DEVELOPMENT AS CIVILIZATIONAL MOVEMENT

Counter-hegemonic prospects from Asia, Africa and Latin America

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Recent Past and the Near Future of

Development Discourse

The contemporary moment in world history is witnessing interesting debates on human future as people in every part of the world review the achievements, failures, mixed outcomes and indeterminate experiences of the past one or two centuries. In every part of the world there is a realization of the interconnection of the experiences of people across the globe while at the same time they are more conscious of the nature of their relationships with one another. People assess the extent of freedom they enjoy and the magnitude of domination they feel in different realms. Technology of information, communication and transport on the one hand and the new consciousness of self-determination of individuals, groups and regions on the other, have created a new democratic environment in the history of human civilization. Hence reflecting upon and articulating global futures from one's spatial, temporal, social, cultural and political vantage points is becoming more and more possible in course of debates and discussions today. During the colonial era and the Cold War years visions of

human progress were articulated by the dominant forces in certain ways which are challenged today in course of the contemporary struggles against hegemonic globalization. The new visions of human future which emerge from the discourses in the developing world now encompass not only political freedom and economic growth, but comprehensive social development and environmental preservation. They have acquired deeper civilizational dimensions entailing newer relationships between humans and between humans and nature.

One of the debates which becomes activated each time a landmark event is celebrated such as the golden jubilee in 2000 or the sixtieth anniversary in 2010 of the founding of the Indian Republic was whether the current path of development of India was fulfilling the vision of its freedom struggle or the vision enshrined in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution to achieve a just, free and equitable society. The same kind of debate came up in China in 2009 in course of the sixtieth anniversary celebrations and the vision of the Chinese revolution to build a people's democracy and a socialist society. The question was raised whether China's very successful economic growth was fulfilling that goal. Similar questions have been asked about India's encouraging growth story.

These debates go back to the liberation struggles of the respective countries where multiple visions of the future remained alive and the winning leadership formulated one dominant perspective. That was backed by state power and the dominant social classes who came to power with the achievement of independence. They put into force a certain

development model in the first few decades with the objective of building n industrial society. When cracks appeared in the dominant strategy with the emergence of crisis of one kind or the other, the alternative viewpoints emerged in each society from time to time. Sometimes these alternatives acquired challenging proportions. The Naxalite movement in India from 1967 onwards and the JP Movement in 1974 sharply questioned the prevailing dominant strategy. The radical communists who inherited the legacies of the Tebhaga peasant Movement and the Telengana Armed Struggle of 1940s questioned India's state-led capitalist development strategy. The movement led by Jayaprakash Narain revived the relevance of the Gandian path, recalled Gandhi's critique of industrial revolution, parliamentary democracy and western civilization in his 1909 classic *Hind Swaraj*.[i]

The Indian freedom struggle had seen several classic debates. Gandhi and Nehru had different development perspectives. For Nehru non-violence, charkha and decentralized governance with relatively self-sufficient villages were matters of policy whereas they were fundamental values for Gandhi. Nehru was for modern industries, centralized nation and parliamentary democracy and he pursued that path of development as the first Prime Minister of India. Tagore had differences with Gandhi on technology and wanted a combination of modern and traditional technology. Bhagat singh and Subhas Bose did not share Gandhi's faith in non-violence and believed in the theory that ends justified the means. While Bhagat Singh believed in revolutionary nationalism that included resort to all possible means including terrorism, Bose did not mind raising the Azad Hind Fauj (Indian

National Army) with the help of the Germans and the Japanese during the World War II. As against all these streams of thought, Ambedkar was not persuaded by Gandhi's faith in Hinduism's innate capacity to reform itself and get rid of the social evils such as untouchability and caste discrimination. He was committed to the idea of social equality in a framework of modern liberal democracy. Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS leaders, especially Hedgewar and Savarkar wanted to build India as a Hindu Rashtra (Hindu nation) while all the other streams rejected that line of thinking. Syed Ahmad Khan and Mohammed Iqbal had visions of modern India based on moral-political principles of Islam where minority rights would be protected. The Communist party of India proclaimed its agenda of anti-colonial and anti-feudal revolution. Except the Hindu Mahasabha all the others wished to maintain the plural character of the Indian geo-cultural space that was a multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-ethnic society. Even though they failed in averting the Partition or in preventing the occurrence of communal riots in post-Independence India that pluralistic outlook remained a major foundation of the Indian Republic. These debates are recalled with great zeal today and as more and more information about the lives and works of the various leaders and movements during the freedom movement in different parts of the country became available the awareness of the multiple streams became the basis of new debates on perspectives on the future course of India. The attempt to give a monolithic picture of the Gandhi-led freedom struggle or the Nehru-led nation-building process no longer held sway in contemporary

times.   That there were deeper civilizational dimensions to the debates during the Indian freedom struggle was becoming clear day by day.[ii]

Interestingly, the post-independence period coincided with the cold war during which time most developing countries were inspired by the socialist countries who adopted state planning to promote industrialization and social welfare.   But their overall orientation was inspired by the western industrial revolution from which they derived their development models. Their goal was to achieve economic growth through industrialization and urbanization using modern technology.   In practice this model neglected rural India and created regional disparities and vast areas of poverty. [iii]Gradually it was realized that such growth was creating more inequalities and imbalances causing many kinds of crisis. It is the accumulation of such crisis that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union and East European systems in 1991. At that moment western capitalism asserted the centrality of the market economy as the main path of economic growth. International institutions led by western powers pushed ahead with market reforms all over the world.   Economic growth through market economy was proclaimed as the universal path of global development.   However, even though the ruling forces in most developing countries adopted this neo-liberal model of globalization, this was challenged by people's movements in many parts of the world including India. When the global financial crisis engulfed the world starting from the US and then spreading to Europe and beyond in 2008-2009 and millions around the globe faced serious hardships losing jobs, savings and assets was there a rethinking on the ideology of market fundamentalism. But the issues that gripped the mankind's

imagination had gone much beyond economic gain and military domination.[iv]

Many of the new issues echoed stirrings of the liberation struggle in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Gandhi had said in *Hind Swaraj* that long after political swaraj or independence was achieved there would still be a continuing struggle for achieving swaraj. Literally swaraj meant self-rule but in effect this means self determination or self-realisation. Gandhi's concept of swaraj referred to swaraj for the village, for women and by implication swaraj for each oppressed person and region. Struggle for the realization of the creative potentiality of each individual, group and region by removing structural and practical constraints to that process is a continuing process. Besides, Swaraj for Gandhi was grounded in the concept of harmony between humans and nature. Thus human progress has to be visualized in terms of freedom of one and all accomplished in harmony with nature. This vision is recalled to challenge the drive of capitalist globalization which increases disparities, destroys natural resources and generates cultural alienation.[v]

This is where the debate in the development discourse is re-enacted today and the struggle over contending lines of thought is likely to continue in the near future. Proponents of economic growth argue that growth will percolate down to alleviate poverty while social movements assert that issues of justice, equity and environmental sustainability are more important than growth. A journey through the development discourse during the recent decades may be worthwhile to understand the political

battles that have been fought and the direction in which the global discourse is moving.

Economic Growth, Human Development and Social Development

Critique of growth-centric perspective of economic policies has been evident in development discourse from time to time. Even though the leaders of the developing countries were naturally driven by their desire to pursue the path of industrialisation and achieve higher targets of growth the policy frames were essentially shaped by the western aid agencies such as the World Bank. During the 1970s when the first wave of critique of western capitalist model of economic growth began to appear in the wake of the anti-war movement questioning US war against Vietnam new issues were raised about defining the concept of development. Some raised the issue as to whether economic development improved the 'quality of life' of people and formulated what came to be known as the 'Q L I' or the quality of life index. In designing this some experts brought in health, education and living standards of people. Others brought into consideration the issue of equity among individuals, groups and regions. Yet others raised the environmental costs of the prevailing pattern of growth. The 1970s and the 1980s witnessed the high point of the alternative development discourse. To this discourse at the global level China's Cultural Revolution, the JP Movement in India, discourse on Liberation Theology in Latin America and the anti-colonial movements in Africa together with the student and youth movements in Europe and US made significant contributions. In fact, the term 'development' itself was attacked as it meant for most of them

iniquitous, unsustainable, centralistic process of economic growth promoting consumerism and crude competitiveness. Others however did not permit the concept of development to be monopolized by that school of thought. Such a preoccupation with índustrialism' produced an óne-dimensional man'[vi] -a human being entrenched in the pursuit of selfish, narrow material ends to such an extent that it was alienated from community, nature and moral values.[vii] Despite this critique the ideology of growth economics was put on a high pedestal by the dominant western powers and international agencies throughout the 1980s when neo-liberal policies were put as the guiding agenda in US and UK. The neo-liberal assertion was to a large extent facilitated by the crisis and collapse of the Soviet Union and social turmoil in many developing countries.[viii]

Thanks to the initiatives of Mahbub ul Haq a new concept was formulated that sought to shift focus from national income accounting to human well-being by developing some new indicators to measure the process of change.[ix] Amartya Sen's concept of capabilities added new substance to that trend of thought. [x] Their concept of 'human development' was adopted by the UNDP which since 1990 has produced the annual Human Development Report (HDR) for all countries of the world.[xi] The HDR took three substantive measures into consideration: 1) life expectancy at birth which is the outcome of health conditions, 2) adult literacy and gross enrolment ratio (combining primary, secondary and college/university – these together getting one-third weightage while literacy gets one-third) which reflect education and the level of knowledge of people, and 3) GDP per capita (at purchasing power parity)which would

take into account economic conditions. This was a significant contribution to the development discourse the world over for two reasons. This paid attention to not only the growth experience of countries which the World Bank's annual World Development Report generally focused on, but also to crucial dimensions of human well-being such as health and education. Secondly, this created a methodology of determining levels of human development using measurable indicators. Thus Human Development Index (HDI) was evolved as a universally acknowledged category. Countries were ranked accordingly. States within countries, even districts and regions tried to produce their HDR. Regions like South Asia, West Asia, Africa and Latin America produced their own reports. Sharp political debates ensued within countries and among political parties and social movements on the performance record of countries and regions based on such reports. The addition of Gender Empowerment Measurement since 1995 further enhanced the value of this exercise. The thematic focus chosen for each year has been another significant way through which a major problem is investigated, trends captured and policies recommended. During the past two decades the human development discourse backed by the prestige of the UN and a host of supporting economists and public figures has greatly influenced policies of governments.

However, HDR also has its critics. They come from two opposite ends of a spectrum. Those who think that economic growth was central to development, consider it as a soft option leading to populist policies. This view-point has got a boost in course of the neo-liberal economic reforms. On the other hand, many from the people's movements find the HDR an

inadequate measure of actual social conditions, especially the aspects of the realm of inequity and injustice. Just when the structural adjustment policies of liberalisation and globalisation were advanced the HDR was devised to manage the tensions that were bound to arise in the process of such reforms. So HDR, from this view-point may have been a managerial anti-dote to the negative fall-out from the reforms and was intended to facilitate the neo-liberal agenda. However, it is heartening to note that in the recent years the UNDP was moving in the direction of developing multiple indicators of human development by taking up additional social aspects. Yet HDR remained rooted in a limited framework of aggregate features.

It is in the context of this debate that the concept of 'social development' registers some additional elements in the development discourse.

The Concept of Social Development

For many thinkers and leaders of the liberation struggles, development meant a comprehensive process of transformation benefiting all sections of society, especially the marginalized. While human development indicators accomplished a desirable advance over average growth indicators of production and income by taking up health and educational indicators it still did not find out how the specific social groups performed on those indicators. For example, the life expectancy of dalit children at birth, or the adivasi girl child would tell us more about a society's development experience than the aggregate figure. So the first major dimension of the

concept of 'social development' is to bring in group differentiated indexes on whatever criteria one chooses to study.

The second important element in the 'social development' concept is to reconceptualise development itself as social development rather than accept a narrow meaning which dealt with 'social aspects of economic development'. This was the theme of the landmark UN Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995 in the wake of which "social development came to be recognised not only as a means to development, but also an end to itself, in terms of opportunities, capabilities and freedoms" [xii]. If development itself has to be understood as social development then it would have several implications. The development experience would be always subject to a variety of assessments depending on the vantage-point one chooses. The more challenging task there is to see the multiple dimensions of deprivation or privilege of an individual or a group together and see them at points of intersectionality. A dalit or Muslim woman worker in an unorganised sector in a backward region like Jharkhand would have multiple vulnerabilities from disadvantages of class, caste, gender, ethnicity, religion and region. It is this intersectionality of the development process that is the critical element in the transition of discourse from human development to social development which has acquired widespread significance. From this perspective social development not only "refers to policies promoting social trust among and across diverse communities-classes, status groups, minorities, etc." [xiii] but also accomplishing structural conditions of equity and justice as a basis for that social trust.

Thirdly, the social development perspective takes development discourse decisively to the realm of rights discourse as it is driven by social movements from below. Once upon a time many of the measures such as poverty reduction and food security were a matter of compassion or charity of the wealthy, the monarchs, landlords, temples, monasteries, mosques and churches. After the end of colonialism, newly independent countries devised welfare policies under welfare states and focused on public action by government agencies as the main instrument for addressing people's basic needs. But state is an organization reflecting the aggregate power structure in society. Whenever, the rulers chose to alter their focus of policy from welfare to growth they reallocated resources. With the expanding democratic consciousness of masses peasants, dalits, adivasis, workers and other marginal groups now demanded their rights. Whenever their rights were ignored the causes for violence and disorder emerged. Thus we see now acknowledgement of what is known as 'right-based approach to development'. This transition from charity to welfare and then from welfare to rights embodies the growth of democratic discourse on development as social development. However, the right-based approach to development usually has two manifestations. One is the rights granted from above under which a government recognizes a demand and legislates it into a legal right. According to this perspective, for example, poverty eradication is a human right.[xiv] Another is the affirmation of a legitimate demand of people in course of struggle and pursuing its realization not only through law and its implementation but also through continuous struggle.

Fourthly, when social groups seize the right to assess the process of change they have to necessarily integrate a host of dimensions ranging from the rate of growth of production to its consequences for specific groups and above all its impact causing depletion, preservation or regeneration of natural resources. Thus sustainable development is an integral part of social development that is based on the premise of harmony between humans and nature rather than "man's conquest over nature" – an outlook promoted by the Industrial Revolution in Europe. For instance, if tribal men and women living in forest areas look at the on-going development process they would first of all ask whether their life conditions were better now than before in terms of food, shelter, health conditions, education, cultural dignity, livelihood resources, natural environment for themselves and their future generations. These dimensions together constitute the trends in their civilizational existence. Thus from the social development perspective the meaning of development is that it is *a process of social change which is materially productive, socially just, environmentally sustainable and a process that gives the right to the people to choose and direct the path of development*. The important thing to note is that these are simultaneous dimensions rather than sequential. You cannot say that let there be growth first and issues of equity and sustainability can be taken up subsequently.

Once these interconnected dimensions are recognized as forming the core of the development process the traditions of struggle for a better society and a better world come out alive. Development is thus perceived as a part of the history of the human civilization. As the struggles for better

material conditions, for liberation from colonial domination, struggle against class, caste, gender, race, religious and ethnic domination and the struggles for reconnecting with nature through mutual bonding for sustainability and struggles for new ethical principles for global interaction unfold development takes the meaning of civilizational movement. These are the issues which the social movements in ASAFLAN countries persist in raising so that the process of democratic transformation of these societies as well as all over the world is hastened.

The   Concept   of   Civilizational   Movement

Even though the concept of social development captures many new dimensions of social progress, especially from the vantage point of the marginalized sections of society still there is a need to take this discourse deeper in order to fulfill the self-realization urges of individuals, groups and regions of the contemporary world.

The greatest legacy of the twentieth century is the rise of self-realization urges of human beings. This was embodied in the anti-colonial struggles, the socialist and democratic revolutions and the multiple social movements of peasants and workers, women, indigenous people, the anti-race, anti-caste and human rights movements especially of the last few decades of the century. This trend is fast acquiring civilizational dimensions and in the near future the assertion of self-realization as being the central goal of global history of civilizations is likely to gather greater and greater salience.

One of the recent moments of articulation of this phenomenon was the centenary of M K Gandhi's work *Hind Swaraj* (Indian Home rule) in 2009 when the concept of swaraj took centre place in deliberations in India and abroad. Swa-raj (literally self-rule) did not mean, according to Gandhi only political freedom from colonial rule, but fuller realization of the self. The self was conceived as individual, group or region. Writing in 1909 he had presented a critique of the Western civilization for its preoccupation with materialism. Though many commentators might disagree with such a monolithic characterization of a civilization Gandhi was focusing on the dominant theme of the industrial revolution that colonialism had spread. Self-realization had to be accomplished in moral, material and political terms as had become clear in course of Gandhi's practice of Satyagraha.[xv] His critique of industrialism was based on similar premises. Gandhi had pointed out that the Western path of industrialization had destroyed traditional skills of people and had ultimately produced an acquisitive society of mass production and mass consumption that also increasingly depleted natural resources. This critique of industrialism was recalled by many social movements in course of their campaigns against globalization when its high tide was unleashed during the 1990s and later. Gandhi had also denounced parliamentary democracy as it had centralized political power and promoted corruption. These assertions will continue to be debated from various vantage points. But the centrality of swaraj as a civilizational goal is the essential message of Gandhi's life and works. What is important to note is that he stood by the text of this short book written in form of a dialogue till his death because swaraj was considered as an endless pursuit of freedom for individuals, groups and regions. Swaraj for the oppressed peasant and worker, swaraj for the oppressed races and castes and for

adivasis or indigenous people, and for women and religious minorities meant continuous struggle for achieving their aspirations. Village self-government or Gram Swaraj in a system of decentralized, participative institutions of politics and government was Gandhi's political order of swaraj. For realizing the self-determination urges of a village or a region a host of policies had to be pursued. Thus, I would argue that swaraj has emerged as a civilization goal in the twenty first century as this is the common feature of all the democratic upsurges of the contemporary times and this is likely to be an even more powerful trend in the coming years.

The concept of swa or self in swaraj or self-realization has three elements built into it. Firstly, it is a concept of self that treats everyone else also as self. The dichotomous notion of "self and the other" that has been a central idea of the era of colonialism, capitalism and caste ideology is conceptualized differently in the swaraj notion. The contradictions among individuals, groups and regions represent relationships which may be relationship of domination and exploitation at a point of history, but they had to be handled through struggle and transformed into relationships of mutual reinforcement. This concept of the self is also represented in the South African concept of Übuntu which in Zulu language means "I am because you are." It implies that 'I can develop only when you develop". The existence of all beings is seen as coexistence with mutual respect for one another and all development can only mean mutual development according to the Ubuntu framework.[xvi]

Secondly, the concept of self is a concept of the human as a creative being. Civilization is also conceived as a long and unending process of the unfolding of human creativity. The individual or a group has enormous creative potentiality which is yet to be fully realized because of many

structural constraints such as class, ethnic, race, caste, gender domination. Social struggles and public policy aim at resolving these contradictions so that an individual or a group is free from the bondage or the obstacles to achieving their creative potential.[xvii]

Thirdly, the notion of self conceived in terms of human beings is integrally connected with nature and other species who are also treated as 'self'. Thus the relationship between humans and nature is to be understood as one of coexistence, mutual support and exploration. This understanding challenges the proposition on 'man's expanding conquest over nature' which has been strongly pushed by the votaries of technological development and industrial revolution during the past two hundred years. The swaraj concept of nature explores nature to know its laws with humility admitting that humans know about only a small part of nature and they ought to utilize that knowledge for the creative good of humans as well as of other species and of nature as a whole. This view has a significant message to preserve natural resources and follow a development path that has minimum depletion of natural resources and energy. Above all it promotes a lifestyle that is committed to the swaraj concept of nature.

This is where swaraj perspective enriches the concept of social development and takes development discourse to a deeper civilizational level. It not only breaks with the Eurocentric development discourse that started with the Industrial Revolution and reached a high point with the neo-liberal path of globalization with the Washington Consensus in the early 1990s, this concept captures the long neglected civilizational issues raised by the third world.[xviii]

This civilization discourse on development and social transformation is based on the premise that all people everywhere in the world have their own civilizations embodying creative potentiality of their beings.[xix] The colonial construction of world history that graded societies with degrees of civilization stands fundamentally challenged today. The claim that Europe represented the most advanced stage of human civilization in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries and currently the US represents the same kind of superior civilization does not carry much weight at present. Now it is clear that the so-called civilizing mission of colonialism was more of a military aggression for world market and political domination than its professed goals. Theory of civilizing mission stands firmly discredited today. The so-called dark continent that Africa was described as, now we know, did have a high civilization of its own having strong influence on both Europe and Asia.[xx]The indigenous people in every part of the world represented important aspects of human civilization as well. Therefore, we are already witnessing a recasting of cultural discourse in the twenty first century.

In the new civilizational discourse all civilizations are regarded as deserving of respect and equal status. No civilization in any part of the world has only positive glorious traditions. Each has both positive and negative traditions and legacies with many diverse trends in their histories. This includes the European, American, Indian, Chinese and Arabic- Persian civilizations. In other words, no civilization is monolithic as assumed by the clash of civilization theorists.[xxi] Paradoxically, even the proponents of   ' dialogue among civilizations'[xxii] have monolithic notions of civilizations focusing on harmonious aspects. Besides, all civilizations experience civilizational movements or a dynamic process of change in which basic orientations of

life, culture and art and attitudes towards nature as well as cosmic outlook in addition to patterns of politics and economy undergo changes. Such changes may not be immediately discernible but become prominent features of human existence over time.

The presently ongoing civilizational movement has addressed the human aspiration for swaraj or self-realization in several concrete ways. Whenever the preoccupation with material needs has been prominent either under capitalism or under socialism the demand for political freedom and social justice has become prominent. When both these aspirations have occupied full attention in a society the cultural aspirations have appeared as more significant and identity demands have surfaced. The perspective on equity and justice has steadily acquired ecological dimensions. Thus freedom, in fact, swaraj has acquired a comprehensive meaning with material, political, cultural and ecological dimensions. The contemporary debates are likely to take these issues into new heights in the near future. The debate on consumerism is bound to grow and make humankind more and more aware of the limits of the availability of natural resources. The crisis of environment is likely to generate more responsibility for appropriate plans for production and consumption. Whether the distribution process is expanding the realm of social justice for workers, peasants, women, dalits, adivasis and minorities will be a major task of politics.

The perspective of civilizational movement questions the centrality of growth targets in development discourse unless they have a relationship with social development and swaraj aspirations. Each individual, each group, especially oppressed group, each region, especially poor and backward

countries, provinces and districts in different parts of the world, today perceive themselves as a 'çivilizational self' and demand dignity of selfhood. That trend is likely to grow stronger by 2030. This is despite the fact that globalization once again tried to put the countries of ASAFLA fairly low in a new scale of technological and economic advance in the Western capitalist frame. But the force of the swaraj movement is so strong that it had to fiercely confront forces of West-led globalization.

Global Initiatives for Transformation

The evolving process of civilizational movement has been the result of three trends in the world all of which are likely to gather further momentum in the near future. They are: social movements in various countries, the world people's movement and regional organizations of states. Let us briefly deal with the way they are affecting the global process of change.

First is the rise of social movements in the various countries such as the women's movement, indigenous people's movements, anti-caste movements, environment movements besides the peasants and workers movements. The upsurge of these movements has brought about a creative society in many countries of the world in which each oppressed group is more conscious of its creative potentiality than before and is determined to carry on the struggle to reduce the constraints on the realization of their potentiality. It is the coming of the creative society that has redefined the parameters of development as social development and civilizational movement. In India, for example, the autonomy movements, the tribal and peasants movement and the dalit movement have acquired unprecedented

momentum and are likely to be more and more assertive in the coming years. The autonomy movements and the land rights movement and the civil liberties movement are likely to grow stronger in China as well.[xxiii] In Brazil, the indigenous people's movement, the unorganized workers movement and the peasant movement for land rights will continue to influence the course of politics.[xxiv] This is true in many other parts of ASAFLA where self-determination movements of one kind or the other are going on.

In case of the movements who challenge the state in their own countries often there is state repression that sometimes incapacitates the movements.The Indian experience presents a typical case in which even though the functioning liberal democracy allows movements to emerge and flourish pursuing non-violent as well as violent methods, both kinds of movements face severe repression from time to time. The movements also face the challenge of fragmentation into splinter groups and manipulation by ruling parties. However, their cumulative impact on the agenda-forming of the polity is clearly noticeable. Some of the laws such as NREGA (National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005) and Forest Rights Act, 2006 and the right to Education Act, 2009 may actually be the responses to the social movements. India has been a typical example of both responsiveness to and repression on people's movements. The autonomy movements in Kashmir and Northeast have been subjected to severe repression as has been the Maoist movement in central Indian tribal region. But occasional initiatives for dialogue and development measures are also visible. The movements opposing displacement caused by mega mining projects in Odisha, Chhatishgarh and elsewhere have raised serious issues of the nature and pattern of development, especially during the neo-liberal phase. Over all it is

clear that the people's movements have a major impact on the shaping of the development discourse in India.[xxv]

The second major current that has influenced the global transformation process is the world people's movement through the solidarity groups across countries. Since 2000 the World Social Forum (WSF) has been the key example of this trend articulating the alternative to the World Economic Forum, the latter representing the forces of globalization of capitalist market forces. Social movements from various countries come together in this forum that generally holds its annual meetings in Porto Allegre in Brazil and demands restructuring of the current world order.[xxvi] WSF upholds the rights of the oppressed groups of the world and focuses on the interests of the countries and regions of the South. The groups in the WSF also take up issues relating to environment in a major way. With the slogan , "Another World is Possible", the WSF has become a crystallizaed platform of many of the ideas represented in the concept of civilizational movement. All continents of the world are represented in the forum which is basically a powerful voice of the south supported by sympathetic activists and intellectuals of the north.[xxvii]

Even before the WSF came into being the UN summits played an important role in bringing the NGOs together in a parallel summit. The Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992, the Vienna Summit on Human Rights in 1993, the Copenhagen Summit on Social Development in March 1995 and the Beijing World Congress on Women in September 1995 were land mark events which brought the world thinking on fundamental issues of human progress into the common consciousness of humankind. Thereafter, the agenda of each country on such issues was scrutinized to assess the record of achievements and failures. Later the UN Summit on Racial Discrimination

in Durban in 2001 and the Environment Summit in Johannesburg in 2002 were also milestones which charted courses of action for the transformation of global agenda. Some of the subsequent summits to review the UN processes and country performances on the same issues created major platforms of global opinion on matters relating to people's rights and environmental concerns. Some of the new structures in the UN system are clearly the outcomes of this process. The formation of the Human Rights Council in 2006 and the UN Women in 2011 are example of this process. Some of UN's existing agencies get more and more energized despite the political constraints of the big power pressures. For example, the ECOSOC whose Committee on NGOs coordinated much of the interaction among the NGOs has become more important in the recent years. In a world dominated by nation-states the global people's movement has many limits in its functioning. Only those NGOs who are permitted by the national governments to go abroad are represented in such forums. As distinct from NGOs there are social movements who may not have funds to travel abroad. Some who manage to do so are supported mostly by foreign agencies who may have their own motivations for supporting such movements. Despite all such limitations, one can see the emergence of a multi-stranded global civil society contributing to the evolving civilizational movement.

The third agency is the rising trend of regional organizations of countries which originally came together for economic cooperation, but in the process influenced the course of history impacting on the structure of the global political economy. They range from regional initiatives of informal kind or organizations still in the making, to steadily consolidating regional institutions. The IBSA forum consisting of India, Brazil and South Africa started in 2003 as an informal grouping of three major developing countries

belonging to three continents. As three large multi-ethnic societies with liberal democratic systems the IBSA Dialogue Forum has emerged as an important initiative for alternative thinking from the perspective of the south. With China included in this grouping in course of the environmental negotiations at the Copenhagen Summit in 2009 a new grouping was born called BASIC. This now acquired added clout in global discourse. Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) came together in their first summit in 2009. The prediction made by Goldman Sachs in 2003 that these four countries will be the leading markets in the coming decades and China and India would be the two leading economies by 2050 began to be seen in concrete terms. With the inclusion of South Africa this formation became BRICS. Now they hold annual summits and their ministers and joint task forces plan to meet frequently on the burning issues affecting global economy. In the recent years they have coordinated their views on environmental issues and have taken collective positions on trade and finance issues in world forums. The coming of what is called 'emerging markets' of China, India and Brazil has vastly influenced the prevailing structure of power in the world.[xxviii] Even though US Dollar remains the most powerful world currency, the Chinese economic growth, especially its exports to the world market, especially to US has established China's special status in the world economy. The high rate of growth of India and Brazil in addition to China's also has had a similar effect as their markets are also growing.

This new situation has brought about a new grouping called G-20 – the group of twenty largest economies of the world which has replaced the G-8 of the industrialized countries which until recently were deciding the rules of world trade and finance. The developing countries known as G-77 or the Group of 77 whose number later rose to 112 countries at one point used

to make appeals and present proposals to the G-8. The latter started inviting leaders of China, India and a few other countries to attend its extended meetings during the recent years. The emergence of the phenomenon of G-20 may have heralded the coming of a new period of world history with the western industrialized countries losing pre-eminence over world economy. China surpassed Japan's US$5 trillion GDP in July 2010 and became the second largest economy of the world after US. This development has been in the making for some years now. Combined with the US military interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan this process has been described as the decline of US empire.[xxix] That the Orient had a higher GDP than Europe until early eighteenth century and now had regained its economic preeminence has been pointed out by many scholars.[xxx] *Adam Smith in Beijing* is a title of the Chinese success story of regulated market economy that has brought a new global status to China.[xxxi] "Peaceful Rise of China'has been a theme of much Chinese discourse in the past two decades.[xxxii]

Would G-20 carry forward the banner of G-8 and promote the path of global capitalism or is it likely to put the world on a new course of equitable development? It is clear that the path advocated by G-8 generates uneven development worldwide and inside countries and ecological destruction as well as alienation, social inequality and consumerism. To what extent is it likely that the developing countries among G-20 would represent the liberation urges of the post-colonial societies and pursue a path of equitable and sustainable development and thus become a part of civilizational movement? That is still an open question.

We have two contrasting models of regional organizations, one consolidating the existing world order dominated by capitalist market

economy and another seeking to alter it. During the Cold War period, transformation of the world political economy into an equitable and just order was the principal goal of the Panchasheel Agreement (Five principles of peaceful coexistence) signed by India and China in 1954, the Bandung Conference of newly independent Afro-Asian countries in 1955, and the Non-Aligned Movement which started in 1961 and continued to meet even today. The developing countries took the initiative in the UN to launch a drive for NIEO (New International Economic Order) – an initiative which got swept away with the coming of the neo-liberal wave of globalization promoting free trade through WTO. But regional initiatives of various kinds continued to be pursued.

The relatively well institutionalized EU (European Union) is very clearly wedded to promoting market economy and liberal democracy at the global level. Having shared the military line of NATO under US leadership it is the epitome of the industrial revolution models of development. The other institutionalized grouping, ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) started as a Cold War security grouping against communist party-ruled states like China. But it has evolved into a free market economic block which has also initiated many regional trade and security measures. The ASEAN plus three (China, Japan and South Korea) has emerged as a formidable economic zone. The East Asia Summit which includes India, Australia and New Zealand in addition to ASEAN plus three has emerged as an important annual forum to take stock of the world economy. Another important grouping is SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization) which started as a neighborly cooperation forum of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in 2001. But over the years it has grown into a comprehensive economic and security organization in East and

Central Asia with India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Mongolia as observers in it. It is also a grouping of market economies seeking a regional role in tackling regional problems. Unlike ASEAN, the SCO with China and Russia as the major players in it clearly has the objective of making their presence felt in the region in competing with the US and EU. However, EU, ASEAN and SCO are all pursuing the paths of industrial revolution and market economy while also pursuing a security policy of balance of power.

As distinct from the EU, ASEAN and SCO an alternative trend in global political economy is symbolized by the ALBA (Bolivarian Alliance of Latin America) which has a transformative vision not only for Latin America, but for the whole world. It aims at restructuring the world political economy so that it is more equitable and just. Starting as a joint initiative of Venezuela and Cuba in 2004 it was joined by Bolivia, Nicaragua, Ecuador and several other smaller states by 2010. Opposing the free trade system which is promoted by the US-led effort to form the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) or the already functioning NAFTA (North American Trade Agreement) ALBA promotes equitable exchange and solidarity among states and peoples to struggle for freedom, equality and justice both globally and in their own countries. It is interesting to note that the BASIC countries share the same general perspective but are not as explicit as ALBA in their action program.[xxxiii]

In Africa, the decade-old African Union has also been actively pursuing a transformative perspective through regional cooperation. Established in 2002 as a successor to OAU (Organization for African Unity) AU has 53 member states with the objective of achieving greater unity and solidarity among the African countries, defend sovereignty, promote political and socio-economic integration of the continent and African

common positions on issues of interest to the continent. During the decade of its existence it has undertaken a number of economic and social measures in support of human rights and democracy. Despite being a large continental organization with diverse tendencies its historical legacies make it a transformative body rather than a regional front of Western capitalist countries.[xxxiv]

There are many other organizations in different parts of the world aiming at achieving regional cooperation, but not all of them are geared towards altering the dominant patterns of global development. But as the world politics gets more pluralized such organizations acquire greater autonomy. For example, the objective of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) was mainly to facilitate regional trade and cooperation in social development matters. But gradually it took collective positions in climate change negotiations vis-à-vis the Western powers. But SAARC has been unable to make substantial progress in regional cooperation due to bilateral problems of member countries, mainly India and Pakistan.   There are initiatives such as the RIC (Russia-India-China), the BCIM (Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar), BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Scientific, Technological and Economic cooperation), the ECO (Economic Cooperation Organization) , MERCOSUR (launched by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay in 1991 joined by Venezuela in 2006) and many others in different continents which seek to promote regional cooperation . All of them strive to secure regional autonomy in their respective spheres and hence have the potential of reducing the influence of big powers. The cumulative effect of all these inter-state initiatives on the restructuration of global political, economic and cultural relations may not appear dramatic at a point of time, but over a long period they definitely alter the pre-existing

global structure. Such effects are clearly visible in the functioning of the UN agencies, World Trade Organization, climate change negotiations and other spheres.

The three catalytic trends of the contemporary world, namely, social movements in various countries, the world people's movements and the regional organizations, together constitute a massive historical force propelling civilizartional movement of the human race. But there are many paradoxes as well as possibilities for the global future at 2030.

Paradoxes and Counter-hegemonic prospects

One of the paradoxes of the contemporary times is the position in international forums taken by the representatives of the developing countries. In BRIC meetings as well as in G-20 forums they play the role of the radical transformers demanding democratization of the world order often in tune with the demands of their own social movements at home. Many of the movements in their countries challenge the forces of global capitalism and the many adverse consequences of globalization. Paradoxically, when the same governments operate back at home they often treat many of those very movements as hostile forces, subject them to repressive laws, curb their activities and sometimes violently suppress them. The governments strongly argue at home that they need to build their economies, achieve high growth rate and become stronger vis-vis neighbours and big powers. This has been the case with India, China and Brazil in the recent years. As a result of this paradox the global struggle against western hegemonic forces gets weakened

as the latter realize that after all the developing countries need their capital and technology as well as their markets. This remains the main reason underlying the persistence of the existing hegemonic order. As a result, many elements of the US-led world system continue to hold good even though much change is taking place in the world with the emergence of the BRICS countries. The UN system is still greatly dependent on the US policy support. The movement for an independent Palestinian State is still not successful in achieving its goal despite tremendous support worldwide, because of the US-Israeli opposition. The counter-terrorism operations by the Western countries provided an alibi for extending their spheres of influences in different parts of the world. The WTO negotiations are still greatly influenced by the US and its allies. The military and economic power of the US still manages to impact political developments all over the world. As a result, the movement for a just and equitable world continues to face obstacles.

This situation is likely to change when the domestic pressures on the regimes multiply and the regimes begin to reorient their policies to fulfill the urges of self-determination of their people. Already there are signs that the dominant growth-oriented policies are undergoing some adjustments. The acknowledgement of people's rights in India through the introduction of several laws such as NREGA, the FRA and the RTE in India some initial signs of this change. In China the package of policies associated with the notion of 'Scientific development' too marks the same trend as also the goal of building a political civilization in addition to the building of material and spiritual civilizations. The question is whether these measures are minor concessions by the regimes as a tension management measure or are they serious structural steps for social transformation in the swaraj-ubuntu mode,

it is yet to be seen. If they are indeed measures to fulfill the freedom urges of the oppressed people and regions in the country, then they would be consistent with the international postures taken by their regimes in the global forums.

When third world governments come together to seek an alteration of the prevailing unequal global order they participate in the ongoing civilizational movement perhaps without being aware of the monumental significance of this historic process. They demand that the developed countries, most of them former colonial powers must recognize their responsibility in the making of the present unjust world system. Colonialism plundered the natural resources of the ASAFLAN countries and paved the way for global warming. The same governing elites take a different stand when it comes to domestic policies. They stress the need for economic growth and even build alliances with the developed countries to impose their models of growth as has been the case under globalization. They seek foreign direct investment to exploit minerals and build mineral-based export-oriented industries. They do so even in the face of resistance from local people whose livelihoods are adversely affected and who face large scale displacement and environmental destruction. The governing elite of the developing countries has bought the ideology of neo-liberal growth on the belief that growth was necessary for reducing poverty and acquiring higher status in the world.

Is this dilemma going to be perpetuated through the coercive power of the state backed by military and economic power of big powers of the west? There are two forces at work which give some hope for the civilizational movement to go on. First is the dynamic of the social movements and the

unprecedented momentum in the rising consciousness among common people about their democratic rights. People's rights movements are especially focused today on local people's rights to the natural resources of their regions and their cultural rights. History has shown that use of force to appropriate those resources and deny socio-political rights to the local people cannot go on for long. Therefore, the regimes have sooner or later responded to the people's struggles. In many cases the people's movements themselves have come to power. The other is the global trend of groups of countries in specific regions and across regions trying to come to terms with the new reality of a post-hegemonic world. No people and no region can be forcibly controlled by outside forces whether from within a country or from abroad, for long. In other words, self-determination of people is as powerful a trend in the twenty first century as self-determination of nations was in the twentieth century. In both cases, people are relating themselves to deeper civilizational trends in shaping new relationships with nature. They are simultaneously struggling to establish new relationships among themselves as individuals, groups and regions in a swaraj-ubuntu framework to generate conditions of greater freedom, equality and justice to realize their creative potentialities.

Hence there are positive hopes for the civilizational movement in the near future.

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iii See Manoranjan Mohanty (ed), *India: Social Development Report 2010* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press for Council for Social Development, 2010), especially the chapters on poverty and agrarian crisis.

iv *Alternative Economic Survey: India Two Decades of Neoliberalism* (New Delhi: Daanish Books, 2011)

v See the text with commentary in Anthony J Parel (ed), *Gandhi, Hind Swaraj* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,1997) See also Bhikhu C Parekh, *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform: An Analysis of Gandhi's Political Discourse* (New Delhi: Sage, 2003)

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xvi *South Africa : Vision 2020 Towards Ubuntu* (Johannesburg, 2005)

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