

**The Emergence of Global Citizenship:
Utopian Ideas, Cooperative Movements and the Third Sector
-As reviewed by Dr Daman Prakash**

The publication 'The Emergence of Global Citizenship: Utopian Ideas, Cooperative Movements and the Third Sector' issued recently [2020] by the Robert Owen Association of Japan is the second one after the release of 'Robert Owen and the World of Cooperation' in 1992. The editors Chushichi Tsuzuki, Naobumi Hijikata and Akira Kurimoto have devoted their heart and soul in putting together the learned papers to highlight the relevance, significance and importance of the Cooperative Movement in the present-day world of globalisation which has been claiming to reduce the entire world into a small village.

The din of multi-national business approach, open market economy, reaching the consumers, harnessing the producers, invoking the glories of IT which often confuses the laymen, tends to get reduced to the soft music of consumer satisfaction, higher economic returns to the producers, reinforcing the morality and ethics of the ideals of Cooperative Movement, and upward movement of people's enterprises, especially cooperative ventures. The consumer appears to stand out with a market personality and identity, not recognised numerically. The acquisition of global citizenship is not a mere outcome of some legal birth certificates, the association and affiliation with economically fair, socially just, and morally upright institutions and internationally spread Movement – the Cooperative Movement. The poverty syndrome, lopsided business entrepreneurship, inefficiency in services, usurping people's rightful authority by external elements, can be reduced, if not totally eliminated, by infusing the true spirit of the Principles of Cooperation among the business institutions and the people at large.

The 326-paged beautifully presented and well-printed publication contains a string of 19 elements which have been contributed by eminent thinkers, professors, seasoned practicing managers from all over the world. The book has been divided into three distinctive parts.

The first part of the book 'Implications of Utopian Ideas and Schemes' covers the ideas and thoughts of Robert Owen and, being a mill owner, his contributions to social reforms.

Antonio Hatzenberger's paper 'Universal Basic Income, Utopia, and Global Citizenship' claims that a basic income would be the means of re-establishing social justice. Though in several cases the means of production were taken over by the State, yet the rightful owners need to be compensated to cover the minimum needs. This provision of advance of the minimum is the basis of freedom. Freedom and autonomy are the leads to global citizenship – Basic income and global citizenship are both part of the same claim for autonomy. The paper proposes a project to crystallize the concept of universal basic income and global citizenship, though there are several problems which need to be taken of – rather the concept to be expanded for a broader understanding by a larger spectrum of people with due safeguards being properly positioned.

The paper 'The Revival of Robert Owen' by Gregory Claeys examines the posthumous Victorian reputation of the founder of British socialism, Robert Owen, who was the earliest critic of the negative effects of that system of economic competition whose most recent developments we refer to as 'globalisation'. Naobumi Hijikata's 'Utopianism and Utilitarianism in Robert Owen's Schema' recognised that Robert Owen was one such socialist who severely criticized the wrong caused by the free market system but came to realise that he aimed to establish equitable exchange and fair competition gradually, even if ultimately he intended to abolish free competition and to establish common property. The owner of New Lanark Mill, Robert Owen also had a human heart. His philosophy is outlined in the 'Principle of the Formation of Human Character' in 'A New View of Society' thus: [I] human character is plastic and can be formed in any shape by circumstances surrounding

him or her; and [ii] the means for formation of human character is given to those who are socially influential – the propertied class. The author also explains that men and women are compounds of three elements: natural inclination, intellectual faculty, and moral quality. Owen though was a mill owner yet he worked hard in the field of social reform. Owen devoted himself to the establishment of community, to be self-managed by constituents locally.

Yoshio Nagai in the paper 'Robert Owen – A Puzzle Solved' tries to clarify the fundamental structure of Owen's doctrine. Recognising that the high level of unemployment among the working class was due to the rapid increase in new productive power, for which society had failed to furnish the proper arrangements, he impressed upon the government to institute measure of a 'change in the standard of value'. Production and consumption were combined within a community, and were made co-extent by the principles of enterprises; for within the enterprise, its organiser[s] could control or manage, at their will, the inner organisation or arrangements of workers. This was the very beginning of reform.

The third sector will play an increasingly important role in empowering poor people and in doing so, we believe there is much that Robert Owen can still teach us about the priorities need to be addressed globally for more progressive governance, greater social justice and great social inclusion in the twenty-first century. Ian Donnachie's paper 'Robert Owen and New Lanark – the Lessons of History' refers to New Lanark [now a UNESCO World Heritage Site] as Owen's test-bed for social reform. Although a dynamic, capitalist enterprise, where profit was foremost, Owen pioneered in one context important developments in capitalism with a human face, in labour relations, education, citizenship, welfare, cooperation, planning and environment.

The high ideals and hard realities of the Owenite community projects are given sharp edge at Manea Fen, a small community in a fenland of Cambridgeshire [1839-41]. The developments of community living in the community have been explained by John Langdon in the paper 'The Great Moral Lever – Life at the Owenite Community of Manea Fen' right from the hard life faced by the workers, until the preparation of a charter of their own, instituting facilities for themselves, and the methods developed for managing their own community.

Catherine Durieux highlights in the paper 'Marriage as Seen by Robert Owen and the Owenites' the ideas of Owen's ideas about marriage. Robert Owen and his followers were the first to insist on a comprehensive analysis relating all aspects of women's inequality and oppression, and to challenge conventional sexual morality.

The paper 'The Local Currencies and Robert Owen's Labour Notes' by Takeshi Maruyama aims to consider the significance of local currencies and their future development in reference to Robert Owen's labour notes and his practical failure in England and America. Owen had tried to pay the 'ticket for wages' to the workers whom he managed in the New Lanark cotton mill, and the workers then used it to buy goods at the factory stores or exchanged it into money at the cashier in the counting house. Others also used to follow this practice during those days. In counting wages for labour, Equitable Labour Exchange was established. However, the system collapsed after some time. Modern currencies though they do not have any intrinsic value, they are guaranteed by governments. The paper discusses the forms of present-day currencies and their merits and demerits. The concept of Volunteering Labour Bank in Japan [1974] has also been discussed. The modern world of private profit and wealth would change into a society with mature public wealth and healthy human relationships. Then local currencies would take their role as one of the first movements to achieve a symbiotic society in which people each other along with the natural environment. They would also take a modern role in correcting the capitalistic global economy with free competition for private interest and wealth.

The paper 'The British Empire and Cooperatives in India' by Rita Rhodes in Part-II of the publication 'Interaction between Cooperative Ideas and Practices' deals with the institution of a formal cooperative structure in 1904 in India. The author explains the background for the establishment of a Cooperative Credit Societies Act of 1904. The India of London comprising the retired members of India's senior and influential administrator also influenced the development. The 1904 Act was not the first piece of Cooperative Legislation in the British Empire. There was a wide replication of this legislation in many countries of the world – many of the former British colonies retained features of the legislation after they gained independence and even today some vestiges of it remain. The centenary of the Indian Cooperative Movement after the enactment of 1904 Act was observed in the country during 2004.

Madhav V. Madane's paper 'A Century of Indian Cooperatives' is an exhaustive description of emergence of cooperatives in the Indian sub-continent. The paper deals with the events on the Indian side of the story and the developments leading to a vast network of myriad types of cooperatives in the region. The paper covers issues like: the principle of mutuality vis-à-vis the system of Unlimited Liability; the subject of Cooperation being a state subject and the institution of the Registrar of Cooperative Societies; three-tier institutional rural credit structure; Concessional finance for cooperatives and the network for agricultural finance; the establishment of National Bank for Agriculture and rural Development [NABARD], its organisation and activities; Non-farm credit; Sectoral cooperatives like housing, thrift credit and urban banks; Agro-processing – dairy and sugar cooperatives and their strong presence in the country; Establishment of fertiliser cooperatives; and the whole range of cooperative education and training programmes. India at present has 550,000 cooperatives with a total membership of nearly 260 million covering all the villages in the country, There is a multi-state Cooperative Societies Act-2002 and a Cooperative Development Policy. The author also lists some of the problems faced by the Indian Cooperative Movement.

Professor Ian MacPherson's paper 'Founders and the Formative Years of Caisses Populaires and Credit Unions in North America' discusses about the leaders of the formative stages of three main traditions within the international credit union movement – Quebec, United States of America and English-speaking Canada [Quebec-Alphonse Desjardins and his wife, Dorimene; Edward A. Filene, Roy Bergengren; English-speaking Canada – Jimmy Tompkins, Moses Coady, Sister Marie Michael and Irene Doyle]. Each of these movements was profoundly influenced by the visions, attitudes and preferences of their most prominent founders. According to Professor MacPherson they believed ordinary people could create and operate cooperative enterprise if they had effective education and training. They left legacies in the movement they profoundly influenced, at least in their formative stages, by their ideas, actions and examples.

Professor Hans-H. Munkner's highly analytical paper 'Raiffeisen and Agricultural Cooperatives' surveys the Raiffeisen Model, its origins, its adjustment to changing conditions and present day's requirements and its worldwide dissemination. Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen of Germany designed his model of organised self-help more than 130 years ago in times of rapid change, wide-spread poverty and struggle of people to find ways and means of how to cope with the challenges of a new social, economic and political environment. To make his model of social and economic development replicable and to turn it into a movement attracting followers in Germany and in other parts of the world, Raiffeisen devised a dissemination strategy that worked and that in retrospect appears surprisingly modern. The International Raiffeisen Union, a non-governmental organisation established in 1968 in Germany, in the membership of the International Cooperative Alliance, has been propagating the concept for the last 35 years.

The paper 'Cooperative Education and Citizenship' by Yuichiro Nakagawa calls upon the international Cooperative Movement to provide some direction to enable the Movement to meet the responsibility it has to its members, as well as to the community at large in the context of global and/or regional positioning. Yuichiro Nakagawa surveys the report 'Cooperatives in the year 2000' presented by Professor AF Laidlaw, Lars Marcus's report on Cooperatives and Basic Values, and the discussions held at the International Cooperative Congresses. The objective of the paper is to consider the ways and directions that are distinct approaches to cooperative education and citizenship within the Cooperative Movement in a global age. The relationship between education in cooperatives and education in schools, as well as within the home, is essential in human life. In the development of a strong civil society cooperatives have an important role in advocating and promoting people's autonomy, equal rights, duties and obligations including participation.

The paper 'Charles Gide and Contemporary Social Economy' by Takashi Suzuki deals with the ideas and arguments of Charles Gide, especially his cooperative republic and social reform. The solidarity with which he composed his ideological basis, social economy and its development and classification are also discussed. The paper also clarifies the similarities and distinctions between the ideas of Gide and contemporary social economy.

The third Sector in the era of Globalisation is the third part of the book. The 'Impact of the third Sector in Europe' written by Roger Spear, Bernard Thiry and David Vivet examines the size of the third sector in Europe, its size, current trends, its status and the policy framework at the EU level. The Third Sector, by and large, consists of voluntary sector or social economy. The social economy may be considered as comprising cooperatives, mutuals and associations or voluntary organisations and foundations. Examples of the developments taking place in the third Sector have also been provided.

Johnston Birchall's paper 'Business Ethics : Case of the UK Cooperative Bank' traces the historical development of the Bank and its current status. Britain provides a typical case: cooperative banking developed within the powerful consumers' cooperative movement embodied in the CWS and later became independent as the Cooperative Bank, though it remained a subsidiary of the CWS. Thereafter the Bank continued to develop taking advantage of the policies of deregulation and of the new opportunities provided by the advancing information technology. It adhered to cooperative principles, while reviewing its cooperative heritage so as to adjust itself to ethical issues including such global issues as political oppression, armament sales and the environment. The Bank fully accepts Robert Owen's legacy in the form of the 'ethical consumer' making choices or rational calculations based on a long-term self-interest. The paper also raises the question whether the Bank should become an independent cooperative society?

'Community-Supported Agriculture Movement – A Vision for a Better Food system' by Deborah Steinhoff argues that there is still room for consumers to initiate change towards a more sustainable form of agriculture and that this change is possible if consumers take more interest in the food they eat and demand from agricultural producers that food is produced in ways that does not disrupt the ecosystem. It also focuses on how CSA [Community-Supported Agriculture] movement is leading the way in initiating this change in the food system. The CSA is a form of social agriculture under which all farms produce organic food for the community. CSA members make a commitment to support the farm, and assume financial risks with the farmers. The farmers in consultation with the consumers follow the methods and techniques, packaging, grading and delivery system are developed. The system has been initiated in North America to some extent and has the potential to proliferate after due approvals are obtained from the government and community leaders.

Shigeki Maruyama's paper 'Civic Sector for Food and Ecology' examines various issues concerning the Japanese civic sector including cooperatives under globalisation. It takes note of crisis of ecology and food safety, policies and laws laid down by the Japanese Government and the response of the Japanese Cooperative Movement. The paper also discusses the role of cooperatives including agricultural cooperatives in the context of WTO, IMF and the World Bank. Also are highlighted the roles played by prominent cooperatives of Japan e.g., Coop Sapporo, Coop Kobe. In order to form and develop a civic sector, there is a need to chart new ideological waters and break away from state control and guidance. The development of the civic sector is impossible without overcoming the authoritarianism within.

Akira Kurimoto's paper 'What Can Cooperative Health and Social Care Offer?' gives an overview of the health and social care system in Japan and explores the typology of cooperatives in these sectors. It also analyses why do the health cooperatives exist and what they seek to accomplish. Japan has a compulsory medical insurance system which covers the entire country through eight public medical insurance schemes. In addition, Third Sector organisations [e.g., health/medical care cooperatives] also play vital role in providing health and social care. The paper also explains the services that are offered by health cooperatives. Japan's health cooperatives present a unique experience combining user's participation and professional's expertise to reduce problems associated with asymmetric information. They are empowering consumers through learning and participation and taking initiatives to build networking for health promotion, medical and social care in communities.

The book is a praiseworthy initiative taken by the Robert Owen Association of Japan and can easily be described as a monumental addition to cooperative information and knowledge on the experiences and thoughts of world's well-known thinkers, practicing managers, professor and social activists. Modifications in the present-day social and economic distortions can easily be corrected in the light of the experiences of people like Robert Owen, who, being a mill owner himself, helped the germ of 'cooperatives' to grow. That small plant planted by him and his contemporaries is a strong and worldwide Cooperative Movement with a direct individual membership of 850 million.

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