question of gaining access to data and research settings. Second, there are questions of research ethics and of relationships with researched populations. Third, there are questions of controls on data, such as random samples and purposive cases. Fourth, there are questions of data collections, analyses and presentations.

Much is made (e.g. Silverman, 2011) of the variety and diversity of qualitative research methods, but, here, I shall attempt to simplify the richness of this chaos by developing a hierarchy or series of levels of these methods in terms of their accessibility to data, their validity and reliability in terms of studying naturally-occurring social interaction and arguably in terms of their ethical standards. For me, these methods could best be organised into three levels. First, texts and visual images can be seen as accessible naturally-occurring documents, which can be looked at without setting up ethnographic observations or getting involved in focus groups or interviews. Second, ethnographies and analyses of naturally-occurring talk involve less accessible data, which

still has to be collected, but which avoid, at least from an ethnomethodological point of view, the validity and reliability problems of interviews. Finally, focus groups and interviews, which are not concerned with naturally-occurring social interaction, seek the views of participants in attempting to fill gaps in our understanding of this interaction.

## 4.2. Philosophies: Levels of Abstraction & Levels of the Social Formation.
In this section, I shall attempt to establish ethnomethodology as a structuralist theory of the interactionist levels of the social formation. It is structuralist in the sense of being conducted at a higher level of abstraction than other forms of interactionism and interactionist I the sense of being concerned with the interactionist levels.

Benton & Craib (2011: 126-127) explain how the critical realist philosopher Roy Bhaskar (1998) organised scientific disciplines into a hierarchy of causalities. The question for critical realism is then how to identify the systems of causality which lead to the exercise of this relative autonomy. Previously, Benton & Craib (2011: 124-125) explain that Bhaskar sees these systems as what he calls mechanisms, and it would appear that Bhaskar's theories have enormous potential for developing this idea of relative autonomy, and that the task of a critical realist social science is to understand these mechanisms at each level of the social formation. In his recent work, the veteran social movement theorist Sidney Tarrow (2012: 06-28) doesn't mention Bhaskar or critical realism, but he does recognise (2012: 22-23) the emergence of a so-called "mechanism-and-process approach to social action", taken up by Tarrow, McAdam & Tilly (2001).

In earlier writings, Benton (1984) explains how, in his reworkings of Marxism, the 1960s political theorist Louis Althusser identified some levels of the social formation, which were relatively autonomous of the economic level. These were the political and ideological levels at which relatively autonomous political and ideological practices were conducted within constraints laid down by the economic level. This was a significant advance on, and a more precise formulation of, more traditional forms of Marxism, where these practices were considered, in a very vague sort of way, to be entirely determined by the economic level.

Layder (1993), in his considerations on social research, develops a similar model of levels of the social formation. Concentrating on social interaction, Layder's context, setting, situated activity and self levels could be considered in Althusser's formulation to correspond to relatively autonomous interactionist and psychological levels, at which relatively autonomous interactionist and psychological practices could themselves be considered to be relatively autonomous of the ideological level.

For me, these interactionist practices are the concern of ethnomethodology, which sets out to identify the interactionist practices through which any sort of social life is achieved. Of course, ethnomethodology has often been criticised for abstracting from power relations, and for considering these interactionist practices to be completely rather than relatively autonomous. What I'm suggesting here is that they are not completely autonomous but relatively autonomous of the economic, political and ideological levels of the social formation.

From the point of view of levels of abstraction, Silverman (1985: 106-110) makes some crucial distinctions between interactionist and ethnomethodological ethnographies. Thus, ethnomethodologies are concerned with the production of social order rather than with the investigation of social disorder. They are concerned with conceptual models and interpretive procedures leading people to behave in acceptable ways. They suspend moral stances and moves

away from identifications with underdogs associated with interactionism. Finally, and perhaps most crucially, they identify universals of social interaction.

I'll now attempt to summarise the sense in which ethnomethodological ethnographies may be said to be conducted at a higher level of abstraction than interactionist ethnographies. Thus, ethnomethodologies are concerned with the interactionist practices, which constitute the social formation, rather than the exceptions to these practices, which constitute social disorder. They are concerned with studying whole social formations rather than with sorting out specific problems of existing social formations. They are concerned with bringing about social change through disrupting common sense patterns of social interaction. Ethnomethodologies, and especially conversation analyses, are concerned with analysing the interactionist practices of the social formation into types and structures of conversations. Finally, ethnomethodologies are concerned with recorded evidence of social interactions rather than with common sense observations of these interactions or with the views of participants as expressed in interviews.

**4.3. Designs: Contents, Narratives & Membership Categories.**
Since I mentioned above that qualitative research methods could be basically presented as consisting of documents, ethnographies and interviews, I can't help noticing that Silverman's (2011) text contains a basic narrative structure in each of his chapters about these methods, progressing from a relatively quantitative method such as content analysis, through various types of narrative analysis, and ending with an ethnomethodological or conversation analysis. Here, I'll have a look at this in a bit more detail.

Content analyses appear in visual images as content analyses, in texts as comparative keyword analyses, in ethnographies as naturalisms, in focus groups as quantitative content analyses and in interviews as empiricisms. Narrative analyses appear in visual images as discourses and semiotics, in texts as ethnographies, in ethnographies as constructionisms, in transcripts as discourse analyses, in focus groups as qualitative thematics and in interviews as emotionalisms. Ethnomethodologies appear in visual images as conversation analyses, in texts as membership categorisation devices, in ethnographies as ethnomethodologies, in transcripts as conversation analyses and in focus groups and interviews as constructionisms.

Thus, emotionalisms, ethnographies, constructionisms, qualitative thematics, semiotics and discourse analyses all rely on the common sense understandings of researchers. Ethnomethodologies and conversation analyses take things a stage further than this by developing membership categorisation analyses of the data. Thus, Silverman (2011: 256-264) describes how Sacks (1992) understood roles in sentences to belong to specific membership categories, and suggested that misunderstandings and disorder can develop from the use of inappropriate categories. Thus, Silverman (2011: 256-264) explains that sentences are organised into groups of categories consistent with each other, and that the categories are organised into standardised relational pairs and positioned categories, which are associated with category-bound activities. Silverman (2011: 263) mentions that Sacks is concerned with how members of societies use norms to produce social order, but the question is not this but rather two others. The first is that of whether these norms are relatively autonomous interactionist practices or of whether they are imposed by other levels of the social formation. Thus, Silverman (2011: 261) mentions that, at the time of the assassination of President Kennedy, categories of Communists were category bound to assassinations of United States presidents. The second is that of the inevitability of members of societies producing social order. Sacks emphasises on the one hand the production of social order by individuals, but on the other hand the fragility of this order and

the creativity of these individuals. Once we understand this, we can understand the relative autonomy of the interactionist level of the social formation. As Silverman so often mentions, what's interesting here are the deviant cases, where this creativity is used to produce social disorder, and where Sacks's hearer's and viewer's maxims (Silverman, 2011: 260-263) are ignored. Of course, such instances are often the basis of humour and comedy, but they sometimes lead to confusion and to hearers and viewers calling into question these norms and understanding the relationships between them and power relations related at lower levels of the social formation.

I've only just noticed on returning to Silverman's text that his writings on membership categories are in a chapter about texts, when I would have thought, and indeed had always assumed, that this type of analysis would be more use in the analysis of transcripts of naturally-occurring social interaction. What's interesting about this is that I've until now considered texts and ethnographies to be relatively autonomous, with texts being about formal and regulated writing and ethnographies about informal and spontaneous speaking. But much social interaction in global justice movements is conducted online, on listservs, on networks such as Google and RiseUp, on aggregative systems such as Facebook and Twitter, and on mobile telephone texts, leading writers such as Juris (2012) to contrast logics of networking with logics of aggregation, and breaking down the traditional barriers between writing and speaking, and between texts and ethnographies. Thus, e-mails, tweets and texts are written, but contain much of the informality and spontaneity of talk, and questions have to be asked about the relevance of membership categorisation analysis to this type of social interaction.

## 5.0. Conclusions:

During the present crisis of neo-liberalism, global justice movements have increased in importance in order to develop a public sphere outside traditional political institutions. Within this public sphere, several areas of antagonism can be identified between neo-liberal and global justice strategies. Deliberative democracies are systems of democracies based on public spheres, debates and informed decisions. They have been developed by means of agonistic pluralist approaches, which recognise the inevitability of antagonisms, and these systems of democracies have been used by global justice movements in developing horizontal organisation and consensus systems of decision-making, where dominance has been displaced to the ideological and interactionist levels of the social formation. Ethnomethodologies are structuralist methods of studying relatively autonomous social interaction at these levels and are thus very useful for studying precisely these types of organisations.

It's been one of the great achievements of global justice movements such as *Occupy* that they have managed to maintain some sort of social interaction without any power structures for several years now. I now have to find some actual movements to study to see how this is done.

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I'm now 60 years old and just studying for my Ph.D. after a lifetime of obsessive compulsive disorder and high functioning autism, which were only diagnosed and treated in the last few years. I probably didn't realise until recently, but my interest in social movements comes from feeling excluded from mainstream society because of these conditions, and my interest in ethnomethodology comes from being one of those who couldn't understand the rules which everybody else followed. If you're interested in supporting me, either in my research interests or in understanding the roles in society of people with mental health problems, please get in touch with me at John.Haworth3@btinternet.com

# Transcript of a participatory investigation in northeast rural Bangladesh

Mohammad Sadiqunnabi Choudhury

**Abstract**

This article illustrates the procedure and outcomes from the qualitative part of my research project "Vulnerability, coping capacity and financial inclusion: participatory evidence from northeast rural Bangladesh". The study uses both participatory methods and quantitative evidences to investigate three important aspects of sustainable livelihoods: vulnerability, coping capacity and financial inclusion. In participatory procedure, I use two qualitative instruments such as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). In these exercises participants scrutinize grassroots information to analyse their livelihood strategies and the role of financial institutions in defying vulnerability. This article is a systematic documentation of their processes.

**Keywords:** Participatory methods, Participatory rural appraisal (PRA), Focus group discussion (FGD).

## I. Introduction

Exposure to risks and shocks is a major poverty experience that has serious impact on household's resource base – destabilizing wellbeing and increasing the probability of moving below the poverty line. Probability of being poor or remaining poor is commonly known as vulnerability to poverty in the development economics literature (Dercon, 2006). There are many economic and non-economic shocks routinely upsetting the rural households in Bangladesh. Rahman (1996) and Hussain, et al (1998) organized them into five broad categories: 1) *Seasonal shocks* due to periodic fluctuations in livelihood activities. 2) *Financial insecurity* due to lack of employment opportunities or death of main income earners. 3) *Natural disaster* including flood, tidal wave, tornado, and cyclone. 4) *Health crisis* including lack of access to health services, safe drinking water and sanitary facilities. Finally, there are 5) *Social crises* due to lack of appropriate social interactions resulting from social injustice and deprivation such as marriage with dowry, land disputes, and gender discriminations. One of the biggest challenges for poor people in rural Bangladesh is how to cope with those shocks (*ex-ante*) and adapt to consequent impacts (*ex-post*) under capacity constraints. Their limited capacity to fight such crises often results in chronic exposure to poverty and vulnerability. This was the background of my doctoral research project entitled "Vulnerability, coping capacity and financial inclusion: participatory evidence from northeast rural Bangladesh" under the School of Social Sciences at UEL. The research aims at investigating the crises management capacity of rural households and the effectiveness of microfinance in reducing vulnerability to poverty. Underlying research question is: How do rural people strengthen their resilience to risks related vulnerabilities? How microfinance or other financial instruments contribute in this process?

**Figure 1: Main research at a glance**

**Research focus**
- Vulnerability to poverty
- Coping capacity
- Financial inclusion

**Research subjects**
- Rural people
- Financial service providers
- Other service providers

**Assumptions**
- High degree of risks and insufficient coping strategies are major causes for low resilience among rural people.
- Inadequate institutional facilities cause high vulnerability and weak coping capacities of the poor.
- Pure microinsurance mechanism is not active in rural Bangladesh due to lack of market facilities and insurance awareness.
- Households thus depend on other components of microfinance such as microcredit and microsavings for insurance against risks in their livelihood strategies.

**Main objectives**
- Investigate the crises management capacity of rural households
- Analyse effectiveness of financial interventions in reducing vulnerability to poverty

**Central questions**
- What are various strategies of rural households to manage crises and build resilience to vulnerability to poverty?
- Which agents are responsible for policies and service interventions in household's strategies?
- How effectiveness of financial instruments in reducing vulnerability to poverty?

**Theory and concepts**
- Livelihood approach
  - Livelihood assets          - Household strategies          - Livelihood outcomes
  - Vulnerability context       - Livelihood interventions
- Poverty and vulnerability measurements
- Financial inclusion

**Research fieldwork**
**Study Area:** Two villages (*Ausha* and *Bhadeshwari*) in the northeastern region of Bangladesh
**Major activities:**
- Livelihood mapping (social map, seasonal calendar etc.) derived from PRA exercises by the villagers
- Identification of poverty groups and measurement of poverty likelihood using PRA and poverty scorecard (PS)
- Analysis of risks, shocks and crises coping strategies using FGDs and household questionnaire (HQ)
- Understanding people's preferences and market's ability to provide microfinance using PRA, FGDs and HQs.

**Expected outcomes**
- Analysis of crises coping capacity together with financial behaviour help better understanding of potential resilience building mechanism through microfinance.
- Analysis of people's needs and preferences and market's ability to supply financial services would be useful to measure the degree of financial inclusion among the poor. One of the major policy issues in wellbeing of the poor is reducing financial gap or increasing people's access to financial services.
- Policy recommendations for reducing financial gaps including the gender gap in financial services to the poor.

Data required for the main study were both qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative methods employed participatory techniques such as participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and focus group discussions (FGDs) to investigate various types of risks and people's preference for financial products in coping strategies. Quantitative methods used *empirical* evidences of poverty and vulnerability and their links to household strategies and livelihood interventions. The quantitative instruments were poverty scorecard (PS) and household questionnaire (HQ). Thus the whole research was a mixed of qualitative and quantitative approaches commonly known as 'q-squared approach' (e.g. Kanbur, 2003). Current paper summarises the qualitative outcome of the study using field notes and transcript of the PRA and FGD exercises. Here I consider *Ausha* - one of the two villages under the original study. The research team consists of two members and a principal investigator. As principal investigator, I was responsible for facilitating PRA and FGD exercises while members were engaged in taking field notes and operating digital recorder. Survey protocol of this study is available in Choudhury (2013; 2014).

## II. Participatory rural appraisal (PRA)

The research team arranged eight PRA exercises to facilitate rural people analysing data and information of their villages: 1) village transect, 2) social mapping, 3) wealth ranking, 4) seasonal calendar, 5) mobility map, 6) Vann diagram, 7) pair-wise ranking, and 8) direct observation.

## 1. Village transect

Transect is the observation of village topographies to evaluate livelihood opportunities consulting the villages. This exercise is also a rapport building tool in PRA. Research team first walk around the village along with a local person to gather information on history and topography of the village. Finally, a group of knowledgeable people draw transect matrix of their village.

**Table 1 Transect matrix of *Ausha***

| Resources System | Homestead | Farmland | River |
|---|---|---|---|
| Resources | Small piece of land around each house suitable for gardening and animal rearing. | Plain land for rice and vegetables. | Water resources in the river *Surma*. |
| Activities | Rearing poultry and livestock. Growing trees and vegetables. | Rice and vegetables production. | Fishing, bathing and washing in the river. |
| Problems | Homestead land becomes muddy in rainy season. Rain affects non-durable households. | Sometimes affected by floods and droughts. | River overflows during major flooding. |
| Opportunities | Improved housing and more poultry and livestock rearing. | Cultivate high yielding varieties. | Water for irrigation. |
| Perceptions | Housing condition should be improved. | Produce more crops. | Find no interest in professional fishing. |

### 2. Social mapping

In this exercise, the respondents in *Ausha* prepared social maps that include village inventory including households, school, shops, community centre etc. They used locally available materials like stone, pebbles, seeds, twigs, flower and leaves for major landmarks and features in the maps. The research team finally transferred the maps in plain paper. Following table is an extract from two social maps.

**Table 2 Summary outcomes of social maps for *Ausha***

| Map contents | Outcomes |
| --- | --- |
| Number of households | 226 |
| Households made of bricks and cement (pucca) | 81 |
| Households with sanitary latrine (water sealed) | 94 |
| Primary school (public) | 1 |
| Primary school (NGO run) | 1 |
| Playground | 2 |
| Community centre | 1 |
| Grocery shop | 3 |
| Tube well | 10 |
| Irrigation pump | 1 |
| Pond | 4 |
| Mosque | 3 |
| Madrasa* | 0 |
| MFI group meeting centre | 5 |

* *Madrasa* is a religious school in which Islamic religion is taught with greater emphasis in addition to secular studies.

### 3. Wealth ranking

In wealth ranking exercise, assets possessed by the households are recorded on cards at first and then the respondents sort them out according to certain criteria (Narayanasamy, 2009). The exercise involves six steps:

*Step 1 Preparation of index cards*: The front page of the index card contained household number (given in social mapping) and name of the household head. Back page contained wealth ranking criteria developed by the respondents in step 2. Back page was filled in step 3 (Figure 2).

*Step 2 Fixing wealth ranking criteria*: In this stage participants were asked to classify the households in their own terminology. In both villages they used three common terms to explain the status: *Khub Gorib* (extreme poor), *Gorib* (poor) and *Dhoni* (rich or non-poor). The participants were requested to make a list of criteria for the classification. These were recorded in the following table.

### Table 3 Criteria for wealth ranking

| Wealth status | Criteria |
| --- | --- |

| | |
|---|---|
| *Khub Gorib* (extreme poor) | • Landless, homestead only.<br>• No food security, no livelihood security in lean months.<br>• Eat only one or two times a day.<br>• Entitled to government grant but not received yet.<br>• Female headed household.<br>• Household in which elderly, destitute widow, physically disabled live alone.<br>• May own negligible number of poultry and livestock.<br>• Household made of non-durable materials (katcha and jhupri) |
| *Gorib* (poor) | • May own land (up to 1 acre) but household depends on wage from day labour.<br>• Food security in certain months (5-6 months), low livelihood security in lean months.<br>• Eat two to three times a day but low quality food.<br>• Recipient of government grants.<br>• Possess draft animal and tools for cultivation (own and leased land).<br>• Household possess some poultry and livestock.<br>• Household made of semi durable materials (half pucca and katcha) |
| *Dhoni* (rich or non-poor) | • Own land (more than 1 acre).<br>• May not always work on the field; employ 1-2 farm labourers permanently.<br>• Lease additional land.<br>• Food security is ensured all the year round with surplus in food store. No livelihood insecurity.<br>• Eat three times a day with quality food.<br>• Possess substantial number of poultry and livestock, and agricultural machinery.<br>• This group also comprises moneylender, small traders, salaried jobholders and immigrants.<br>• Household made of durable materials such as bricks and cement (pucca) |

*Step 3 Collection of information*: Participants were provided with information in the first page of the index card. They were asked to supply household information based on the criteria developed in step 2. The research team then recorded the information on backside of the card (Figure 2, P.2) and repeat the process for all households.

**Figure 2 Sample index card**

| | |
|---|---|
| P.1<br><br><br>Household No.         : 16<br>Household head    : Abdus Salam | P.2<br>• 0.5 acres of own land<br>• *Katcha* house made of straw and bamboo.<br>• Leased another 0.5 acres of land.<br>• Sell labour in off season.<br>• Possess small number of poultry and livestock.<br>• Food security for 8-10 months |

*Step 4 Sorting and grouping the cards*: The research team then shuffled the cards, read out the information from page 2 of each card without revealing page 1 and asked participants to place the card in appropriate column down on the ground (Figure 3). Once all cards had been sorted out, research team revealed page 1 to cross check. Respondents were allowed to make any change and explain why they wanted such change.

**Figure 3 Household poverty groups**

| Pile - 1 | Pile - 2 | Pile - 3 |
|---|---|---|
| ☺ | ☺ | ☹ |
| Rich | Poor | Extreme poor |

*Step 5 Superimpose poverty groups on social map*: Households classified into poverty groups were then marked on the social map. Extreme poor, poor and rich households were marked with red, yellow and green marking respectively. Table 4 presents final outcome of the wealth ranking exercises.

*Step 6 Verify the outcomes*: The outcome of the exercise were verified with a wider audience to facilitate the triangulation of the results. This would make the results more authentic and reliable.

**Table 4 Household poverty group in *Ausha***

| Poverty groups | *Ausha* (%) |
|---|---|
| Extreme poor | 28 (12.4) |
| Poor | 60 (26.5) |
| Non-poor | 138 (61.1) |
| Total households | 226  (100) |

Figures in the parentheses are percentages.

## 4. Seasonal calendar

There are seasonal variations in the rural economy – certain months in a year are full of works with more income and food security and the rest of the months are opposite.  Seasonal calendar is a diagrammatic exercise by the rural people to analyse seasonal variations in their livelihood using reference period of one year. In this study, we invited rural people to figure out their livelihood experience in crop production, food security and employment over the reference period.

**Table 5 Seasonal calendar for *Ausha***

| Gregorian | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bangla | Poush | Magh | Falgoon | Chaitra | Boishakh | Joyshtha | Asharh | Srabon | Bhadra | Ashwin | Kartik | Agrahayon | Poush |

**Agricultural employment** ■  **Non-agricultural employment** □



**Rice cultivation**

| **Amon** HYV, local | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ploughing | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sowing | | | | | | | | | ▨ | | | | |
| Harvesting | ▨ | | | | | | | | | | | | ▨ |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Boro** HYV, local | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ploughing | ▨ | | | | | | | | | | | | ▨ |
| Sowing | ▬ | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Harvesting | | | | | | ▨ | ▨ | ▨ | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| **Food security:** | **Extreme Poor** ■ | **Poor** ▪ | **Non-Poor** ☐ | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Extreme Poor | ■ | ■ | | ■ | ■ | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Poor | ▪ | ▪ | | ▪ | ▪ | | | | | | ▪ | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Non-Poor | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

The residents of *Ausha* have fluctuating employment opportunities in both agricultural (mainly rice production) and non-agricultural (day labour in various activities) sectors. Employment in agricultural includes ploughing, sowing and harvesting activities by self or wage employment. In the gestation period between ploughing and harvesting there are some minor activities like weeding, watering and applying fertilizer. Non-agricultural activities are less during the monsoon, particularly in two rainy months in *Bangla* calendar - *Asharh* and *Srabon*. The next three months are lean for agriculture, so people search for non-agricultural jobs. Interestingly, during the time of cultivation and harvesting people withdraw themselves from non-farm jobs as demand for farm jobs are at peak and many of them have to help family farm. Food storage is an indicator for food security. Rural people count food security in how many months they are able to consume from food store without buying from outside. Respondents report that extremely poor households normally have food stock up to five months which is about eight months for moderate poor. Non-poor households have surplus food for more than a year according to their estimates.

### 5. Mobility map
In mobility map exercises rural people revealed movement pattern in their livelihood activities including search for services, facilities and opportunities. Respondents used various symbols to locate important institutions, identified purpose, distance, importance and frequency of their visits. Information gathered in the mobility map and Venn diagram is used to measure the effectiveness of a particular institution.

**Figure 4 Mobility map of *Ausha***



83

```
          ↓
┌─────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────┐
│   South Ausha   │     │     Madrasa     │
│ (0.1 km) [10]   │     │  (0.2 km) [25]  │
└─────────────────┘     └─────────────────┘
```

Note: Figure inside the parenthesis represents distance and inside the square bracket represents frequency of movement in a month.

*Purposes of visits*: Residents of *Ausha* go to Sylhet city for various purposes. Major reasons are healthcare, legal advice, shopping, banking, job, and education. There are two primary schools inside the village (one government and the other NGO-run). High school, college and madrasa are few kilometres away from the village. There are two bazars (*Lama Kazi* and *Toker Bazar*) where people go to buy and sell household necessities like meat, fish, rice and vegetables. Bank branches and MFI local offices are located in these two commercial places. People visit union council office to collect or enquire about government grants. Women's mobility is mostly inside the village. Outside mobility is accompanied by husband or family members. They also go outside in groups with other women for two major reasons: to receive loan and withdraw savings from the MFI local office and to collect their children's stipend from the school.

*Importance of visits*: Bazars are the most important place for the rural people where they could buy and sell their products to run and earn livelihood. These places are also significant for rural banking, MFIs and other commercial services. Sylhet city is vital for standard healthcare, higher education, shops, legal and administrative services which are beyond the local capacity.

*Mode of transport*: Sylhet-Sunamganj highway runs through the village which is a communication advantage for the villagers. People take long distance travel by bus or auto-rickshaw, medium distance by auto-rickshaw or rickshaw, and short distance on foot. They take boat to cross the river Surma to visit friends and family in South *Ausha*.

**Table 6 Mobility in *Ausha***

| Mobility inside the village | | Mobility outside the village | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Place** | **Frequency** | **Place** | **Distance** | **Frequency** |
| Friends and family visit | High | Hospital (Sylhet) | Long | Medium |
| Community centre | Low | Bank (*Toker Bazar*/ *Lama Kazi*) | Medium | Low |
| MFI group meeting | Medium | University/College (Sylhet) | Long | Medium |
| Grocery shop | High | High school | Short | High |
| Primary school | High | MFI office (*Lama Kazi*) | Short/medium | Medium |
| Mosque | High | Bazar (*Toker Bazar*/ *Lama Kazi*) | Short | High |
| Shalish | Low | Union Council (*Mogolgaon*) | Medium | Low |

*Shalish* is a conflict mitigation process headed by a person, normally the village chief, who is respected by all. Frequency is determined either by average number of visits in a month by villagers or a number of visits by an individual.

**6. Venn diagram**

Using Venn diagram participants analyse the importance of and access to key institutions influencing their livelihood. In the diagram they use circle of newsprint with two or three sizes to mark the importance of a particular institution. Bigger circle attached to an institution indicates higher degree of importance and vice versa. After attaching each institution to appropriate circle, participants then place those circles on the ground around a central circle indicating their village.

The placement of the circles is done according to their accessibility. Longer distance from the central circle indicates lower access to the institution and vice versa. Note that distance means accessibility not the physical distance.

**Figure 5 Venn diagram of institutions in *Ausha***
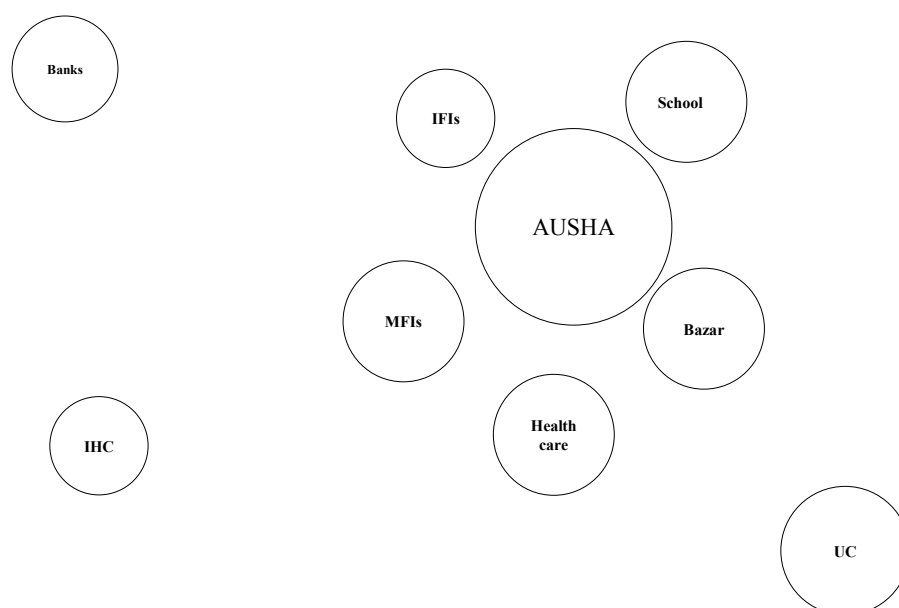


Informal health care and financial institutes such as moneylender and banks are less important service providers in *Ausha*. They are less accessible as well. On the other hand, Union Council is considered important but it is less accessible due to distance and lack of efficiency. Rest of the institutions are both important and accessible according to the residents (Figure 5).

## 7. Pairwise ranking

Pairwise ranking was used for assessing preference of the villagers in financial activities. Participants draw two separate preference matrices: one for institutions and other for services. They place various financial institutions or services in the row and column of a matrix. Then, they compare first item in the column with various items in the row one by one and enter their preference in the respective grids. By repeating the process for all items they obtain upper

triangular preference matrix. Lower triangular grids were blank because of symmetric nature of the matrix. The participants then place frequency of each item in 'score' column and rank the items based on the score. Finally, they explain the reasons behind their preference.

**Table 7 Financial institutions preference in *Ausha***

| Financial institutions | MFIs | CB | SG | FOR | ML | Score | Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Microfinance institutions (MFIs) | - | MFIs | MFIs | FOR | MFIs | 3 | II |
| Commercial bank (CB) | - | - | SG | FOR | ML | 0 | V |
| Small groups (SG)* | - | - | - | FOR | SG | 2 | III |
| Friends and relatives (FR) | - | - | - | - | FR | 4 | I |
| Moneylenders (ML) | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | IV |

\* Village informal group which saves and collectively invest in farm and non-farm activities.

Friends and family comes first when considering borrowing for deficit or crisis finance. This is because of social network. Rich people in *Ausha* keep close tie with poor community and share risk by providing interest free loans. MFIs and small groups come next. Both institutions organise group, collect deposits and provide loan to microenterprises. Banks are the least preferred financial institutions to the villagers. Distance, minimum deposit requirements, collateral for loans and required papers for opening an account are reasons mentioned by the PRA participants. Poor people think, "Banks always work for the rich".

**Table 8 Financial instruments preference in *Ausha***

| Financial Institutions | FML | IL | MS | VS | IS | RP | Score | Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Formal microloan (FML) | - | IL | FML | FML | FML | RP | 3 | III |
| Informal loan (IL) | - | - | IL | IL | IL | IL | 5 | I |
| Mandatory savings (MS) | - | - | - | VS | MS | RP | 1 | IV |
| Voluntary savings (VS) | - | - | - | - | VS | RP | 2 | V |
| Informal savings (IS) | - | - | - | - | - | RP | 0 | VI |
| Remittance payments (RP) | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | II |

Mandatory and voluntary savings together constitute microsavings. Informal loan are borrowing from friends and family or moneylender. Remittance payments are formal or informal services people use to receive remittances sent by relatives abroad

Residents of *Ausha* express top preference for the informal loan. This is due to their reliability on friends and family. They rarely borrow money from moneylender. Remittance payment facility is the second desirable service to the villagers. It is interesting to note that remittance is one of the major sources of income for the non-poor in *Ausha* and a source of soft loan (interest free) for the poor indicating a strong poor – non-poor social bond. For these two financial services people never feel credit constraint. Consequently, they express less preference to formal microloan and saving money.

## 8. Direct observation

Direct observation is a classical method of scientific enquiry which allows observer to focus on specific areas of interests and record events and behaviours as they occur. In this study, main focus of the direct observation was group meetings of three MFIs (Grameen, ASA and FIVDB) operating in the sample villages. Main objective of this direct observation was to see the financial

behaviour of the MFI clients. Group meeting were observed in overt and covert. Covert observation is important to capture the behavioural difference between obviously and secretly observed events.

MFI group meetings are centre for financial provision and financial participation. MFI field staff approves loan proposals and accepts loans and savings instalments in the meeting. In addition, they discuss on various social issues. Apart from loan repayment and savings accumulation, financial participation of the clients comprises access to financial advices and training for financial literacy. These are required for financial capacity building that enhances cognitive resources of the clients. Clients should be able to make business plan, express the need for loan, and take control over financial assets. Group meeting is an ideal place for the rural people to gain financial capabilities. Direct observation of the group meeting reveals real situation of the capacity building and cognitive resource mobilization.

*Ideal group procedures*:    MFI group comprises 30-35 members including executive posts of president, secretary and cashier. The group is divided into subgroup of 5-7 members. Meeting is normally held in the yard of president between 9.00 am to 1.00 pm on a predetermined day in a week. Field officer attends the meeting to monitor and supervise the meeting procedure. All members attend the meeting with passbook in hand inside which weekly loan instalment and savings are kept. The cashier collects those passbooks and hand them over to the officer. The meeting starts after the recitation of 'development oath' (e.g. 16 points in Grameen meeting). Presidents or secretary facilitate the loan proposal, default mitigation and issue based discussions including financial planning and advice. Loan officer then conducts financial adjustments in the client's passbook and return to the office and makes necessary entry in branch accounts. All disbursements are held in the branch office. Financial literacy training is normally referred to adult learning package of the MFIs to save time of the meeting.

*Real picture*: Loan officers were busy in financial transactions i.e. collection of loans savings instalments. Group cohesion and cognitive resources mobilization was less visible or ignored. Many members just attended the meeting to hand over instalments to cashier. Some of them managed to send instalments through family members or friends. Although recitation of 'development oath' is compulsory in Grameen centre meeting, it was held in overt observation, not when the surveillance was covert. There was no time left for the loan officer for any issue based meeting or financial plan and advice for the members. Group meeting is designed to enhance financial capability through training and financial advice. In reality, members found ignorant about their passbook entry. They depend on the school going family members to cross check the balance. Day-to-day money management advice was found to be replaced by pressure on regular instalment payments.

## III. Focus group discussions (FGDs)

Main aim of FGDs in the study was gathering qualitative data on vulnerability, coping capacity and financial inclusion from both service receivers and service providers. The research team conducted five FGDs in each village: three with poverty groups (extreme poor, poor and non-poor), one with financial service provider group (MFI field staff, moneylender) and another with other services provider group (village doctor, local government members). Each group comprised 6 - 10 participants. At first, the moderator explained research purposes to the audience and imitated a topic relevant to their livelihoods. Then the main discussion started enthusiastically. The research assistants operated digital recorder and took field notes with prior

permission from the discussants conditional on anonymity and research purpose only. Discussions were flexible but the moderator used a set of prompts and probes for each group to limit the discussion within the scope of the study (e.g. Krueger and Casey 2009).

## 1. Poverty groups

The research team invited 6-10 male and female participants from each poverty group (extreme poor, poor and non-poor) identified in PRA wealth ranking exercises. Each group participate in FGD separately. Selection of respondents was on the basis of their availability and willingness to participate. Main focus of the discussion was coping capacity and financial inclusion.

*Prompts and probes*
*Introductory*: Introduce yourself please. If you are an MFI member, how long is your membership?

*Opening questions*: How do you manage risks and shocks in your livelihood? How do you solve financial crises?

*Transitory probes*: Tell us about existing financial services in your area and your needs and preferences for financial services.

*Key questions*: What are the major difficulties in access to financial services in your area? Do you get financial consultation and training from the service providers regularly? What types of difficulties do you face in coping with crisis?

*Summary transcript*: Risk management capacity and the extent of financial inclusion are diverse among poverty groups. Participants in all poverty groups report similar pattern of risks and shocks in their livelihoods. However, coping capacity and resilience to shocks differ among the groups. Extreme poor groups argue that if informal loans are costly and household savings are inadequate they depend on government grants and relief. The situation never arises in *Ausha* as low cost funds are always available from benevolent rich. The moderate poor participants report that they use informal loans and savings for combating crises but these are inadequate. They urge for emergency loan and instant savings withdrawal facilities from formal sources. Non-poor participants are more resilient against shocks as their assets base is stronger. All participants express concern about poor access to mainstream banking. Non-poor participants report that they have banks accounts but rarely use them due to distance and procedural barriers. Moreover, they are not eligible for MFI services. They urge for access to MFI services even if it is with savings only membership without loan facility. During the discussion, participants reveal some gender issues in coping capacity and financial inclusion. Women participants focus on *micro* crises such as minor illness and child related problems. They are interested in precautionary savings to deal with these crises. Men show more concern in *meso* crises such as land dispute, accidents, and crop failure. They are interested in savings that release some fund for investment and assets accumulation. Male participants have grievance as they are not eligible for MFI membership. Finally, all participants report that they have got numeracy training from MFIs but it is not enough. They seldom get financial advices from the MFIs. Main difficulties in crises time, as they report, are lack of cash on hand or emergency fund.

## 2. Financial service provider group

This group contains representatives from formal financial service providers such as MFIs and informal financial service providers such as patrons and moneylenders. The research team organized group discussion with 6-8 participants from MFIs (Grameen, ASA and FIVDB) field staff and patrons. Patrons are soft loan providers who do not charge interest. There is no

professional moneylender in *Ausha*. The main aim of these FGDs is to know about the extent of financial inclusion in the village.

*Prompts and probes*
*Introductory*: Introduce yourself please. How long have you been in this profession?

*Opening questions*: Why do people need financial services? How do you help them solve financial crises?

*Transitory probes*: Tell us about your financial service provisions in this area and future plan of your institution (or yourself in case of moneylender).

*Key questions*: What are the major difficulties in providing to financial services in this area? Do you arrange financial consultation and training for your clients?

*Summary transcript*: Only few clients in *Ausha* ask for agriculture loan. Larger loans go to service sector clients such as taxi driver who needs money for new vehicle or for servicing the running one. Some of the clients need money as they get remittance later than the time in need (due to transaction time). Many clients demand for savings only membership which is against the service rule of MFIs and guidelines of the regulatory body. In response to the query in crises finance respondents report that they can withdraw savings any time facing emergency. However, clients do not get emergency loan from any MFIs. Patrons in *Ausha* argue that there is no commercial moneylending in the village in the sense that they (patrons) lend money not for earning interest but for charity. They provide *karde hasanah* which is a zero-interest loan with no fixed time for repayment and no obligation to payback on serious ground. In response to inquiry into training arrangement FIVDB officials report that they provide adult literacy and numeracy training through its Community Learning Centre (CLC). However, financial advice and in-depth training on day-to-day money management are not included in that programme. Grameen Bank members have to recite '16 decisions' which is a kind of motivational reminder to client's financial and economic development. ASA does not have such programme. Field staff from all MFIs argues that advices and training are common practices when they deal with their clients but not in a systematic way. The clients consult with the field staff and branch manager before taking the loan and during the repayment schedule.

## 3. Other services providers group
This group contains representatives from local government, rural doctor, and village chief who provide administrative and non-financial services to people of *Ausha* and *Bhadeshwari*. The research team organized an FGD in each village with 5-6 participants from the other services group to discuss about the livelihood intervention with non-financial services.

*Prompts and probes*
*Introductory*: Introduce yourself please. How long are you in this profession?

*Opening questions*: What is the importance of your services to rural people? How do you help solving their crises?

*Transitory probes*: Tell us how do you provide services or accomplish administrative duties in this area.

*Key questions*: What are the major difficulties in providing services or implementing governmental programmes in this area? What is your future plan?

*Summary transcript*: Local government (union council) implement the construction and repair of rural infrastructure and allocate social security allowances from the central government. *Ausha* is constituted under *Mogolgaon* union council. Representatives from the council report that infrastructure development works in the villages are ongoing and the distribution of government grants and allowances are adequate. The services of rural doctors (paramedics) are essential for minor illness such as fever, flu, dysentery and diarrhoea. Two paramedics and a homeopath practitioner run drug shops in *Toker bazar*. Some people prefer herbal medicine. For serious illness people go to upazila heath complex. In case of village administration, there is no fixed personality in the villages who may be called as village chief. Villagers informally and respectfully nominate some senior residents to run *Shalish* (informal village court). The strength of the *Shalish* depends on social network and system of value judgement.

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# Book Review: Ritual and Recovery in Post-conflict Sri Lanka
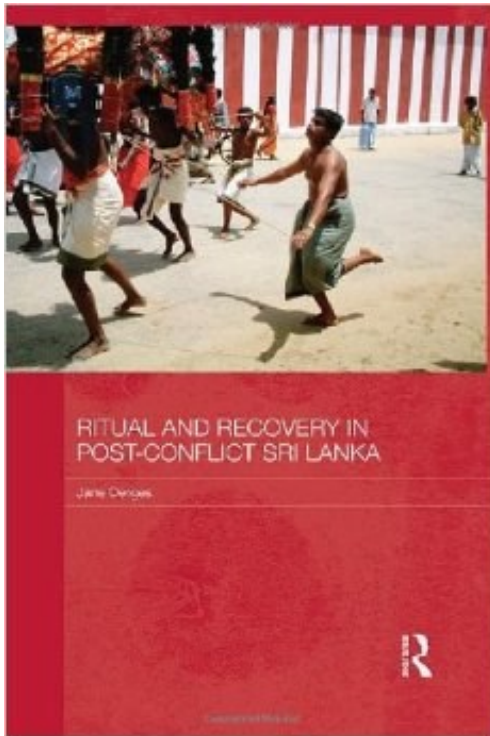
Derges, Jane. (2013) *Ritual and Recovery in Post-conflict Sri Lanka,* London and New York:Routledge. Number of Pages: xvi, 213. Price: £85.

Reviewed by: **Thanges Paramsothy,** PhD Research Student in Anthropology, School of Social Sciences, University of East London, UK

A recent book, 'Ritual and Recovery in Post-conflict Sri Lanka,' by Jane Derges, provides an ethnographic account of the performances of Hindu rituals that serve to recover some old, less ubiquitous religious traditions in war-affected Jaffna society located in the Northern part of Sri Lanka. This study particularly explores the traditional Hindu ritual performance of *Thuukkukaavadi* in which a devotee is suspended on air by hooks attached through the flesh of his backs and legs. Derges sees *'Thuukkukaavadi'* as a transformative practice, which enables devotees to heal their experience of pain and suffering in a repressive political atmosphere where people find it difficult to voice their opinions and their mobilizations against the injustices they face are suppressed by means of violence. This ethnographic study is a seminal and novel contribution to Anthropological studies that focus on post-conflict Jaffna.

The fieldwork for this study was conducted during the ceasefire agreement (2002-2006) between the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Given the absence of intellectually stimulating ethnographic studies about Northern SriLanka due to the protracted civil war that affected the region from the 1980s to the late 2000s, this study breathes fresh air into anthropological conversations on the traditions and cultures of the people of Jaffna.

This book consists of four parts. Outlining the conversations that the subsequent chapters focus on, the introduction begins to build momentum for the rest of the book. Derges states at the beginning that she has chosen 'An Analysis of Silence' as a tool to study the place of both spiritual and bodily performance of devotees during the religious festivals and in other ritual settings. She realised during her fieldwork that people in general saw silence as a protective mechanism and utilised self-hurting religious practices in order to express not only devotion but also a non-verbal response to the oppressive effects of war and violence. She notes that self-hurting religious practices function as transformative ritual performances that have a greater degree of potential to heal the wounds of post-conflict Jaffna society. According to Derges, in an atmosphere where an open dissent against social and political injustices has been extensively ignored, people use silence and non-militant discourses such as spiritual and bodily performance

to maintain some degree of dignity, safety and autonomy (p. 8). This is, in fact, a fresh observation about the role rituals play in the post-conflict political lives of the people of Jaffna.

Derges narrates her own experience of data collection in detail. She explains the challenges that she faced while conducting fieldwork. Derges notes that the participants of the study were suspicious of her and that there was noticeable silence among them. As a result, total acceptance of the researcher as a participant observer by the participants was out of the question. Similarly, the participants did not have much trust in each other. This suspicious and fearful environment led her to question the traditional methodology and strategies of ethnographic fieldwork such as participant observation, interview and some other established data collection techniques. Instead, she found informal settings and conversations, which produced a more spontaneous interaction among the participants, helpful to gather more intimate and honest accounts. She adopted methodologies that were more suitable to an environment where a stranger is treated with suspicion. She had her exchanges in 'Mobile Interview Settings'- 'on buses, boats, during walks and visits to locals, which provided useful opportunities to trigger particular memories and impressions of the participants that cannot be easily accessible in more static settings' (p.15). Creating a non-static setting in a conflict environment by a stranger is not an easy task. It requires long-term commitment and experience. Derges, in fact, was successful in her attempt to establish appropriate methodologies in collecting sensitive data from both verbal and non-verbal (bodily) expressions. In a number of cases, she realised that the formal interviews with participants were unproductive and unwise, whereas attention to everyday activities including observation of ritual performance, gossip in everyday interactions and the use of dramatic interpretation offered her a clear perspective on how people were dealing with the war, violence and their consequences (p. 112).

Let me briefly discuss what Derges has examined in each part of the book. The first part is about the discourses of war. She discusses very briefly the origin of Tamil grievances and the rise of Tamil militancy and explains how the colonial and post-colonial political and nationalist lexis as well as armed confrontations constructed Tamils as an indigenised 'other'. She argues that the indigenised 'other' is a by-product of the failure in the 'post-colonial era to construct a national identity that would encompass all Sri Lankans under one united and cohesive state' (p. 29). This has in turn created a localised identity which Tamils in Sri Lanka perceived to be more important than the national (Sri Lankan) identity. Moreover, she describes how the people in the north established diverse strategies for dealing with the horrors of a war, which caused uncertainty, fear, mistrust, suspicion and destruction in their everyday lives. People in such a post-conflict atmosphere widely exercise silence as a form of resistance, protection as well as response to trauma.

The second part of this book is about the transformation of social realities. Derges covers a number of changing contemporary social realties in Jaffna including dislocation of families, women-headed households, changing 'traditional roles' of women, increasing incidence of couple co-habiting, high incidence of pregnancy among unmarried women, unemployment, escalating level of alcoholism, an increase in suicide rate, the re-establishment of neighbourhood, visits by Tamil diaspora to see their families and friends in their homeland and expressions of caste and class consciousness.

There are a large number of women-headed households in Jaffna due to the death, disappearance and dislocation of men (husbands) during the war. This has also created a social reality where

women co-habiting rather than re-marrying. The author also talks about the escalating levels of alcoholism in the female population. Women in post-war Jaffna seemed to be easy targets of verbal abuses and physical and sexual harassment: 'there are numerous incidences of sexual molestation and physical assault by local youths and gangs. However, crime committed by local youths or gangs often went unpunished by the local police' (p. 62). Derges also points out that there is a widespread criticism of the police establishment that they deliberately demonstrate ineptitude in maintaining law and order in post-war Jaffna society. She indicates that many still remember with great nostalgia the protection the LTTE offered women until they lost control of Jaffna.

Derges illustrates the general expression of local inhabitants-'*Sandaiyumillai, samaathanamumillai*' (no war, no peace)- in an extensive manner with her filed data. This was particularly expressed with reference to the 'High Security Zones' (HSZs) and the militarization of the north and the east. Her analysis indicates how the war and the political violence have caused negative impacts on the youth of Jaffna. The powerless position of Jaffna Tamils, particularly the youth, creates alternative discourses of dissent and resistance through language and action. These alternative discourses of resistance are widely prevalent in the form of jokes, gossip, petty acts of sedition and street drama, which are often hidden from public view, but open a space to express their feelings of defenselessness. '*Thuukkukkaavadi*' is viewed as an extreme form of symbolic expression of violence and torture. The author describes the performance of *Thuukkuukkavadi* as follows:

> '*Thuukkukkavai presents perhaps a more extreme version of symbolic inversion: the young Tamils participants inverted their experience of violence and torture through reproductions of bodily pain as acts not only of religious devotion but also of strength and control. The violence perpetrated against them was transformed through religious passion that also enabled them to reclaim a sense of power (shakthi) through their own agency (p.91).*

The bodily ritual performance of the research participants and bodily engagement of the ethnographic researchers during the fieldwork are central aspects in both traditional and contemporary Anthropological and Sociological literature (see for example Das 1997; Shilling 2004). The third part of the book was allocated to illustrate the articulation of participants' bodies in religious ritual performances. The bodily ritual performance of participants was identified and illustrated as effective and non-violent forms of social recovery and healing practices. Notably, the author has described the insufficiency of western models of therapeutic practices such as counseling, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Narrative Exposure Therapy (NET), which were attempted by aid workers or NGOs in dealing with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in Jaffna (p. 166). She points out how religious ceremonial practices such as *Vaakku Cholluthal* (oracles), *Kai Parththal* (palm readers), *Thuukkukkaavadi*, *Pirathattai* (rolling), *Theemithippu* (fire-walk) and *Paravasam* (trance or stage of ecstasy) function as local recovery mechanisms among the Tamils in Jaffna affected by the war, violence and torture.

Derges indicates a tremendous growth in these religious practices particularly with the arrival of the Sri Lankan army and the subsequent sudden rise in the arrests and torture of Tamils. People in Jaffna during the time of horror and violence had faith in religious practices and rituals that involve the body of the worshiper when all forms of their resistance to political violence were widely suppressed. Increasing number of people, particularly the youth in Jaffna made the vow and were actively involved in these religious performances in order to escape successfully from everyday violence, to protect them from torture and arrests, to deal with trauma and disorder and

to articulate powerlessness and resistance. Derges describes the multiple functions of these religious practices in post-conflict Jaffna society, where 'the bodies of devotees became a central, productive and cathartic element, which sought to retrieve self and community from a sense of oppression and enabled the survival of the beleaguered community' (p. 180). Moreover, she has documented how these religious practices are performed and the ways in which neighbours, fellow villagers and the Jaffna community in general view and treat these religious practices.

The fourth part is the conclusion. As Derges herself indicates, her research attempts to link two major themes: the first theme relates to the contested identity and subjugation of the Tamils and the second reveals survival and resilience (pp.177-78). The author has paid much of her attention to understand how traditional religious performances are articulated and how the locals give a new meaning to these religious performances in a conflict-ridden setting where the community is expected to live amidst violence, torture, frequent arrests and humiliation.

This study, however, has a few shortcomings, which prevent readers to view the current contradictory realities of Jaffna society. Firstly, it is true to a great extent that the people practice silence as a protective and recovery mechanism in post-conflict Jaffna. The fieldwork for this study was conducted during the ceasefire agreement when both the LTTE and the Sri Lankan forces were present in Jaffna. There was also a rumor among the people that spies representing both the LTTE and the Sri Lanka government were active at this time. Even the author 'on an occasion was openly accused of being a spy for the government or the CIA' (Central Intelligence Agency) (p. 14), as she was 'hanging out' in public places, particularly spending a lot of time at the temples as part of her ethnographic fieldwork. Ordinary people were careful as to whom they could trust and on what they could speak to a stranger, and thus they exercised silence as a way of protecting them from potential harm and arrest from both the state and non-state actors. However, the war-affected people, political and media personnel and social activists in Northern Sri Lanka, following the end of the civil war, often break their silence and frequently mobilise against injustice. They demand the state to reveal the whereabouts of their relatives who disappeared at the time of violence and displacement and to release their properties and lands controlled and occupied by the Sri Lankan forces in the so-called High Security Zones (HSZs) and to free media from the interference of the state and its armed forces.

What is happening after the civil war came to a brutal end? People, activists and Tamil political leaders have been looking for opportunities and spaces to break their silence in order to convey their voice to the international community, since their collective voice has not been heard by the Sri Lankan government and suppressed by the of oppression and arbitrary arrests. For example, hundreds of northern Jaffna Tamils protested when *David Cameron,* the Prime Minister of Britain arrived in Jaffna in November 2013 demanding the state to reveal what happened to their relatives and friends who went missing during and at the end of the war. *Balendran Jeyakumari* and her 13 year-old daughter *Vipoosika* protested on a number of occasions demanding information on a family member who disappeared at the end of the war and were eventually arrested and detained in March 2014 on suspicion of harboring a criminal. *Jeyakumari* took a leading role in the demonstration that greeted David Cameron (BBC Asia 2014, March 14). After almost one year with the regime change and due to local and international pressure on the Sri Lankan government, *Jeyakumari* was released on bail and asked to report in a nearby police station on a monthly basis. She was also asked to surrender her passport in the court and informed not to move outside the district where she lives without permission. It is obviously understood through the court's order that her free movement is prevented and her presence is regularly monitored. It

is indeed another form of imprisonment in a relatively wider geographical space, even though she is released.

Secondly, Derges observes that the ritual performance of devotees has re-established a sense of strength and cohesion among fellow villagers and families. However, at the village level in Jaffna, the ritual performance, which generally takes place along lines of caste, fails to bring the entire community together. Notably, caste-based religious practices create divisions within the same ethnic group. The historical division in the religious domain has been further accelerated by the reconstruction of caste-based Hindu temples with the support of diaspora remittances sent by both dominant and subordinate castes in Jaffna. The author's observations on the sense of strength and cohesion created among fellow villagers and families through a rituals sharply differ from the observation that ritual performance takes place mostly along lines of caste and kinship in the villages in Jaffna. The author, as she herself stated, lived in a densely populated urban area rather than an isolated village. As a result, she would not have been able to observe religious and ritual practices that take place at the village level.

Thirdly, the discussion on caste and class in new social settings again failed to throw light on the caste-based discriminatory practices observed in rural Jaffna. According to the author, both in the peninsula and abroad, caste divisions have, to some extent, diminished, in large measure due to the war, which brought people together in refugee camps (p. 75). However, it should be noted that even though the war and repeated displacement made it difficult to maintain caste-based distance in an emergency social setting, a closer observation indicates that caste-based distance and discriminatory practices are prevalent in IDP camps, which emerged as a result of the long stay of IDPs. Many long-term IDP camps in Jaffna emerged along caste lines and reproduced the old categorizations of caste in an entirely new social setting (Thanges 2008). Moreover, it can be observed that caste divisions, to some extent, have been questioned due to the protracted war and displacement. But, at the same time, we cannot simply ignore the historical struggle of oppressed castes against untouchability in Jaffna (Vegujanan and Ravana 2007). The struggle against 'castism' in Jaffna has a longer history than the struggle for political freedom or an independent Tamil homeland (Russell 1982).

Fourthly, the author demonstrated that there was a reversal of caste status due to demographic change particularly at work place. Members of dominant caste, reduced in number, increasingly found themselves in subordinate positions within the work place (p. 75). Not like before, it is quite obvious in Jaffna that a substantial number of people from the traditionally oppressed castes have access to higher education and consequently get government jobs. Another important reason for this demographic change is that a large number of so-called 'upper caste' and 'middle class' *Vellalar* left the country due to violence and the armed conflict, extending their socio-economic networks within and beyond the country (McDowell 1996). For example, McDowell (1999) provides statistics on the caste composition of Sri Lankan Tamils who arrived in Switzerland between 1983 and 1991. According to him, 63% of the population was *Vellālars* and 13% of them were *Karaiyārs* (fishermen) from the western side of Jaffna peninsula. His analysis shows that there was a significant mixed-caste of migrant population in the middle years of the 1990s.

It was estimated as of the 1950s that half of the population (50%) in Jaffna peninsula was *Vellalar* (Banks 1960). A study in a village (*Mallakam*) in Jaffna shows that 31% of the village population was *Vellalar* (Thanges 2008). It is possible to get an approximate caste-based break down of the

population when a researcher conducts an ethnographic survey in a small village with the support of local government officers and inhabitants. It is indeed extremely difficult to get an accurate percentage of Jaffna's population in terms of their caste status, as there are no official records on the caste composition of the population. However, overwhelming displacement towards western countries particularly among the *Vellalar* caste (McDowell 1996,1999; Danial&Thangaraj 1995) is instrumental in changing the traditional demographic patterns in the socio-economic and religious domains of Jaffna. The demographic change in Jaffna, however, did not bring about a fundamental change in the dominant social history of *Vellalar* (Arasaratnam 1981). They still carefully maintain their dominant role in the spheres of religion, positions in higher educational institutions and Tamil national politics in Jaffna.

Finally, Derges rightly observes that there is an increasing class-consciousness following the exodus of different caste and class groups abroad and due to their acculturation into the social systems of the west and their accumulated wealth (p. 78). It is an important and obvious observation in today's Jaffna society. However, she did not explain in detail how this class-consciousness among different caste groups including oppressed castes brought changes in their everyday inter-caste interaction, power relations, socio-economic and religious status and the traditional caste hierarchy. These are indeed potential research areas, which scholars need to focus on in their ethnographic fieldwork in an extensive and holistic manner in order to understand the changing socio-economic trends in contemporary Jaffna society.

As it is noted at the beginning, the ethnographic fieldwork for this study was conducted from 'July 2003 to November 2004 with a shorter period in 2005' (p. 14) and the findings were published as a book in 2013. There is almost an eight-year gap between the fieldwork and the publication. Notable changes have taken place in the social, economic and political atmosphere after the end of the civil war in may 2009. These changes include the reopening of the A9 highway connecting peninsula to the mainland of the country and the consequent developments in internal trade and internal labor migration. The recent regime change in Sri Lanka as a result of the presidential election took place in 8th January 2015 has created a small opening to exercise democracy in political, economic, and socio-cultural affairs in the country. These changes, perhaps, lead to social recovery and transformations.

Apart from these shortcomings, on the whole, this study throws light on the complex nature of the social realities and ritual recovery practices among those who undergo political violence and oppression in their everyday life in the war-affected Jaffna society. It is an immense contribution to those who are interested in studying the 'new' role of local Hindu religious and ritual practices, which emerged as an effective transformative and recovery mechanism in conflict and post-conflict settings.

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# Publication news from UEL PhD students and PhD Alumni and Alumnae:

## 2014-2015

### a) Books and Edited Collections

## What is Narrative Research?

**Cigdem Esin**

**with** Corinne Squire, Molly Andrews, Mark Davis, Barbara Harrison, Lars-Christer Hyden, Margareta Hyden

Narrative research has become a catchword in the social sciences today, promising new fields of inquiry and creative solutions to persistent problems.

This book brings together ideas about narrative from a variety of contexts across the social sciences and synthesizes understandings of the field. Rather than focusing on theory, it examines how narrative research is conducted and applied. It operates as a practical introductory guide, basic enough for first-time researchers, but also as a window onto the more complex questions and difficulties that all researchers in this area face.

The authors guide readers through current debates about how to obtain and analyse narrative data, about the nature of narrative, the place of the researcher, the limits of researcher interpretations, and the significance of narrative work in applied and in broader political contexts.

**Dr Cigdem Esin** received her PhD in 2009 for the thesis, Construction of Sexuality in the Narratives of Well-Educated Young Women in Turkey, the University of East London (UEL), Director of Studies, Prof. Maria Tamboukou

# Inclusion and Democracy

### Edited by Ulrike M Vieten
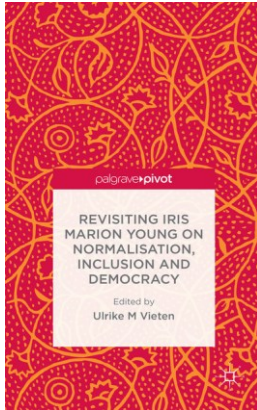
Vieten's edited collection brings together papers that were given at the I M Young Memorial Symposium 'Inclusion and Democracy Revisited', held in Amsterdam in 2012. The different chapters presented here explore in-depth, Young's models of a 'politics of cultural difference', and a 'politics of positional difference' read in combination with her critique of normalisation. Young regards the latter as decisive to any change for the better when reaching out politically to a fairer and more just democratic society.

With the current political, economic and socio-cultural crisis in mind, the contemporary world of global speed and transformed societies in and beyond Europe needs a refinement of what we understand 'normalisation' and 'difference' to be. How can we connect to each other, and in what ways can Young's 'structural inequality model' be applied to develop alternative outlooks on how to enhance inclusion and democracy in different nation states?

Dr Ulrike Vieten received her PhD in 2008 for the thesis, *Situated Cosmopolitanisms: the notion of the Other in discourses on cosmopolitanism in Britain and Germany*, the University of East London (UEL), Director of Studies, Prof. Nira Yuval-Davis

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