

Preface

In the classic tale “The Little Prince” appears the following remark about the only human inhabitant of a very small planet which is prone to a kind of instability or danger in form of gigantic trees:

... Indeed, as I learned, there were on the planet where the little prince lived--as on all planets--good plants and bad plants. In consequence, there were good seeds from good plants, and bad seeds from bad plants. But seeds are invisible. They sleep deep in the heart of the earth's darkness, until someone among them is seized with the desire to awaken. Then this little seed will stretch itself and begin--timidly at first--to push a charming little sprig inoffensively upward toward the sun. If it is only a sprout of radish or the sprig of a rose-bush, one would let it grow wherever it might wish. But when it is a bad plant, one must destroy it as soon as possible, the very first instant that one recognizes it ... Now there were some terrible seeds on the planet that was the home of the little prince; and these were the seeds of the baobab. The soil of that planet was infested with them. A baobab is something you will never, never be able to get rid of if you attend to it too late. It spreads over the entire planet. It bores clear through it with its roots. And if the planet is too small, and the baobabs are too many, they split it in pieces ...” It is a question of discipline,” the little prince said to me later on. “When you’ve finished your own toilet in the morning, then it is time to attend to the toilet of your planet, just so, with the greatest care. You must see to it that you pull up regularly all the baobabs, at the very first moment when they can be distinguished from the rosebushes which they resemble so closely in their earliest youth. It is very tedious work,” the little prince added, “but very easy” ... (De Saint-Exupéry, 2015)

The current world population is 7,361,062,100 and this huge number is increasing with dreadful velocity every second. Some experts in demography affirm that: “...At the dawn of agriculture, about 8000 B.C., the population of the world was approximately 5 million. Over the 8,000-year period up to 1 A.D. it grew to 200 million (some estimate 300 million or even 600, suggesting how imprecise population estimates of early historical periods can be), with a growth rate of under 0.05% per year...A tremendous change occurred with the industrial revolution: whereas it had taken all of human history until around 1800 for world population to reach one billion, the second billion was achieved in only 130 years (1930), the third billion in less than 30 years (1959), the fourth billion in 15 years (1974), and the fifth billion in only 13 years (1987)... Population in the world is currently (as of 2015-2016) growing at a rate of around 1.13% per year. The average population change is currently estimated at around 80 million per year...” (Worldometers, 2015).

Our problem is more complicated than the apparent simplicity of the little prince because a majority of human beings pursue an infinite diversity of caprices and ambitions inside a finite and fragile planet. Frequently each individual or collectivity keeps the accounts of their goods and services but ignores the damages and turbulences caused by their action.

Surely the readers of our Handbook of Research on Transitional Justice and Peace Building in Turbulent Regions may find that stormy societies are not always fixed anomalies lived in some isolated geographies: some countries can advance from turbulence towards calm and peace but sometimes disorder can be propagated regionally and globally. Indeed, in times of globalization a global propagation of dangers exists. Our main message in this short foreword is that we want to find global solutions in order to overcome the local, regional and global turbulences: a small turbulence is seed of a gigantic problem and, indeed, our finite planet is the small home to millions of human beings that create dozens of new problems but they can create cooperatively adequate solutions.

Utopian Global Welfare vs. Growing Planetary Turbulence

Some worldly philosophers known as utilitarian thinkers, specifically Bentham, Mill and Edgeworth suggested an idea of universal welfare (happiness). They defended the global well-being to the universe of sensitive beings (animals, plants and human beings).

In his wiser encyclical letter the Pope Francis quoted the words of Saint Francis of Assisi who proposed a more complete idea of a good and inclusive world:

... Francis helps us to see that an integral ecology calls for openness to categories which transcend the language of mathematics and biology, and take us to the heart of what it is to be human. Just as happens when we fall in love with someone, whenever he would gaze at the sun, the moon or the smallest of animals, he burst into song, drawing all other creatures into his praise. He communed with all creation, even preaching to the flowers, inviting them “to praise the Lord, just as if they were endowed with reason”... His response to the world around him was so much more than intellectual appreciation or economic calculus, for to him each and every creature was a sister united to him by bonds of affection. That is why he felt called to care for all that exists. His disciple Saint Bonaventure tells us that, “from a reflection on the primary source of all things, filled with even more abundant piety, he would call creatures, no matter how small, by the name of ‘brother’ or ‘sister’”... Such a conviction cannot be written off as naïve romanticism, for it affects the choices which determine our behaviour. If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously. The poverty and austerity of Saint Francis were no mere veneer of asceticism, but something much more radical: a refusal to turn reality into an object simply to be used and controlled. (Francis, 2015, p. 11)

The care of our common home is the main concern of the Pope Francis. He said that the entire world is suffering a permanent and growing destruction: seven decades after Hiroshima and Nagasaki the credible threat of a total destruction due to the possession of nuclear weapons by some powerful countries still persists; the global warming as a result of human activity is producing dramatic changes in the climate and the earth; pollution, climatic chaos, waste, contamination of water, loss of biodiversity,

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growing scarcity of clean water, breakdown of societies, increasing inequality, emergence of new wars, are the actual plagues propelled by the greed and indolence of human beings. Indeed, the mentioned problems are clear signals of a near destruction of the global commons. Approximately five decades ago the visionary biologist Garret Hardin proved the existence of an inexorable trend towards a tragedy of the commons due to the unrestrained growth of human population and the persistence of the most brutal greed (Hardin, 1968).

The modern history is a sequence of growing fragmentation of welfare from big universes (living beings, humanity) toward narrow and very exclusive collectivities (nations, social classes, communities, clubs, families and, finally, individuals). The consolidation of modern State Nations occurred in a context of severe competition: each nation has a chauvinist ambition in order to attain success despite the tragedy of its adversaries (Cuevas, 1998).

Sadly the world is not a public good without frontiers and rivalry. Indeed, the great economist Albert Hirschman reminded the remarks of Pascal about the Christian Divinity: God is the quintessential pure public good available to all the individuals and human collectivities at the same time, without exclusion (frontiers and barriers to entry), without rivalry (competition and jealousy) and, perhaps, without subtraction (depletion of natural resources) (Hirschman, 1985, p. 7).

Exclusive groups (nations, social classes, communities, families, etc.) can be understood like very exclusive club goods. A club good, according to James Buchanan is a semi-public good that offers low levels of rivalry to its members but imposes high barriers to entry. The clubs are very exclusive because the utility that each individual receives from its consumption, use, access, "... depends upon the number of other persons with whom he must share its benefits." (Buchanan, 1965, p. 3)

The exclusive club of super riches comprises a minimal fraction of human kind. According to the most recent report by the NGO OXFAM: "Global wealth is increasingly being concentrated in the hands of small wealthy elite. These wealthy individuals have generated and sustained their vast riches through their interests and activities in a few important economic sectors, including finance and pharmaceuticals/healthcare ... In 2014, the richest 1% of people in the world owned 48% of global wealth, leaving just 52% to be shared between the other 99% of adults on the planet. Almost all of that 52% is owned by those included in the richest 20%, leaving just 5.5% for the remaining 80% of people in the world. If this trend continues of an increasing wealth share to the richest, the top 1% will have more wealth than the remaining 99% of people in just two years ... with the wealth share of the top 1% exceeding 50% by 2016 ..." (Oxfam, 2015). Indeed, this means that the world is owned by an exclusive club (very powerful elite) that has the exclusive rights of property in order to take crucial decisions that, of course, affect the rest of the population.

A majority of human beings is condemned to live in turbulent regions, as victims of poverty and conflict. The economist Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, expressed the tragedies of millions of human beings in these terms:

Every morning our newspapers could report, "More than 20,000 people perished yesterday of extreme poverty." The stories would put the stark numbers in context—up to 8,000 children dead of malaria, 5,000 mothers and fathers dead of tuberculosis, 7,500 young adults dead of AIDS, and thousands more dead of diarrhea, respiratory infection, and other killer diseases that prey on bodies weakened by chronic hunger. The poor die in hospital wards that lack drugs, in villages that lack antimalarial bed nets, in houses that lack safe drinking water. They die namelessly, without public comment. Sadly, such stories rarely get written. Most people are unaware of the daily struggles for survival, and of the vast numbers

of impoverished people around the world who lose that struggle. Since September 11, 2001, the United States has launched a war on terror, but it has neglected the deeper causes of global instability. The \$450 billion that the United States will spend this year on the military will never buy peace if it continues to spend around one thirtieth of that, just \$15 billion, to address the plight of the world's poorest of the poor, whose societies are destabilized by extreme poverty and thereby become havens of unrest, violence, and even global terrorism. That \$15 billion represents a tiny percentage of U.S. income, just 15 cents on every \$100 of U.S. gross national product, or GNP. The share of U.S. GNP devoted to helping the poor has declined for decades, and is a tiny fraction of what the United States has repeatedly promised, and failed, to give. It is also much less than the United States should give, both to solve the crisis of extreme poverty and thereby to provide for U.S. national security. This book, then, is about making the right choices—choices that can lead to a much safer world based on a true reverence and respect for human life. (Sachs, 2005)

The Existence of Turbulent Regions According To Two Different Views

The Institute for Economics and Peace produces annually an indicator of peace, named Global Peace Index. This index comprises three main domains, namely: ongoing domestic and international conflict (indicates the number and intensity of ongoing civil and international wars); societal safety and security (indicates the levels of safety and security within a country, such as the perception of criminality in society, the level of political instability and the rate of homicides and violent crimes) and, finally, militarization (indicates a nation's military capacity, both in terms of the economic resources committed to the military and support for multilateral operations). The Global Peace Index 2015 shows the next global photography where is highlighted the noisy turbulence in Middle-East, North Africa, Latin America and Russia, thus:

...The most substantial change in the index was recorded for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) — where several countries suffered from an upsurge in violence related to sectarian strife and civil conflicts, as well as a rise in actions by Islamist extremist groups. It was followed by South America, where peacefulness was most affected in some countries by a rise in the perceptions of criminality and in popular protests. MENA now ranks as the most violent region, overtaking South Asia (which includes Afghanistan) from last year's GPI. Yet again, Europe maintained its position as the most peaceful region in the world, supported by a lack of domestic and external conflicts ... Although there were no new wars between countries, tense relationships between the two Koreas, concerns over China's growing military assertiveness in the Asia-Pacific region, the potential further expansion of the Middle East conflicts across borders, and the possibility that conflict between Russia and the Ukraine escalates into all out military confrontation suggest these may become hotspots for international conflict in the future. In the case of deaths from internal conflict, the scores for most regions deteriorated (the exceptions being South America and Central America and the Caribbean). The individual countries with the biggest score erosion for these indicators were Ukraine and Central African Republic, owing to ongoing and worsening civil wars. For the indicator of internal conflicts fought, internal conflict escalated most in the Middle East and North Africa. The situation improved in South America and South Asia... (Peace I.f., 2015, p. 8)

A more nuanced assessment is offered by the Fund for Peace with the Fragile States Index. This is "...an annual ranking of 178 nations based on their levels of stability and the pressures they face. The

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Index is based on The Fund for Peace's proprietary Conflict Assessment Software Tool (CAST) analytical platform. Based on comprehensive social science methodology, data from three primary sources is triangulated and subjected to critical review to obtain final scores for the Fragile States Index. Millions of documents are analyzed every year, and by applying highly specialized search parameters, scores are apportioned for every country based on twelve key political, social and economic indicators and over 100 sub-indicators that are the result of years of painstaking expert social science research" (Peace F. F., 2015, p. 3).

This index comprises two big sets of indicators, namely: social indicators (demographic pressures, refugees and displaced people, group grievance, human flight and brain drain.); economic indicators (uneven economic development, and poverty and economic decline); and political and military indicators (state legitimacy, public services, human rights and rule of law, security apparatus, factionalized elites, and external intervention). According to this measurement, there are sustainable and stable "paradises" (Canada, Ireland, Iceland, Norway, Germany, Portugal, Australia and New Zealand); ambiguous "purgatories" (United States, United Kingdom, Poland, France, Spain, Costa Rica, Panama, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Romania, South Korea and Japan); turbulent hotter states (Mexico, Cuba, Brazil, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Venezuela, Salvador, Nicaragua, Morocco, Algeria, Turkey, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, China, India, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Indonesia, and South Africa); and, finally, burning turbulent hells (Guatemala, Haiti, Colombia, Sierra Leona, Liberia, Nigeria, Mauritania, Malik, Chad, Libya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Kenia, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Nepal, North Korea, and Russia).

The Dark Side of Peaceful and Prosperous Nations

The conventional economist assumes that the good health of a nation is equivalent to an incremented wealth (a growing gross domestic product, GDP). According to this odd assessment the healthiest nations are: United States, China, Japan, Germany, United Kingdom, France, Brazil, Italia, India and Russian Federation. According to the World Bank (Bank, 2015), some problematic regions like Latin America and Caribbean and Middle East and North Africa have lower economic income, and Sub Saharan Africa suffers a low income.

The less peaceful and more dangerous (militarized) countries are: Israel, North Korea, Russia, United States, Pakistan, France, India, Syria and Yemen (Peace I. f., 2015, pág. 36).

Nine potentially ultra-violent states exist that possess now a big arsenal of atomic weapons, namely: Russia, United States, France, China, United Kingdom, Israel, Pakistan, India and North Korea (Forbes, 2014).

The key message is that turbulence appears explicitly in some problematic regions (Latin America and Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa) but partially this is product of endogenous failures of each nation or particular region. Sadly the most prosperous and supposedly peaceful regions and countries can be actual and potential originators of waves of disorder and violence in the regions that today suffer turbulences.

The Essence of this Handbook

The reader of our collective work can find a complete theoretical discussion about conflict, violence, nonviolence, transitional justice, and peace building from different views and disciplines. Moreover,

the specialized public can obtain exhaustive and nuanced explanation of some particular cases of transitional justice and peace building like Germany, Nicaragua, Sudan, Eritrea, Syria and Cambodia and, particularly, the situation of two very turbulent countries like Iraq and Colombia. This approach results from the cooperative work of researchers formed in different disciplines and with a direct knowledge on situations of violent conflicts and processes of restorative justice and peace building.

Freddy Cante

Universidad del Rosario, Colombia

Hartmut Quehl

Felsberg Institute, Germany

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