

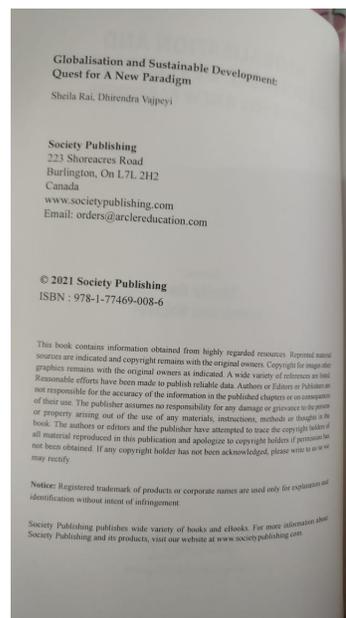
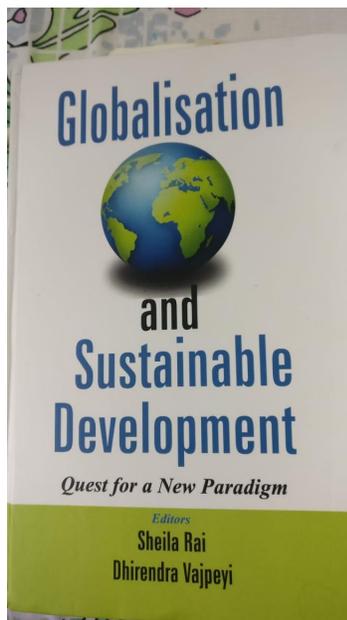
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Chapter – UJAMAA – An Alternative Model of Development. (2021)

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Chapter Gandhi and the Re-enactment of Racism

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- Towards a Political Etymology of Sedition

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Municipal Budgets and Public Goods
Neo-liberal policy-induced budgetary cuts in education and health by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation have led to the deterioration of public systems and a loss in their credibility. page 68

Besieged Palestine
Crisis produced by the contrasting combination of Israeli hyper-statehood and Palestinian non-statehood can only be resolved through a one-state postnational solution that dismantles the forbidding walls of nationalism. page 102

Women's Rights and Religion
The appointment of women priests can be used to transform the structural inequality within religion, while guarding against the co-optation of women's emancipatory politics by the right wing. page 15

Ambedkar on Tribes
Certain popular misconceptions about B R Ambedkar's views on tribes and his writings on the same over a period of time are investigated. page 78

No 'New Deal' in the US
Intensifying systemic contradictions of capitalism pose challenges before the Joe Biden administration, which cannot be surmounted by its centrist status quoist policies. page 23

The National and the International in Ambedkar's Political Thought

10 Via an analysis of political sovereignty, the social question, and Buddhism, the article seeks to demonstrate how B R Ambedkar reworks the connections between the national and the international on the common register of human equality. —*Judit Kanwale, Antarpur Bharati*

Women, Priesthood and Religious Rights in Tamil Nadu and Kerala
15 In light of the recent announcement by the ministers for Hindu religious and charitable endowments for Tamil Nadu, regarding the government's willingness to facilitate resources and training for women who wish to be priests in temples, the article examines the debate regarding the rights of women to Hindu religious realm. —*Aparna Lakshmi, Harmeda CK*

Preparing for a Just Transition Away from Coal
19 The dominance of coal for Indian energy security might, finally, be about to reduce as increasing demands are made for a just transition to cleaner and more community-friendly forms of energy. —*Patrick Oskarsson, Vasudha Chhotray*

Behind the Early Unravelling of Joe Biden's Promise
23 The unwillingness of the new United States administration under Joe Biden to adhere to a new deal-like transformative policies, is due to the persistent control of the big business that is endemic to the sociopolitical systems of the capitalist West. —*Satyendra Banjan*

Gandhi and the Re-enactment of Racism
32 Examining M K Gandhi's attitude towards South African natives during his sojourn in South Africa, Advaita Desai and Gokul Vaidya, in their book *The South African Gandhi*, have accused Gandhi of racism as he considered the natives racially inferior and called them Kaffirs. —*Rudra Kumari*

Political Economy of BMC Budgets
68 The paper focuses on the changing trends in budget allocations of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation, especially since the structural adjustment programme that came to be implemented from 1990 and how it has affected civic services, especially health and education. —*Ravi Duggal*

Is Ambedkar's Prejudice against 'Tribe' a Settled Matter?
78 A challenge is mounted against the widespread assumption that Ambedkar was prejudiced against 'tribe', by revealing acts of academic carelessness that occur in the writings of some scholars through the cherry-picking of quotes and failure to historically contextualise the same. —*Nishikant Kolge*

Global Value Chains of MNCs and Indian SMEs: Promoting Linkages
86 The rapidly expanding global value chains of multinational corporations are increasingly dominating international trade, while emerging economies like India can hardly afford to ignore. —*M H Rola Subrahmanyam, Marudharan Loganathan*

Private Sector in Solid Waste Management
95 In most developing countries, waste is managed by government bodies who allocate a large amount of resources but rarely obtain the desired results. Taking this problem into account, this article explores the relationship between environmental policy and firms engaged in solid waste management by studying the case of four firms in the swm industry in India. —*Rajiv V. Shah, Sanjay Gupta*

A Hundred Years of Israeli Hyper-statehood
102 Drawing historical insights from Rashid Khalidi's acclaimed book, *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917–2012*, this article suggests that the unseat at Israeli hyper-statehood can only grow in the us and across the world. —*Amir Ali*

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Protecting the Sabarmati Ashram

MK Gandhi's ashram at Ahmedabad, known as Sabarmati Ashram, is an unusual monument of international importance. It was Gandhi's home from 1917 to 1930. He led the famous Gandhi March from the ashram and pledged not to return to the ashram until independence was attained.

After the Salt March, Gandhi disbanded the ashram as a part of the freedom struggle in 1931. After independence, Gandhi's associates and followers formed the Sabarmati Ashram Preservation and Memorial Trust to protect the buildings and archival possessions of the ashram for posterity. This trust looks after the buildings, including Hirday Kunj—the residence of Gandhi and Kasturba.

Hirday Kunj and the memorial museum greet thousands of visitors coming from all parts of the world daily in a truly Gandhian fashion, without frisking or security check or sight of armed persons. The visitors are well treated and inspired by the aesthetics, openness, and sanctity of the place.

The present government is all set to "reclaim" the "visual wholesomeness, tranquility and undisturbed environment of 1947" and make it a "world-class" tourist destination spread over 54 acres. It has announced a budget of ₹1,200 crore for "Gandhi Ashram Memorial and Precinct Development Project." There will be new museums, an amphitheatre, VIP lounge, shops, food court, among other things in the newly created "world-class" memorial as per the newspaper reports.

Reports say that the project will be under the direct supervision of the Prime Minister and the chief minister. This is in keeping with the present government's strategy to appropriate and commercialise all Gandhian institutions in the country. The worst example of this can be seen in Sevagram, but the most frightening aspect is government control over all Gandhian archives. What does this mean effectively?

The proposed plan severely compromises and trivialises the sanctity and importance of the present-day ashram,

mainly Hirday Kunj, surrounding buildings, and the museum.

The simplicity of the ashram will be completely lost in a ₹1,200 crore project. Hirday Kunj, other historical buildings, and present museums, even if they remain untouched, will no longer be central but pushed into a corner by the new museum, amphitheatre, food courts, shops, etc.

Easy access to Hirday Kunj and the present museum will be hindered as the road passing by it will be closed. The new entrance will have at least a VIP lounge and a new museum before Hirday Kunj and the current museum. Lakhs of Indians, specially schoolchildren, as well as foreign visitors come to Sabarmati Ashram every year. The place has never needed a "world-class" makeover to attract tourists. The charisma of Gandhi along with the authenticity and simplicity of the place has been enough.

The proposed plan is an extension of "Gandhi theme park" and at worst a "second assassination."

In short, if the project is going through, the most authentic monument of Gandhi and our freedom struggle will be lost forever to vanity and commercialisation.

We must collectively oppose any government takeover of Gandhian institutions, while ensuring that the government continues to use public money for the proper maintenance and upkeep of such institutions, in consultation with eminent Gandhians, historians and archivists from India and around the world.

Prakash Shah, GN Deyy, Anand Purvayashan, Ram Purvayashan, Rajeshwar Gandhi, G C Parikh, and 73 others

NPs of SHGs in India: Behavioural Aspects

This is in response to the article, "Performance of Self-Help Groups in India" (epw, 29 January 2012). This letter puts light on a few behavioural aspects of loan repayment behaviour of self-help groups (SHGs) in India. The article very neatly elaborates interesting facts and the non-performing assets (NPAs) of the SHGs in India and their

PERSPECTIVES

Gandhi and the Re-enactment of Racism

SHARDA KUMARI

Examining MK Gandhi's attitude towards South African natives during his sojourn in South Africa, Ashwin Desai and Godam Vahed, in their book *The South African Gandhi*, have accused Gandhi of racism, arguing that Gandhi kept his struggle for British concessions for 'indentured Indians in South Africa separate from the struggle of Zulu people for freedom from colonial rule, because Gandhi considered the natives racially inferior and called them Kaffirs—a derogatory term used against them by the Whites as well as Indians. However, accusing Gandhi of racism indicates a misrepresentation of his ideas in transition, and the word Kaffir does not connote a racial slur.

M Gandhi's life and philosophy was, as he himself called it, an experiment with truth, and therefore, it took sudden, unexpected twists and turns before he arrived at a circumscribed course of action on the close path. These ups and downs in his thought process are interpreted variously by Gandhian scholars and Gandhi's critics, and as a result, some of his expressions and actions have acquired a controversial status. Some people have called him a hypocrite (Singh 2004, Jayaward 2012, French 2011). Some others have accused him of having a narrow approach towards the downtrodden in India (Gidder 2003), and yet others have even levelled a charge of racism against him (Jayaward 2011; French 2011; Desai and Vahed 2008). However, Vahed and Vahed (2010) believe that Gandhi's middle position avoiding the two extremes—anti-racism as well as financial racism—with reference to South African Blacks is to be interpreted "as a political strategy." Some of the commentaries concerning his approach relate to his formative years in South Africa.

Since there are not just a handful of remarks against a prominent figure, but based on rigorous research and often add a different, unexpected dimension to the existing body of research in Gandhian thought, they need our serious attention and must elicit a justification. What is meant by justification is that in the course of research on such issues, it is often noted that such opinions may arise owing to a misinterpretation of Gandhi's ideas on a particular issue or action, though I admit that they may also represent an opinion different from a Gandhian perspective, and deserves to be added as an extra dimension to the study of the relevance of Gandhi's ideas in a post-Gandhian era.

In the present article I discuss one such controversial aspect of Gandhi's personality brought to public debate by Ashwin Desai and Godam Vahed in their 2008 book *The South African Gandhi*, wherein the authors accuse Gandhi of holding the view against South African natives. The accusation is not, at all times, the ideas expressed by the authors seem to have elicited angry responses from people belonging to some African countries, an academic debate and scholarly attention on the issue is in vogue.

Background to the Present Study
The present study is inspired by a recent campaign in some African countries against Gandhi, accusing him of holding racist views during his sojourn in South Africa, especially against the Black South African natives, not by implication, against all African natives. Michael Soti Dooly, reporting for the Guardian, with the headline "State of Racist Gandhi Removed from University of Ghana" wrote that a Gandhi statue was removed from the campus of the University of Ghana after protests from students and faculty, who argued that the Indian independence leader considered Africans "inferior" (The statue was unveiled in 2005 at the University of Ghana, Accra by India's former President Pratibha Patil). Similarly, Sarah Brown (2007) writes a report for *The New York Times* that a Gandhi statue was removed from the University of Ghana (Accra) by India's former President Pratibha Patil. Similarly, Sarah Brown (2007) writes a report for *The New York Times* that a Gandhi statue was removed from the University of Ghana (Accra) by India's former President Pratibha Patil. Similarly, Sarah Brown (2007) writes a report for *The New York Times* that a Gandhi statue was removed from the University of Ghana (Accra) by India's former President Pratibha Patil.

There is no dearth of studies and commentaries on Gandhi concerning his views on the caste system, varna system and race. For example, Anandharaj Roy, speaking to students at Kuruk University, accused Gandhi of discrimination and raised a question on the morality of the commensuration of the Mahatma in various forms. According to her, it is time to unveil a few truths about a person whose doctrine of non-violence was