

*Hardanger Academy for Peace Development and Environment, 30 Jul 2017*

These are the goals of the United Nations; the Hardanger Academy in little Jondal, Norway (population ca.1150) made them three foci. The problem arose: what do they have in common? Are they three aspects of the same thing? If so, what is that “thing”?

Four ways of trying to answer have been identified and explored. Four because of four ways of approaching social reality, through:

- *actors*, with intentions-capabilities-contexts, with their needs;
- *culture*, defining the true-good-right-beautiful-sacred;
- *structure*, the patterns of individual and collective interaction;
- *nature*, evolving to higher complexity, with diversity and symbiosis.

All four have surface and deeper aspects. The surface aspects are conscious, can be articulated and communicated. The deeper aspects are repressed into the subconscious as inconvenient, too obvious or simply unknown. They can be “conscientized” (Freire), or simply be learnt.

These four ways of approaching social reality can then be applied to the micro level of individual actors, to the meso level of social groups, to the macro level of states and nations, and to the mega level of regions and civilizations. The concepts of peace, development and environment have their interpretations at all levels (like not poisoning the human body-nature with tobacco, drugs, alcohol); not only at the macro level of states that the UN is mainly addressing.

*Take nature*, doing the four in the opposite order. One way is through darwinism. And one self-professed darwinist was Adolf Hitler.

To Hitler the niche was the whole world, the species were races: like nations, not races by pigment. The Jews were a non-race.

They were struggling; the more fit, the higher up.

Hitler read out of global reality that the English race was the fittest. The German race, fit for much higher levels-not above the English, maybe in “peaceful coexistence”-had been suppressed.

The solution was to follow the English, colonize others, take their resources, make them work for the colonizer. He attacked USSR, conquered Ukraine, plundered, turned them into slaves: maximum four years school, forced them to deliver to the Germans, not the cities.

Peace is an outcome of a natural hierarchy according to fitness; development is according to hierarchic level; nature was scarce in Germany and abundant outside, hence expansion for *Lebensraum*.

*Take structure*, Karl Marx. The structure of *mode of production* had two layers, owners and not-owners of the *means of production*: slaves in antiquity, land in feudalism, capital (liquid and fixed) in capitalism, state in socialism-between primitive communism and future communism with all means shared, and hence nobody's property. If new means of production were incompatible with the mode, the mode had to change: a revolution, turning slaves into land workers into industrial workers into state workers till communist liberation. Six stages.

Peace is an outcome of not having owners fighting for means of production; development is transition from one stage to the next ultimately shared by all in communism; environment had been squeezed beyond its capacity by land- and resource-owners no longer there.

*Take culture*, and Western exceptionalism as Westernization; the idea that peace is an outcome of a world government Western Montesquieu-style with separation of legislative, executive and judiciary powers (oblivious of military and capital power as military-industrial complexes); development is level of Westernization to be accelerated by (Western) development assistance; environment depletion-pollution can be managed through renewable resources and detoxification.

*Take the actor approach*, individual and collective, as NGOs, TNCs states, nations, regions, civilizations. There are many of them, often with strong views on peace-development-environment, often canonizing themselves: *You get all three, If and only if, You follow me.*

Here is my conclusion: I am unimpressed with all four approaches.

We have considerable peace, development, environment deficits, in spite of, or because of, all four of these approaches.

Nothing of what they have done convinces us that those three precious ideas-peace, development, environment-are aspects of one and the same thing. They are independent of each other; *sui generis*, of their own kind. Conceptually they are three different thoughts to be thought. Verbally they are three different

words to be spoken. And practically three different jobs to do, not one single button to push.

Empirically we can easily find cases with one of them reasonably satisfied but the others not at all. Developed societies far from peaceful (USA, Israel, Norway) nor considerate to the environment (maybe their own, not that of others). We have peaceful societies that are very undeveloped (Laos), societies being at one with nature but neither developed nor peaceful (Volta?). And societies with none of the three (Saudi), or with all three (Botswana).

Three different words, three different concepts, three different realities, three different jobs; with three different definitions. Ours below should be reasonably compatible with common word usage, desirable as values, and feasible in practice:

- *peace, negative*: conflict solution, trauma conciliation.
- *peace, positive*: linking good aspects of actors in joint projects.
- *development*: lifting the bottom up to meet needs, less inequality.
- *environment*: meeting nature's needs for diversity and symbiosis.

There is something to learn from the four approaches rejected.

The strongest will tend to impose their views. Structures have inner lives and have to be guided. Cultures well up from deep levels.

Any definition-theory-practice is only one among many, tested by trial and error, and doomed to be overtaken in the process of history.

But in that process Peace, Development, Environment are key aspects.

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28 August 2017