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PEACE STUDIES: A CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

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May 1987

To start with the point of departure: the definition of peace research. I see three components in that definition:

- (1) research into the conditions for peace with peaceful means;
- (2) in a global perspective;
- (3) with a holistic approach

Security studies will tend to focus on how to obtain peace with nonpeaceful means, such as deterrence. This is certainly not excluded completely from peace research but would be of more marginal interest. Peace research will make a contribution to world peace by exploring new arenas, not by repeating studies as well done by others.

Most words in the tripartite definition given above are problematic, but that is not our concern in this connection. Suffice it only to say that the word "global" is inserted to rule out any preconception to the effect that any particular country, or any particular civilization or region, should have some kind of monopoly on how to conceptualize and operationalize peace. And the word "holistic" serves the same function in intellectual territory: no discipline has any kind of monopoly on conceptualizing or indeed exploring peace. All such borders should be broken down, the approach should be not only inter-national but transnational; not only inter-disciplinary but transdisciplinary.

Peace studies is the study of the findings of peace research with a view to developing them further. Needless to say, in this there is no assumption that "peace research" somehow started at the end of the 1950s. We have had peace research since times immemorial, in all civilizations people have tried to come to grips with the conditions for peace. There is an enormous tradition to draw upon, for instance in the world's religions--particularly the softer aspects of those religions, just to mention one major source.

It follows from what has been said above that peace studies cannot be inserted in a university curriculum at any point with the same possibility of being meaningful. My own bias would be to think that peace studies, not unlike business administration for that matter, comes after a college education, not as a part of it. A certain level of maturity is needed. A grounding in various disciplines is needed. Just like studies of business administration then would lead to an MBA (Master of Business Administration) peace studies should lead to an MPS, Master of Peace Studies. Whether that course lasts one year or two years is less important in this connection. Personally I would certainly be in favor of two years since the field, precisely because it is global and holistic, requires much reflection and maturity.

But then there is another setting, the quick approach. That setting should ideally take the student out of his and her usual intellectual habitat, heavily imprinted with the codes, explicit and implicit, of the nation and the discipline. The student should be maximally open to global and holistic approaches.

That openness is not obtained under standard conditions of low temperature pedagogy but may be obtained under conditions of high temperature of pedagogy--deep immersion, a setting of total dedication to the studies, being together with others with the same motivation and dedication but otherwise different, challenging, even threatening because they see world problems from different angles in geographical territory and intellectual territory. In short, a truly international summer school. But the school should not be of too short duration. Two weeks would certainly be insufficient, four weeks better, six weeks perhaps ideal including field studies, time to write a paper and have it discussed, and so on. The participants should be mature, with some experience. To be a college graduate is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for this.

And then there are, of course, in-between solutions of half a year duration for instance. I would tend to be somewhat skeptical: this is neither the deep exposure which can only take place through a relatively limited period after which fatigue sets in, nor the hard working, overtime, with the problems, sufficient to get a real grasp and get beyond being a clever student absorbing facts and theories to individual creativity and group creativity.

So much for the setting, then something about the form, and then, indeed, much about the content.

The only meaningful form would be multi-form. Neither one way instruction and teaching in the most traditional way nor group discussions and learning from each other and from oneself, also actually rather traditional, will do. A combination makes sense. It is as naive to believe that some book or some person has understood it all as it is to believe that everybody can get a deep understanding of peace just by acting out personal experience together in a dialogue. There is need for instruction, there is need for discussion. The balance should not only be the obvious discussion period in conjunction with each period of instruction (discussion not being the same as the highly disciplined and much more narrow American form of "question and answer," however useful that may also be), but goes beyond this. The open workshop with agenda items decided by the participants, criss-crossing and/or transcending the formal pedagogical agenda would be very useful. The field trip, seeing each other and the problems from other angles in world geography even it is near by, using the time-machine built into most societies or just the class distinctions and rural-urban discrepancies, already adds much to the experience. But at no point should this be interpreted to mean that one can get away from serious study using books, resource persons and other resources with a view to absorbing what they have to offer in addition to developing one's own peace research.

And then there is the content about which I think one has to proceed with a high level of care.

I would start by making a distinction which later on can be blurred but which is very useful as a point of departure. And the distinction is as follows: on the one hand studies of the situation within actors, intra-actor; and on the other hand studies of the situation between actors, inter-actor. The actor, then, could be at any level of social organization starting with individual human beings, then proceeding to groups (particularly social classes and racial/ethnic groups), then proceeding to societies, onwards to regions, and finally to the world as a whole (in which case the inter-world combination is still empirically empty, leaving us with an interesting arena to explore, using theory on the non-empirical).

The distinction is important because empirically we find extremely aggressive, war-prone actors who do not engage in any war-like behavior whereas on the other hand we can find the most peacefully inclined actors suddenly enwrapped in a conflict that they do not manage to solve. And then they go on, into highly destructive behavior for which they may even be badly prepared, and the results are even more disastrous.

Of course, there is a Chinese boxes problematique implied here. Inside an actor there may be actors such as classes within societies, and--stretching the concept a little bit--inclinations within a human being, such as the celebrated Id and

Super-Ego There is the inter-approach inside the intra just as there is intra-approach inside the inter.

And yet the two perspectives can also usefully be kept somewhat apart. It is not the difference between actor and structure; in order to understand an actor a structural perspective is certainly indispensable. But we may say by definition that this is the difference between the actor-oriented approach in peace studies and the system-oriented approach, also in peace studies. Peace studies comprises both of them, and will suffer badly if one of them is left out. To take an example: what is the use of negotiation studies, and more particularly disarmament negotiations studies as a study of interaction between two actors without a thorough understanding of the forces driving those actors? And correspondingly, what would be the use of excellent knowledge of all possible actors in the world if we are not in a position to say something useful about how they could relate to each other peacefully in a system of actors? Peace is not only a problem of tying actors well together; there is also the problem of making them less aggressive.

The actor-in-itself versus the actor-for-others. The latter approach gives us ideas, for the curriculum, of two large areas: conflict studies and cooperation studies. They can easily be *joined*, using game theory as one (but certainly not the only one, that would be an extreme mistake) unifying approach. The theories of exploitation/inequity on the one hand and equitable relationships on the other would play a major role.

But what comes to our mind in connection with the first approach?

Very simply: area studies to start at the regional level, studies of the countries in the world, studies of their subdivisions according to class, racial/ethnic, gender, age and other "fault" lines; studies of "human nature". At this point, we enter in this large building for the study of the human condition, from macro (not only international relations but inter-regional relations) down to micro (including in "human nature" the study of human needs, both of the body, mind and spirit as a foundation for peace studies) have something to offer, and the trip should be taken up and down and up again and down again, through the study. On each floor, then, we shall be confronted with inter-actor approaches in order to give meaning to the intra-actor approach, at the same level, the level "below" and the level "above". And that, certainly gives rise to another division in peace studies: according to the level, or better space (in order to avoid any connotation of "higher" and "lower") of concern.

I would tend to think in terms of five spaces including human (referred to as "individual" above), social (which would include the group, the society and the region) and world spaces. The other two, left out so far since there are no actors in the usual sense of deliberate goal-striving, would be nature space and culture space.

And that gives me an opportunity to simplify the whole edifice. What has been said so far, roughly speaking, is that peace studies

is concerned with all kinds of actors from micro to macro, singly and combined, studied as single actors and in systems. In addition there is nature, usefully explored from one particular angle so close to peace studies that become parts of each other: in general the ecological perspective; ecological balance in particular (to be added to basic human needs as a foundation).

Concretely this would mean in the beginning of a two year study a solid grounding (for some repetition) of basic findings in the ecology of the planetary system with a view to the factors threatening and upholding ecological balance (including human demography); theories of health and ill-health for the human body and mind, psychology/philosophy/religion for the human spirit; social psychology for inter-human relations; sociology/anthropology/economics/political science for what goes on inside human society, international and inter-regional relations including the study of world institutions for the rest.

But from what perspective could we do this? We can not possibly do everything. We have to simplify, somehow.

Certainly, but in so doing two types of reductionism should be ruled out as certainly worthy of study, but insufficient as a basis for the evolving field of peace studies. We cannot assume that human nature is inherently aggressive and for that reason let peace studies break down to a study of how human beings can be

checked and balanced, even behind bars, when necessary. Rather, the assumption would have to be that we human beings are capable of anything from the best to the worst, of the most egoistic and most altruistic behavior, the most destructive and the most constructive, hatred and love, peace and war, conflict and cooperation.

Correspondingly, we cannot possibly assume that one single factor anywhere in the edifice is the factor on which it all hinges; such as class struggle, race/ethnic struggle, gender struggle, age group struggle, balance of power systems or world institutions just to mention a few. It should be noticed that this differs from the "human nature is aggressive" assumption in being more open: there is a variable to deal with, a problem to be resolved and then peace will be ushered in. The "human nature is aggressive" proponents do not even have that, their single factor assumption is actually a single point with no variation built into it.

So, what then would be some unifying perspective that would give us insight, both at the intra-actor and inter-actor levels of discourse, into all the spaces of actors, possibly excluding nature space since we tend to assume that the moment the human element enters everything becomes so different?

I would answer in two ways: culture and structure.

Culture was the fifth space mentioned above. The space of meaning. We cannot possibly discuss anything human, and certainly not the entire human condition which is actually what peace studies in a sense amounts to, without understanding the type of meaning the condition has, in different parts of the world, to different types of people. And one approach here would certainly be civilization theory, which, in turn, would be meaningless without a relatively deep immersion in the world's religions. I would see that as one of the key courses together with world economic geographies/ecology and basic world history in order to understand better the key actors for the first year/term/weeks. I do not think we should be afraid of synoptic presentations. There are certain details that can be acquired later; the problem is how to come to grips with essentials. And for that purpose either very wide ranging authors or groups of authors would be preferred to the single "area specialists", coming out of one particular tradition only. What should be avoided would be reliance on one single synoptic presentation.

Let me only add to this that languages are certainly as important as religions when it comes to not only giving meaning, but also communicating meaning. So, maybe a course in peace studies should have built into it the study of at least one language in other civilizations. English speaking westerners should not get away with it studying brother and cousin languages

like French, Spanish, German, Italian and Russian. Arabic, Chinese, Hindu, Japanese would be much more useful. The speakers of these languages, however, have a much easier task due to the asymmetry of linguistic penetration: they turn western linguistic colonialism to their advantage by easy perfection in one or two languages outside their own civilization, maybe combined with a deeper study of their own language!

Let me then turn to structure. It has not come up so far as a major concept precisely because it cuts across world space, social space and human space. There is structure everywhere. But the language of structure is not religious, not usual, ordinary language either. I think the language of structure is essentially mathematical when this word is interpreted both in its geometric and algebraic meaning. Hence, there is no way around it: the students are to be exposed to a minimum of mathematical concepts such as graphs and matrices, how to use them to represent phenomena, how to calculate with them, how to develop their own imagination about structures. Nothing of this is particularly easy or particularly difficult; it is a question of good pedagogy, not to mention good examples. Two types of persons who actually might be useful as resource persons would be architects and urbanists; many of them are structuralists even without knowing it.

Personally I have a somewhat particular approach trying to simplify all of this further by combining culture and structure,

or rather the deeper aspects of them, deep culture and deep structure in what I call a (social) cosmology. So far I have only used it in the study of civilizations, in other words intra- and inter-regional approaches to peace (and development). The cosmology of a civilization is its hidden code; the unfolding of that code is what gives us insight for both the intra-civilizational and inter-civilizational approaches. Some civilizations have more and some certainly have less peace built into them, both on the cultural and the structural side. The code is revealed as it is unfolding in concrete history.

But it is totally unnecessary to buy this approach although the reader might perhaps understand why I, strategically, as an intellectual, wanted to do something like this: to simplify. What should be done, however, would be the archeological search for codes, for the deeper inclinations built into actors and their systems; not only the immediate and temporal manifestations in terms of attitudes and behavior.

And that leads us to another major point: peace studies is the study not only of the findings of peace research, that word taken in the broad sense, but of how to develop peace research further. In other words, peace studies would be meaningless without an introduction to the methodology of peace research. Today, in for instance the US, that methodology would be a counter trend to mainstream methodology in, for instance, the study of international relations.

It would be much more structuralist, less atomistic--and, of course, more global (less nationalist) and more holistic (less uni-disciplinary). The world would certainly not be seen as only consisting of nation states, but as consisting of, in addition, inter-governmental organizations, international peoples' organizations, transnational corporations, all kinds of infra-national actors such as organizations, municipalities and what not--and, above all, all five billion human beings and so many inhabitants of the biosphere, not to mention the abiota in lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere and cosmosphere. Peace studies would try to come to grips with totality, even if it is at the expense of detail. These details can always be found explored somewhere; the big deficit today being global/holistic approaches. The contribution of peace research to general 20th century culture lies in this direction.

In saying this the courses on methodology would obviously have to span the whole spectrum from techniques of data-collection, data-processing and data-analysis to theory formation on the one hand and sophisticated insights in epistemology/philosophy of science on the other in order to better understand the assumptions underlying the various approaches to research, including one's own approaches. This hurts. Mainstream US research is today almost totally deficient in this regard and the results are obvious: parochialism, shallowness, mastery of detail and literature, but not of paradigmatic assumptions and theory. In short, nothing or very little is produced that will

outlive one decade, or the author him/herself. Shallowness gives insufficient nutrition for robust growth.

And yet, all of what has been said so far is in my view only the curriculum for the first year. For the second year I would have a totally different approach. The general theme would be the application of theory to concrete problems. Since the goal of peace research is the same as the goal of the peace movement, abolition of war as a social institution, nothing less the second year could be much more strategic and tactical, much more action oriented. The approach might be less general and theoretical, more casuistic and practical. Problems would be formulated from the real life around us, from all corners of the world and the students would be encouraged to discuss the age-old, and excellent, pragmatic American question: "what are we going to do about it". Without, as a warning, assuming that there always is something within our range of knowledge and of action that can be done.

Let us say that at the inter-regional level the key real macro conflicts in the world today are what is wrongly referred to as the east-west conflict (which is actually between northwest and northeast and more particularly between the United States and the Soviet Union); what is wrongly referred to as the north-south conflict (which is actually between northwest and southwest, today finding its major expression in US action in Central America); and

between the northwest and the southeast of the world in economic terms, particularly between the United States and Japan. And then there are many others, such as the conflicts inside the Third World (but with ample First World, and to some extent also Second World "infiltration") between Israel, Palestine and the Arab states; and between whites and blacks in South Africa, with much of the rest of the world taking part one way or the other, the war between Iraq and Iran, and so on. I do not think the task of peace studies is to dictate the correct solution to these intractable conflicts. But it certainly is our task to analyze them, both by understanding the actors and by understanding the systems, in this case the conflict-formations. The studies should be geared to the design of goals for the systems, conflict resolution with a reasonable level of acceptability, and strategy and tactics for achieving those goals, including designation of actors, in other words who should do what, where and when to whom, how--not only why this should be done (by someone, somewhere, sometime).

In saying this there is no assumption that the focus should be on international conflict. That is a very classical approach to peace studies, long time ago superceded. There are conflicts in all spaces, at all "levels" to use that word--conflict resolution is an important approach everywhere. Given a reasonably general theory in conflict resolution, with good, cross-cutting concepts, the MPS should have something meaningful to say about a wide variety of conflicts.

However, there is a warning here: conflict is not the only perspective linked to the system approach. The positive sum game, harmony of interests, cooperation or whatever one would call it is an equally valid concept. Thus, there should not be the usual single minded focus on conflict, destruction, war, hatred but just as much on the opposite. The dialectic between the two is what generates a fruitful process that can be guided towards more desirable states of affairs.

At no point in this teaching/learning process should there be any naiveté about the very concrete role of power in the entire struggle for peace and for the abolition of war. There is the power to instruct, as given to the institution carrying a major aspect of culture, the church. There is the power to destruct built into a major institution in the social structure: the military. There is the power to construct which is built into the structure of the economy. And there is the power to decide whether to instruct, destruct or construct: political power. All of this, one way or the other, is a part of the modern state, and referred to euphemistically as nation-building, state-building, "modernization". Both from data and theory do we know today that these three processes have been, by and large, disastrous in terms of increased belligerence. Governments are given the right to exchange human rights implementation for human duties not only to pay taxes but also to be obedient to the government to the extent of defending the national interest as defined

by the government, even with their own life (and money). The condition, of course, is that the killing is done in a modern way: in cold blood, not passion; professionally by the modern warrior caste, sometimes with a Ph.D. (in war studies); and at a distance so as to make the relationship between killer and killed as alienated as possible. All of this touches the modern state directly, and peace studies puts a search light on it that would be resisted by many sectors of the modern state. Hence, peace studies will either get into conflict with the authorities or make compromises to make the studies so bland as hardly to be worth the effort. The intervening factor, of course, is the amount of courage and tenacity by those who launch such programs. The struggle is not hopeless, it can be won. It has been won in several places, such as the School of Peace Studies of the University of Bradford in England, numerous summer schools in peace studies, etc.

Finally, some words about the order in which all of this is taught. I would say in general: in any order. I am rather skeptical of those who try linear constructions of a curriculum. Thus, I would certainly think it would be a good idea to begin the first day with a case study of a very complex conflict, for instance the conflict in the Middle East. And then I would proceed in any direction, and come back to it, proceed again in different directions and come back to it and so on and so forth. The garden of forking paths, to Borges. Maybe it is only by proceeding along paths of that type that we can ever arrive at a better garden for humankind.

On the other hand, the garden has a structure, so do the weeds. I think we should now come beyond the stage where the summer school in peace studies, or a course, or a collection of courses in peace studies is constructed by putting together some authors who have made interesting papers and some professors who are teaching interesting courses with the hope that the famous totality said to be more than the sum of the parts will emerge by itself. Of course, it is there, to some extent in the minds of some participants. But today much more can be done, much better. Just as there is some kind of theory of health there is also a theory of peace; and that theory of health is more than the sum of the health of the liver, the health of the ring finger, the health of the eye and the health of the ear. There is a totality out there, and the task of developing it and teaching it rests on the peace researchers.

And from there the challenge goes on, downwards and outwards in the whole system of education. This kind of studies would be needed just as much in high school (more focus on the nature of the actors?) in grade school (more focus on conflict-regulation?) and in kindergarten (particularly with a focus on cooperative games?).

And from the many students the challenge comes back: "This is unclear," "this leads nowhere", "what is underlying it all?" Other fields benefit from students, on a regular basis. Peace researchers, and ultimately peace, will benefit at least as much as the students.