



Beyond Marginalization of Pacifism and Nonviolence

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Abstract

In the call for papers for this conference - *Rethinking Pacifism for Revolution, Security and Politics* – the entry point is an acknowledgment of the fact that pacifism has occupied a marginal place in international relations scholarship, politics, activism, media, and the wider society. This is well-known for all of those who have tried to counter this marginalization through different means. Nevertheless, it is necessary to think on and investigate why such marginalization has taken place, and how this marginalization can be replaced with a support for nonviolent cultures and civilizations.

This paper is divided in three chapters. First, a personal chapter on why and how nonviolence and *Another Development Approach* became a part of my life, and why I think this approach is intertwined with nonviolence. Second, a chapter on structural and cultural causes to the marginalization of pacifism and nonviolence. In that chapter I also discuss democracy in relation to violence and nonviolence as well as challenges for pacifism and nonviolence. Third, and finally, a chapter on how pacifism and nonviolence can be moved from a marginalized place in various discourses to a place where more people, organizations and states consider pacifism and nonviolence to be foundational for a fair and sustainable international order.

The paper concludes that there is a global normalization of violence due to structural and cultural reasons, and that this normalization need to be challenged by pacifism and nonviolence if peace and sustainable development will be a reality. Besides of nonviolent action, research and collaboration, the paper also discusses opportunities in the field of education and communication.

In each chapter, the paper also gives arguments for feminism.

Introduction: Searching for Another Development through Nonviolence

“*War is not normal in human life.*”

What if many and most accepted this idea expressed by José Figueres, former president of Costa Rica? Can we as a collective humanity get to that point? What can be done? What is needed? Why is the pacifism of Costa Rica an exception rather than the rule? Can human civilizations survive and prosper without a culture of peace and nonviolence as a common ground?

Questions that can be problematized. Questions discussed in this paper.

When the American professor Francis Fukuyama, working in the field of political science and political economy, 1989 started to talk about *The End of History*, he had great hopes for liberal democracy. The great ideological battles were over due to the victory over Nazism in the 1940s and due to the collapse of Communism at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. Positive changes could now be managed within the framework of liberal democracy – according to him, a universal ideology. He said:

“*What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of postwar history, but the end of history as such.... That is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.*”¹

In this context and part of the paper I will not comment on professor Fukuyama’s thinking in that time otherwise than that history has proved him wrong, and that he like anyone else had to reflect on the serious threats against a sustainable future in prosperity and peace for humankind as well as on the ideology that he perceived as universal and good – liberalism.

However, from my point of view and related to my own reading of history, *the end of history* as a conceptualization of a situation can be used for describing my own perceptions and feelings leaving adolescence and moving to adulthood in the beginning of the 1980s.

Growing up in a world where human civilizations could disappear due to the use of nuclear weapons by first and foremost the superpowers, USA and Soviet Union, and growing up with the knowledge about what world wars and genocide could mean in terms of suffering and destruction I perceived *the end of history* (or rather *the end of human history*) as a real risk. Modernity seemed to have a potential to produce death on a scale never before comprehended.²

I also started to get emotionally and intellectually engaged in the violence used by colonizers and imperialists during different periods (including the postcolonial), as well as by men against women and girls which also has to be considered as mass violence (and according to me a crime against humanity due to the fact that violence against women is so deeply rooted in as far as I know, all societies).

¹ Fukuyama, F (1989), p. 2 and Fukuyama, F (1992)

² Bauman, Z (1989), von Wright, G-H (1986). and Englund, P (1996).

And, in that state of mind – what about the violence against the nature? What about the unsustainable use of natural resources? What about the disparities in the world when it comes to access to resources needed for personal and social development? What about the future for all children born and not yet born?

From my point of view, born on the sunny side of the street, my reading of the situation was that we, as a collective human civilization, was moving rapidly towards a critical situation even risking survival of our human civilizations as we knew them. It was also clear that so many people were deeply affected by violence, not only by direct and physical violence but also other forms of violence³, and that this had to be changed. From that point in my life the commitment for nonviolence was there as well as search for understanding and hope. I also realized that Sweden, even though implementing successful social reforms for the benefit of people and with an international reputation as mediator in conflicts and commitment for disarmament, contributed to mass violence through exports of arms to various conflicts, countries and regions. In fact, Sweden was one of the biggest exporters (and still is) of arms in the world, legitimizing this “business” through official lies and realist assumptions on how national security should be safeguarded. “Our” national security, regardless of commercial profits, were more important than the lives of civilians in war zones where weapons and systems produced in Sweden were used. That was not the language used, but the reality looking at the effects of this policy.⁴

For the reader it must be quite clear that this was a transformative time in my life searching for alternatives beyond mainstream political discourse,⁵ and with eyes and ears open to voices from different parts of the world, as well as those brought up in Sweden and the Nordic countries like me. Of course, I looked to the examples of Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King.

I also realized that there were many female voices for peace and demilitarization, not so often heard and recognized, with a holistic perception on what constitutes a peaceful society in harmony with nature, for example the women that launched and worked within *Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)* as well as other scholars and activist who from a feministic perspective strived and strive for a world free from violence in all its manifestations. Without gender equality there will be no peace and no sustainable development, and without the struggle by women that had not been recognized. Later on, I found lists of names of women from “the global south” named by postcolonial scholars who made stories and thoughts visible, names and stories that I had never heard about in my upbringing or in my academic training.⁶

Another entry point into the discourse about the contemporary situation at that time and alternatives to the Cold War, colonialism and neocolonialism, short sighted industrialism, exploitation of nature etc I found in the book *The Crisis* written by a series of scholars.⁷ Through this reading as well as others I expanded my language for understanding the

³ For a discussion and definitions on violence, see Galtung, J (1996), p. 24-46.

⁴ Åkerström, L (2016)

⁵ By discourse, and as Björn Hettne, I mean the broader academic and public debate on particular issue even though I am aware the critical views on grand narratives put forward from postmodern and post-development scholars. Hettne, B (2012), p.4.

⁶ Mohanty, C T (2006), Loomba, A (2015), and Young, R C J (2001)

⁷ Friberg, M och Galtung, J (eds.) (1983)

situation. Special attention in this book from me was on an essay written by Björn Hettne - *The Western Development Model Questioned* - in where he outlined the development discourse and also reflecting on what he described as counterpoint perspectives and not only variants of mainstream.⁸

I found this extremely interesting, relevant and hopeful due to the need for everyone not to be crippled by a westernized discourse, and for being open to voices from Asia, Africa, Latin America and the WANA-region⁹, especially the vast majority of world population and minorities fighting for their own survival affected by structures, systems and actions constructed and enforced by different types of elites.

Later this reading also opened my eyes to the concept of *Another Development* brought forward in *The 1975 Dag Hammarskjöld Report on Development and International Cooperation* with the title *What Now?*¹⁰ as well as other publications produced by *Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation*, for example *Another Development. Approaches and Strategies*¹¹ edited by Marc Nerfin.

Even though the thinkers behind *Another Development Approach* as an alternative conceptual framework for development did not start from the entry point of nonviolence, they outlined something that I have carried with me ever since. In some paragraphs Marc Nerfin defines some basic features of *Another Development*:

”Essentially, its message was that there would be no genuine development and no really new international order if certain key questions were not asked – and concretely answered. Development of what, development by whom and for whom, development how, it asked, and it went on to outline the basic features of another development, required in all societies, whether in the North or the South, centrally planned or market dominated, at high or at a low level of productivity. Another development would be:

*Need-oriented, that is, being geared to the meeting of human needs, both material and non-material. It begins with the satisfaction of the basic needs of those dominated and exploited, who constitute the majority of the world’s inhabitants, and ensures at the same time the humanization of all human beings by the satisfaction of their needs for expression, creativity, equality and conviviality and to understand and master their own destiny.*¹²

*Endogenous, that is, stemming from the heart of each society, which defines in sovereignty its values and the vision of its future. Since development is not a linear process, there could be no universal model, and only the plurality of development patterns can answer to the specificity of each situation.*¹³

⁸ Ibid, p 187-237.

⁹ WANA means West Asia North Africa and is used by some who find MENA (Middle East North Africa) being to politized.

¹⁰ Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (1975)

¹¹ Nerfin, M (ed.) (1977)

¹² In this paper I will not elaborate on the research and views on human needs. I am aware that it is possible to discuss this in length with reference to for example Abraham Maslow, Manfred Max-Neef, Antonia Elizalde Martin Hopenhayn and Marshall Rosenberg.

¹³ This statement was a rejection of for example modernization theory put forward by Walt Rostow.

*Self-reliant, that is, implying that each society relies primarily on its own strength and resources in terms of its member's energies and its natural and cultural environment. Self-reliance clearly needs to be exercised at national and international (collective self-reliance) levels but it acquires its full meaning only if rooted at local level, in the praxis of each community.*¹⁴

*Ecologically sound, that is, utilizing rationally the resources of the biosphere in full awareness of the potential of local ecosystems as well as the global and local outer limits imposed on present and future generations. It implies the equitable access to resources by all as well as careful, socially relevant technologies.*¹⁵

*Based on structural transformations; they are required, more often than not, in social relations, in economic activities and in their spatial distribution, as well as in the power structure, so as to realize the conditions of self-management and participation in decision-making by all those affected by it, from the rural or urban community to the world as a whole, without which the above goals could not be achieved.*¹⁶

*These five points are organically linked. Taken in isolation from each other, they would not bring about the desired result. For development is seen as a whole, as an integral, cultural process, as the development of every man and woman and the whole of man and woman. Another development means liberation.*¹⁷

The definition put forward by Marc Nerfin and others has been questioned from different point of views; not that much mentioned about human rights, the need for elaborating more on for example gender equality, conflict management, peacebuilding and nonviolence, a somehow romanticized view on concepts such as society and community as well as being too vague about what structural transformation means.¹⁸ However, even if it is possible and needed to make critical remarks and put the perspective of *Another Development* in relation to history, changes in international discourse, other perspectives etc, *Another Development Approach* still offers a useful conceptual framework challenging contemporary dogmas and practices and pushing for sustainable alternatives.

During the 1970s and after, it targeted the East/West and North/South relations of power with negative effects for the majority of the world population. Today *Another Development* can be seen as a resistance against neoliberalism, reliance on technical solutions and geoengineering for the management of global problems, different variants of self-centered nationalisms, interventions based on geopolitical motives, right wing extremism, jihadism, corruption and male domination.¹⁹

¹⁴ The concept of self-reliance has a relation to names such as Mohandas Gandhi, Julius Nyerere and Kwame Nkrumah, since they were leaders explicitly talking about self-reliance as a need to break the dependency to former colonizers.

¹⁵ Context for this paragraph was the debate about environment and development that started to get attention, in for example the publication *The Limits to Growth* commissioned by *The Club of Rome*, and at the *UN-conference on the human environment* in Stockholm 1972.

¹⁶ When this was written they also made reference to the *Declaration for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order* (NIEO), adopted by the *United Nations General Assembly* in 1974.

¹⁷ Nerfin, M (1977), p.10-11.

¹⁸ Coronel, S and Dixit, K in *What Next?* (2006), p.21-24

¹⁹ Abrahamsson, H (2012)

It can also be noted that Gandhi pushed for such alternatives through nonviolence, i.e. searching and fighting for a mode of development beyond westernized models or state governed models with no or little space and freedom for people at various levels of society.²⁰ In other words, the link between nonviolence and another development has been there from earlier times expressed by Gandhi who was hesitant about modernity and industrialization as a way to reach real development.

From this personal background and motives – a willingness to strive for *Another Development* through nonviolence – I found it meaningful to participate at this conference and reflect on how pacifism and nonviolence can be moved from a marginalized place in various discourses to a place where more people, organizations and states consider pacifism and nonviolence to be foundational for a fair and sustainable international order.

I find it unlikely, and maybe even impossible, for the “international community” to reach peace and global sustainable development without a necessary critique of the views and norms that uphold militarization and militarism as cornerstones in international politics and relations. There are many who would oppose such a description of international politics and instead put the spotlight on how states and non-state actors interact in a multitude of ways, not only from a security perspective.²¹ However, even if that is true, the world is as militarized as ever before even if the levels of nuclear weapons are not on the same level as during the peak of the cold war.²²

Cultures of Violence and Nonviolence

The system and its consequences for promoting cultures of violence

This section starts from the assumption that “true” sustainable development cannot be achieved without tremendous efforts for true” peace.”²³ This is also stated in the preamble to the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* with the name *Transforming Our World*:

*“We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.”*²⁴

This is a normative statement (however not based of principles on pacifism and nonviolence),²⁵ but not the reality since what I describe as “cultures of violence” have a legitimacy in so many settings and discourses. Pacifism and nonviolence on the other hand, as stated in the call for papers to this conference, occupies a marginal place in international relations, scholarship, politics, activism, media and the wider society. Yes, there are legislations in most, if not all, countries and societies that prohibits murder and different

²⁰ Naess, A (2002), Nanda, B R (2001) and Terchek, R J (2000)

²¹ When writing this paper, I have to engage in the discourse on what constitutes international relations. Gustavsson, J and Tallberg, J (2014), Baylis, J, Smith, S and Owen, P (2013)

²² SIPRI (2017)

²³ By using the word “true” I simply try to emphasize that greenwashing is not good enough and that the word peace has been misused by many, just legitimizing certain actions, even the use of mass violence for achieving political and economic goals.

²⁴ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

²⁵ Goal No.16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels) with all sub-targets and indicators does not include the words pacifism and nonviolence. However, in sub-target 4.7 for quality education, the word nonviolence is used. In the last part of the paper I will come back to this.

forms of violence. In most countries and societies there are also legal restrictions on what kind of violence that are possible to use, on what occasions and by whom, even though with huge variations.²⁶ Yes, there are international laws that prohibits wars of aggression, terrorism and torture, even though war for defense and for collective security are part of the legal framework as well.²⁷

It is probably correct to understand this legal “dualism”, i.e. both prohibiting violence and legitimizing violence domestically and internationally as a part of a system built on states with legal right to sovereignty over territory and people and with the right to uphold and maintain order and security through law enforcement and through the use of military organizations and actions if perceived necessary.

In such a system there are always room for interpretation when state power and use of force should and can be used. Legal systems and rules play a role when decisions on violence are made, but perhaps more importantly, political situations and actors decide on what kind of actions, including military ones, that will be enforced. This means that there are options for restriction as well as the use of mass violence if the political motives are there.

In such a system there are always factors that affect stability, i.e. processes, phenomena, actors and relations which in variations of historical, geographical, political and social conditions challenge order. Such factors can provoke violence especially when mechanisms for managing change and conflicts through democratic and peaceful means are not there or are weak. Violence is also perceived as a legitimate tool by many players in that system and in relation to their own reading of history and situations. This is true for both states and non-state organizations and actors. And, all actors using violence need to find some arguments why their violence is necessary and justified.

On a concrete level it means that the majority of the population in the world have perceptions, and experience of different forms of violence, even if they have not been directly affected by violence have not hit themselves and if some kind of peace is a lived reality. That kind of reality and cultural environment easily contributes to fear and a sense of insecurity with great risks of establishing support in the individual and collective psyche for “security systems” with mandate to use force in the form of violence. Other aspects of these “security systems” are surveillance, withholding of information, budgeting for security organizations, and even torture to show power and to gather information.

Another dimension of this problem is the knowledge among people about the magnitude of violence that has been used by a multitude of actors, as well as perceptions of powerlessness, i.e. that matters of social order, war and peace is not possible, or difficult, to control. This description may need verification, but I strongly believe that most people recognize that decisions on matters of war and peace are made far from themselves, and that democratic decision making is very hard to realize in the area of national security and international politics. Realists and neo-realists in the discourse on international politics and international relations understand the system of states as one with an embedded security dilemma enforcing

²⁶ It is beyond the scope of this paper to empirically verify these statements even if it would be interesting and important to describe differences between countries when it comes to criminal law and its implementation.

²⁷ For information on international law, see <http://www.un.org/en/sections/what-we-do/uphold-international-law>
The amount of literature on The Just War theory is extensive. Aggestam, K (red) (2004), Holmes, R L (2014), Walzer, M (2000), Walzer, M (2004), Zinn, H (2003), p.67-105.

sustained militarization of world affairs. Such views reduce the opportunities for open information, transparency and accountability since security, defined in its narrowed sense, is prioritized.²⁸

Because of this global normalization, it is perhaps easy to understand why pacifism and nonviolence have occupied a marginal place in so many domains. The space for being a believer of and activist for pacifism and nonviolence is not that big, and comes with risks in different forms, even in democracies where freedom of speech is a fundamental human right. Those who advocate pacifism and nonviolence can be surveilled, jailed, killed, harassed and ridiculed depending on country and situation.²⁹

Yes, as mentioned earlier, there are norms and rules against violence in most countries and societies, and yes, there are international laws against war, aggression and terrorism. But, at the same time violence and military action are by most people, groups and states considered as legitimate and necessary if a situation demands such a response. This legitimacy in legal systems and in the global cultural environment opens for the use of mass violence, action from states to establish order and to achieve political goals, action from non-state actors to establish a new order and achieve political goals, as well as an ongoing militarization of minds, groups, organizations and states.³⁰ The culture of violence is in other words established at a global level, penetrating minds and societies, and a part of the international order. No wonder why pacifism and nonviolence are not established as norms to build societies and international relations on.

Before entering into a reflection on democracy and nonviolence I want to add some reflections on masculinity based on a critical gender perspective, and on civilizations and cosmologies as I think there is a need to discuss in what way such factors relate to matters of cultural violence. I will also say a few words on pacifism and nonviolence from a cultural perspective.

Masculinity and violence

In previous sections I have outlined an analysis of “the system” which produces a global cultural environment that gives support to violence as a way of managing situations and to achieve goals. That global cultural environment is expressed in different discourses, settings and situations; international and national politics, among non-state actors, in academic research, in schools, in organizations and households, in popular culture, in historical narratives and in media.

Every person on the planet is exposed to narratives with and on violence, and with explicit and implicit messages that violence is and can be justified by someone. I am also sure that there is a general lack of information in most cultural environments on the alternatives, and especially on pacifism and nonviolence. For example, how many teachers in social science or other subjects, have educated their pupils and students on such narratives? How many

²⁸ Karlsson (2004) and Baylis, J, Smith, S and Owen, P (2013)

²⁹ Zinn, H (2000) and Zinn, H (2003)

³⁰ The reader of this paper see that I intervene in the dialogue between realists and idealists in the field of international relations. Personally, I think both perspectives provide understanding, but that these paradigms need to be transcended since both paradigms tend to legitimize militarization of world affairs and international relations. Nye, J Jr, Bynander, F and Welch, D A (2011)

editorial boards in the biggest newspapers have decided to investigate the meaning of peace and nonviolence, and have a profile based on peace journalism?

What is also very clear is the fact that men are the users of violent force. Men are in most narratives portrayed as users of different types of violent force, either “on the right side of the equation” or as “the evil doers”. Yes, there are exceptions to this rule, but nevertheless few structures are so clear than the ones defining men’s role as users of violent force. This is especially true when it comes to war and military activities. As the author Anita Goldman wrote:

“*Of all domains, war is the most masculine*”.³¹

For this reason, the question of cultural violence has to be connected to the construction and reproduction of masculinity.³² If a culture of pacifism and nonviolence will be embraced, masculinity as a construction has to be changed, and men have to be actively involved in such an enterprise.³³ How can new narratives for masculinity be constructed? A good starting point is to be critical against the dominating ones for the purpose of open up the space for a much broader view on masculinity.³⁴

Civilizations, cosmologies and violence

Among scholars, as most know, there are efforts to describe traits in and internal variations of civilizations and cosmologies. It is also a challenge to define what these civilizations and cosmologies are and how they can be understood from different perspectives. Another area of investigation is how such civilizations and cosmologies are related to matters of violence and peace. Examples of researchers in this field are Johan Galtung, Göran Therborn, Samuel Huntington, Ingmar Karlsson, Ramin Jahanbegloo and Karen Armstrong who all dwell upon the relation between civilizations, cosmologies, violence and peace among some areas.³⁵

In this section I will not elaborate on questions on which civilization and cosmology that is most prone to violence or peace. I agree with Ingmar Karlsson who says that the struggle for peace can start within each civilization, and that the “Clash of Civilizations thesis” of Samuel Huntington run the risk of enhancing the tensions between civilizations instead of supporting learning and dialogue.³⁶

In previous sections I have put emphasized the system of states, and the consequences for the legitimization of different forms of violence. That system has gone through tremendous changes over time due to so many factors which are beyond the scope of this paper.³⁷ However, it is fair to state that this system has been constructed through violence with elites drawing borders with support from, and the use of, armed forces fighting wars, killing

³¹ Goldman, A (1998), p.13.

³² Nystrand, M and Stern, M (2006), Galtung, J (1996), p.40-45.

³³ There are also feminist scholars who study the women’s role in relation to war, for example Enloe, C (1990) and Goldman, A (1998)

³⁴ A good read on this matter is the article by Howard Connel written in *The Guardian* May 15th, 2017 with the title *Traditional ideas on masculinity are poisoning our society. There is another way.*

www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/may/15/power-violence-define-men-peace-masculinity

³⁵ Galtung, J (1996), Huntington, S P (1998), Therborn, G (2012), Karlsson, I (2013), Jahanbegloo, R (2014) and Armstrong, K (2016)

³⁶ Karlsson, I (2013), p.11-34.

³⁷ Wallerstein, I (2004), Hettne, B (1994) and Hettne, B, Sörlin, S and Östergaard, U (2006)

millions and millions of people and putting pressure on people resisting rulers and warlords. On that note it is important to also mention the cases where states have been recognized through peaceful settlements and processes, for example Sweden-Norway 1905, Czechoslovakia 1992 and 1991 when the Soviet Union disintegrated. In other words, exceptions exist.

And, even if violence in the process of state building has been a reality, there has been attempts to create systems for a more stable world order where states respect borders and use mechanisms for dialogue and conflict management. Since the beginning of the 19th century different systems have been put in place from the understanding that war is an endeavor with high costs, for example *Concert of Europe* 1815, *League of Nations* 1919, *United Nations* 1945, *International Court of Justice (ICJ)* 1945 and *International Criminal Court (ICC)* 2002. Nevertheless, the efforts have not managed to get rid of war as a tool for reaching political and economic goals, even though most leaders of states are not running to war as a way of expanding power. In most cases political power struggles take other forms.

Personally, I do not see deep rooted perceptions in civilizations and cosmologies as root causes of violence even though they certainly matter. From my understanding they can rather be perceived as “dynamic cultural belief systems” with the ability to conserve, maintain or change social order depending on relations and on how particularly actors with different types of power relates to and activate certain dimensions of such belief systems. The fight for power over land, resources and people seem to be able to bring the worst sides of cultural belief systems to the level of practice.

Since this fight has been going on for such a long time, beliefs have become normalized, and therefore hard to change. And, civilizations and cosmologies are also embedded in a social, political and economic order with certain groups and individuals in different positions able to legitimize certain behavior, decisions and actions. This also means that belief systems are possible to change if the awareness and will are there. In a world where ideas travel, no civilization can be static. And, the space for independent minds is there in all human environments. This gives room for hope.

Cultures of pacifism and nonviolence

Basic features of pacifism are that it opposes war, militarization and violence as ways of solving conflicts. As in any other ideology there are variations among believers and defenders of the basic positions which are also relevant in this paper.³⁸ Nonviolence can be considered to contain two dimensions; against violence and without violence, i.e. a practice that work against and without violence for the purpose of change.³⁹ And, among proponents for nonviolence, there are also room for different perspectives.

Those with pacifist beliefs, from ideological conviction and/or from conviction about the effectiveness of such approaches, will search for and take actions against violence without violence. Such believers are in most cases in minority due to the cultures of violence that historically have been allowed to be established, and which still exist. If using the concepts of Björn Hettne discussing development thinking, pacifism and nonviolence can definitely

³⁸ For definition of pacifism, see: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/pacifism>

³⁹ Vinthagen, S (2015), p.61-81.

understood as counterpoint perspectives even if there are laws on national levels as well as the international level prohibiting specific forms of violence.

However, actors for pacifism, nonviolence and peaceful settlements of disputes exists in as far as I know all civilizations and cultures.

In the same way as I tried to describe “the system” and the consequences of the system when it comes to legitimizing violence, it has also caused resistance to the ideas that violence is legitimate and to the practice of violence. This is the same case as for other dominant structures, for example racism and sexism, i.e. that these have been challenged by brave people and groups.

The question for this paper is how to move pacifism and nonviolence from the counterpoint to the mainstream in political discourse, i.e. get pacifism and nonviolence broadly accepted in the world. Is that possible? What would it take for such a change?

This is a challenge of huge proportions for obvious reasons described previously in this paper. There is also a challenge for all believers and practitioners of pacifism and nonviolence due to the need for everyone with such beliefs to engage with the questions whether nonviolence actually always is preferred and possible to use considering context and situation. Believers of pacifism and nonviolence are also in the zone of ambiguities and uncertainty, as believers of violence are.⁴⁰ This is well known among pacifists, but perhaps not among those who resist pacifism as principle and practical opportunity?

In the next part of this paper I will reflect on democracy and nonviolence since democracy constitutes a space in which ambiguities and uncertainties can be processed, but also for other reasons.

What about Democracy and Nonviolence?

Even if democracy is a disputed concept, it is possible to distinguish democracy as an idea from authoritarian governance and from countries in a state of anarchy. Basic features are ideas about public participation and inclusion, respect for fundamental human rights and a governance system that separates powers from each other, i.e. legislative, government and judicial. In democracies there are also mechanisms, protected by law, on how power can be used and changed without resorting to violence.⁴¹

Proponents for democracy often also pushes for democratic development in other countries from the basis of “democratic peace” as theory for world peace. They motivate this empirically by saying that democracies do not engage in war with each other, and normatively by saying that democracy is superior to other forms of governance.⁴² The proponents for such beliefs do not base their political convictions on pacifism and nonviolence. Rather they put their trust in democratization of nations and international institutions for the purpose of development and peace.⁴³ This also means that proponents of democracy rely on military strength for the purpose of national security, and for the purpose of peace enforcement in international affairs. Other methods can be used before resorting to violence; mediation,

⁴⁰ Chenoweth, E and Stephan, M J (2011) and Engler, P and Engler, P (2006)

⁴¹ Karvonen, L (2008), Karvonen, L (2008) and Hemberg, G (2002)

⁴² Adler, M, Andström, F, Kant, I och Russet, B (1995) and Galtung, J (1996), p.49-59.

⁴³ Archibugi, D and Held, D (1995) and Ramsbotham, O, Woodhouse, T and Miall, H (2016)

diplomacy, legal procedures etc, but in the case of crisis in what is considered as situation with no other options, democracies can use mass violence for years and years, and on levels that causes mass destruction of cities, countries and cultures. This is most obvious when we studying the actions of USA.

Democracy, in today's world, is founded on mostly liberal ideology, and liberal ideology in itself does not contain pacifism and nonviolence.

For believers of pacifism and nonviolence that is perhaps important to comprehend, since believers of pacifism and nonviolence seek democratization as results of their efforts.

If pacifism and nonviolence will not occupy a marginal place in international relations, scholarship, politics, activism, media and the wider society, liberalism also needs to be scrutinized and transcended even though it is possible to truly appreciate the defense of public participation and inclusion in politics, support for and protection of human rights and rule of law.

For believers of pacifism and nonviolence it is also necessary to relate to how law enforcement should be enacted in practical cases, for example management of terrorism, transnational crime, protection of abused women and children by men, peace missions sanctioned by the *United Nations* in different cases etc.

From that, I move to the matter on how to move pacifism from the margins to an accepted position in national and international affairs with an emphasis on how believers of pacifism and nonviolence can work with communication and advocacy for that purpose even if civil resistance and action in relation to different challenges is the most important work.

Beyond Marginalization of Pacifism and Nonviolence

I have outlined that pacifism and nonviolence needs to be perceived as ideologies standing on their own feet, even if differences among scholars and activists must be appreciated due to the need for challenging violence in different contexts and situations. Proponents for pacifism and nonviolence challenges "the system" and most of the ideas that legitimizes violence. Pacifists and nonviolent defenders are definitely in the counterpoint of international discourse. What can be done to change that situation?

I have also argued that pacifism and nonviolence can be a contribution to democratic discourse due to the fact that democracy provides solutions for peaceful relations between people and nation if basic ideas whether or not respect for fundamental human rights are enhanced and protected. However, pacifism and nonviolence are also ideas that transcend political and economic liberalism due to their fundamental critique of militarization and war, and of an economy that is founded on self-interest and without an integration of fundamental understanding of planetary boundaries for human activities.⁴⁴ With that said, pacifists and nonviolent believers also need to engage in matters of how law enforcement should be enacted, and on when and on what grounds violent force is legitimate. The position as absolute pacifist is the hardest one both principally and practically.

In the first part of this paper I also connected nonviolence to *Another Development Approach*, even if that approach was formulated decades ago. This connection was done from the

⁴⁴ Rockström, J and Klum, M (2012), Rockström, J and Klum, M (2015) and Raworth, K (2017)

conviction that nonviolence needs to promote a different development than established powerful actors present and force on the rest of the world. The neoliberal policies and practices are incompatible with sustainable global development – just as incompatible as different variants of self-centered nationalism, fascism and tribalism. These”-isms”, alongside sexism, militarism, racism and homophobia, produce violence, inequalities, environmental stress and cultures of fear, distrust and hate. We, as a collective and interdependent humanity, need efforts on every level of society that promotes peace, freedom from violence, respect for human rights, gender equality, climate justice and sustainable development.

Pacifism and nonviolence are, as I see it, key for such a development which can be labeled as *Another Development*.

However, it is not possible to turn a blind eye to the need for thinking about development in relation to contemporary challenges and contexts, but nevertheless give support to the basic analysis that Nerfin and others provided, i.e. that everyone has the right to development, that ecological sustainability is necessary, that the local level and place is important since this is the level where the vast majority of the world’s people live their lives. Empowerment of people where they live (or are forced to live), and participation in decision making are of utmost importance if sustainability in its full meaning is to be achieved. It is also important, and necessary, that national and international policies support local development to avoid the marginalization, oppression and exploitation of local communities and people.

Then, what can be said about how to move pacifism and nonviolence from counterpoint to mainstream? Is that possible? What can and needs to be done?

Well, a lot of work is already done by movements. These efforts are of course the most important ones since they try to make real changes. These efforts are also the ones that have built an empirical base with information on the effectiveness and results of nonviolent revolt and civil resistance founded on different variants of pacifism and nonviolence.⁴⁵ That was also noted 1996 by the Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung who said:

*“To assert “nonviolence does not work” is uninformed, given the amazing successes in the second half of this century.”*⁴⁶

In combination with research, reflection, collaboration and learning among scholars and activists, this information has tremendous value for expanding nonviolent work.

However, what is done besides this that can have an impact? Of course, the establishing of networks, building of platforms for communication, expanding the use of media tools in specific campaigns and enhancing research for the purpose of understanding and learning. In all these areas work is done, and can be developed further.

From my point of view working a lot with education and communication, I see two potential entry points for intervention that could support the cause of pacifism and nonviolence, besides the areas of work already mentioned.

⁴⁵ Chenoweth, E and Stephan M J (2011) and Engler, M and Engler P (2016)

⁴⁶ Galtung, J (1996), p.117.

First to find a strategy for making nonviolence as part of curriculum in educational systems, and with support from the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, especially goal 4.7 which states:

“By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.”⁴⁷

Since the *2030 Agenda* is adopted by the members of the *United Nation*, there is a window of opportunity to advocate for nonviolence in formal and non-formal education. If educational systems could make education for sustainable development (ESD) mandatory, and with culture of peace and nonviolence as integrated dimensions, there could be a push that would make pacifism and nonviolence well known among staff, students and pupils in school in country after country.

Strategically, besides working towards ministers of education in each country, it could also be an opportunity to reach the *Regional Centre of Expertise Network* which is the biggest existing international network working on ESD.⁴⁸ Another related platform is *Global Action Program (GAP)* on ESD which is a follow-up of the *United Nation Decade on ESD (2005-2014)* and a program relevant for all RCEs around the world. Through *UNESCO*, and the institutions managing and coordinating the RCE network, there is also opportunities for reaching an extensive partner network.⁴⁹

If such work in relation to these platforms would be undertaken, it is also needed to have a dialogue within the network of pacifism and nonviolent scholars and activists on the *2030 Agenda*, if it is perceived as an agenda with relevance and legitimacy and how such a network can relate to that agenda. From my point of view, the *2030 Agenda* is a most needed agenda for all countries and for international development cooperation. It is not perfect, but a great leap forward compared to many other attempts.

However, with that said, I am also aware of and appreciate critical perspectives on education pointing out that education is also a “battle ground” where certain views are allowed to become dominant and others have difficulties to be heard. How different “counterpoint perspectives” could be made available in educational systems, and how to work within and with education are questions that many have engaged with, and which is a paper in itself.⁵⁰ But, even if the challenges are many also working for pacifism and nonviolence in education, I think that is of utmost importance. I also believe that this work should be related to the work for sustainable development.

⁴⁷ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4>

⁴⁸ <http://www.rcenetwork.org/portal>

⁴⁹ <https://en.unesco.org/gap>. See also *Education 2030 Framework for Action* which is just recently adopted. For more information, see <https://en.unesco.org/news/education-2030-framework-action-be-formally-adopted-and-launched>

⁵⁰ There are so many thinkers on education that could provide thoughts on these matters. In this paper I only mention one due to his importance in the field of education; Paolo Freire, the Brazilian educator and philosopher who was a leading advocate for critical pedagogy writing *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* 1970.

Second, to explore opportunities for outreach through different media platforms, for example through information campaigns supported by influencers who communicate messages on pacifism and nonviolence with focus on how nonviolence has, and can, change the world to the better.

Such campaigns can complement civil resistance campaigns and be considered as “popular education” with an ambition to have an impact on the discourse for peace and sustainable development. With a selection of messages and influencers with an understanding and a heart for pacifism and nonviolence, such campaigns could be part of a strategy that contributes to move pacifism and nonviolence from counterpoint to an internationally recognized discourse on what role nonviolence can have moving towards sustainable development.

Third, to link pacifism and nonviolence to feminism for reasons explained earlier in this paper. Freedom from violence as human right need to be part of pacifist and nonviolent agenda as well as deconstruction of masculinity due to the fact that men in the vast majority of cases and contexts are the users of violence. Such work for connecting pacifist, nonviolent and feminist analysis and movements will strengthen the overall work against violence, which includes gender based violence.

For the sake of survival of humankind, it is urgent.

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