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## OCCASIONAL PAPERS

THE SOCIOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT:  
PER ASPERA AD ASTRA ?

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# GOVERNMENT PAPERS

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## THE SOCIOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT: PER ASPERA AD ASTRA?

Development is a key concept in the self-view of mankind in the present period, which is the initial phase of the history of the One World. It marks, in an oblique manner, the emergent realization of ever more people that the spatiotemporal framework of human existence on earth has drastically changed. Henceforth human self-realization and self-maintenance must imply concern and indeed care for human context, both nature and fellow humans. Under these new conditions, the developmental urge appears destined to do for human society - or at least for certain human societies<sup>1</sup> - what thus far has been done by expansiveness as a basic feature of human collective existence: namely to foster the proper and effective functioning of procedures and institutions for continuity.<sup>2</sup>

Obviously development is also a novel concept. This entails advantages as well as disadvantages. It is imaginative. But it is not crystal-clear. It is indicative of the forward-looking self-perception of many of the entities that nowadays feature as the main components of mankind. At the same time, it retains a carry-over from the past. "Underdeveloped" and "developing" are at times mere euphemisms rephrasing the descriptions by which members of the dominant parts of mankind would designate those of dominated parts: "backwards", "primitive" and the like. Thus, the term development will accommodate the natural self-identification of many a group or nation, as well as the ethnocentric identification that some parts of mankind will apply in respect of others. Without such a multi-valence in meanings, the term could hardly have become, and remained, as fashionable as it actually is.

The term development usually comes adorned with an epithet. Its main purpose is clarification. In addition, it may occasionally serve to placate sensitivities. In the course of time, a number of epithets have been adopted and several of these have subsequently been abandoned. Their useful life varies in duration; there is some turn-over. One of the earliest epithets, if not the earliest, is "technological". It has by and large been discarded for reasons of manifest inadequacy; but it lingers on in the term technical assistance. This remains widely used: in a meaning considerably vaguer than the words proper would suggest. In retrospect, it does not appear that the term was dropped because it was a pars pro toto expression: this kind of expression is freely used all the time. Rather, it must have been that the pars selected for the purpose turned out to be an unfortunate choice. Technology transplanted will hardly work miracles. Indeed, as A.J. Toynbee has lost no time to point out<sup>3</sup>, it may wreak havoc.

Then came the term "economic development". To some, it is yet another pars pro toto, perhaps somewhat more adroitly chosen. To others, including many respected economists, it comes near to being, or actually is, a full, adequate description. This difference in appreciations is important; we shall return to it.

Subsequently, some more epithets of the pars pro toto variety have come into use, such as political development. Others have been adopted that were decidedly partial, segmentary indications. Examples are administrative, agricultural, educational development, and the like. Whereas the pars pro toto variety tends to refer to development as process, the sectorial variety is more geared to envisaging development as action.

Returning to the former variant, a natural question to arise is whether after economic and political, a social has been adopted as an epithet. Indeed it has, but not in a manner that would put it on a par with the other two. In connoting community development or social welfare (or security) policies, it features in the list of sectorial rather than of pars pro toto indications. This seems to preclude the use of the adjective social along with economic and political, as a pars pro toto epithet to development. Were a third adjective required to continue the series, it might be necessary to resort to a slightly awkward term like societal. The intriguing question, crucial to this paper, is what societal would mean, if related to development.

It is proposed to approach this question by a circuitous route. Our access to it will be from a point that was shunted aside temporarily in the preceding: "economic" as a pars pro toto or rather as a "full" description. Is it right to rely on a part, however salient, to convey the whole that is to be conceptualized? Could "development" and "economic development" be rated synonymous, interchangeable expressions? Thus phrased, the problem sounds formal; upon closer inspection however it appears as a matter of profound epistemology rather than of, simply, formal logic. This may explain why few people indulge in such closer inspection. As often as not, a considerably more down-to-earth reasoning is adhered to. It says that to him for whom the fulness of life is economic, the answer is yes and that for anyone else it is no. This would not be saying much, but for the coincidence that there exists such a thing as an economic philosophy of life. (Philosophy, by the way, that is as hard to identify as an iceberg; but Marxism is its visible top.) Due to this philosophy - no doubt in conjunction with other factors -, the prevailing perception of development, even

amongst leading minds, is based on the assumption that it is mostly, primarily or even wholly economic development.

Illustrations abound, and they add up to demonstrate the formidable influence of those holding on to this prise de position. Not so long ago, one of the leading development economists asserted privately that development is a matter of every aspect of life; less than a week later he went on record publicly asserting that economic theory, in dealing with development, has improved to the point where it can account for any relevant non-economic considerations. The famous Pearson Report<sup>4</sup>, one of the more influential amongst the weighty reports with which important agencies have heralded the Second Development Decade, is a brilliantly one-sided presentation of development: not so much because it stresses aid rather than self-help but because it offers a - probably unsurpassed - representation of the economic-financial pars pro toto. The United Nations, in sponsoring the Second Development Decade, have taken a position, by means of two subsequent resolutions<sup>5</sup>, according to which economic development is the one concern in considering matters of development and development aid.

In view of all this it is an act of boundless temerity but, I submit, also of intellectual honesty to hoist the warning signal. The exclusive stress on the economic aspect or dimension of development is open to challenge. It is so for reasons of pure epistemology. These should perhaps not detain the present argument. It is so again for at least two more immediately significant reasons. One, it is western-ethnocentric, and this in a manner that is rapidly becoming obsolete. Two, it misreads the signs in most if not all underdevelopment situations.

As to the former point, the alleged primacy of economics in life<sup>6</sup> is typical of a period in western history of which we are wit-

nessing the end. In its upsurge it was marked by the industrial revolution and by work as a (if not the) prime moral value; its end appears to ensue from instant mediated communication and automation. The younger generation of the west, whether rebellious or not, have no real use for the primacy of economics, that is the egocentrically or ethnocentrically understood maximization of returns upon effort. It follows that the primacy of economics is a tenet typical of a certain time and place. Any claim as to its general or fundamental validity needs to be substantiated. It cannot be assumed; but this is precisely what is generally done. Hence the challenge.

As to the second point, it is often remarked that the rising tide of expectations in the developing areas has basically one motif only, namely the desire for abundance in a strictly down-to-earth, material sense. As an observation of fact, this sounds disarmingly correct. (But note the extremes of idealist response it will often elicit amongst certain groups in developed areas: an intriguing counterpoint.) It would, however, be a sad and by no means innocent mistake to follow this observation through with the often heard statement that thus the unequivocal demand is for economic development. To warrant such a conclusion it is necessary to assume (1) that those concerned can and will distinguish between their actual dismal state, called underdevelopment, and a desired, almost dream-like, state of material bliss, and again (2) that they will subsequently interpolate, between the two, economic development as the link (both conceptually and in terms of effort) to bridge the gap. For such a conclusion, no firm base is available in existing evidence. Other conclusions, all equally tentative, are also possible. One of these would be that quite a few of those concerned desire<sup>7</sup>, simply, to strike it rich, for a change. Amongst this range of pos-

sible conclusions, the one about economic development is in fact unlikely to prove more probable than others. It is complex and sophisticated to such an extent that questions are bound to arise whether it can fit the thought and action patterns obtaining in many underdeveloped areas. There is no trace of doubt that questions of this nature do crop up in the practice of economic development. Still, it is on rare occasions only that one hears them voiced. Hence, once more, the challenge. This kind of questions needs to be pursued systematically, even if it means to take time out from urgent action.

On the strength of these two points, it appears virtually impossible to bring proof for the thesis that development would be synonymous with economic development. Rather, they suggest that development, if anything, is not merely economic development<sup>8</sup>. To some, this suggestion comes as a disappointment, as if someone tried to force an open door. Surely, development economists will at times staunchly and perhaps narrowly uphold "economocratic" views as regards development. But will they not, at other times, uphold a more liberal, if vaguer, comprehensive view as well? Some of them will indeed; but there is occasion to ask how much of such broad-mindedness would, in the last resort, have to be written off as a mere defense mechanism to safeguard the continued pre-eminence of the economic discipline and profession. (More so since, after all, economics started on its career as the universal social science.) Nor does the real weakness of the suggestion just made reside in what economists will have to say about it. It resides in a different circumstance. Other disciplines have thus far contributed little that could support and effectuate the claim that development is more than economic development and that it is by consequence a matter for multidisciplinary, if not interdisciplinary, concern.



In the meantime, so long as development remains the privileged domain of economists, bankers, entrepreneurs and management experts, it seems unrealistic to hope for better than relatively modest (by the yardstick of expectations and of recognized needs) and basically unpredictable results of development action. To state this does not in any sense constitute an effort to detract from what these experts have done: a fool who would attempt to do that. It is, simply, drawing the inevitable conclusion from the patent fact that the approach has been partial and one-sided to begin with. No need to add that this conclusion is disconcerting in more than one way. It also is alarming. The several milestones that mark the beginning of the Second Development Decade do not give confidence that in the regard now mentioned the lesson of the First Decade has been learned. Perhaps it is still being learned, though. Between the lines of the two basic U.N. resolutions<sup>5</sup>, a good deal of vagueness and hesitation is apparent. Would it be preposterous to interpret at least part of this as the sign of some holy dissatisfaction with current preconceived ideas, and thus as a possible indicator of a search for a fresh and hopefully less stunted approach?

The question now is, clearly, what are the implications of this view for sociology. Thus phrased, it restates the question that introduced the long parenthesis on economic development: what about "societal" development?

Basically, the position is perfectly clear. The field of development, whether in terms of intellection or in terms of action, is in no way pre-empted. Access to it is free: nobody is obliged to enter

on the terms of economics or on any other terms. There is no shortage of indications, perhaps vague yet unmistakable, that other social sciences besides economics have a calling to get into the act. Amongst these others, sociology is generally assumed to come first or second.

At a first blush it could appear that, if all this constitutes a challenge to sociology, the response has been forthcoming without fail. At the previous World Congress, at Evian, thousands of members of the profession showed at least a passive but oftentimes an active interest in the matter. For a number of years now, there has been a rising tide of sociological publications on development and its countless aspects and problems. The subject is taught under various labels and from a number of sociological angles. Time to congratulate ourselves? Not really. To those launching the Second Development Decade, development is still economic development. Sociology has not achieved a real impact. It has not made a real dent in the problem. Economists, still firmly in control, show concern, occasionally, about what they see as insufficient or ineffective sociological participation. It looks as if, in the matter of development, a statement applies that a leading member of the profession made, years ago, about something else: many departures, few arrivals. And for present purposes it is less important to know that some sociologists have arrived than to realize, and recognize, that sociology has not yet established itself as a major means for dealing with development.

This state of affairs inspires two kinds of questioning. One refers to causes of the underperformance - if that is what it is - of sociology, and consequently to ways to eliminate drawbacks. The other refers to promising access roads for sociology into the field of development.

Summed up in one sentence, the emergent concern with development found economics in a condition enabling it to face the challenge at short notice, but it caught sociology utterly unprepared. This statement holds no praise for economics and no blame for sociology.

Ever since the devastation of two world wars and the manifestly economic calamities in between, a large portion of the creative thinking of both theoretical and practising economists has been geared to conceptualizing the economy, and economics with it, in such a manner that they should prove manageable. When the concern with development emerged it was readily recognized by many economists as a new variation upon the known theme; and this is how it has been dealt with ever since. The sure grasp and the dexterity of manipulation demonstrated in the process have, on the whole, been so convincing that hardly any severe questioning could crop up concerning the validity of underlying assumptions. Development still features as merely a new variation upon the known theme; and the theme still features as universal, notwithstanding the recognition of a so-called widening gap between rich and poor nations.

Not so in the case of sociology. Developments in the discipline have distantly paralleled the bifurcation between macro economics and business economics, except that either way the distinctive features have always been exclusively sociological. Moreover, that which features at the micro and of the spectrum is not one complex but rather two more or less counterpoised elements. One is the urge towards social action in various forms and in various - but always limited - frames of reference. The other is a more investigative, explanatory approach, of increasingly psychological colouring, which is strongly backed by rapidly growing research techniques (based, in their turn, on various philosophical presuppositions of which the importance is usually hidden because they are taken for granted). Amidst these two diverging trends

there has been relatively little opportunity for the growth of theory geared to managing social or societal situations of limited size. Developments at the macro end have been determined to a considerable extent by the circumstance that sociologists have never achieved consensus about their definition of society. At no time have they - consciously or unconsciously - adopted a basic device towards the conceptualization of the reality or realities they proposed to deal with. (In more or less tacitly adopting price for their purpose, economists have not merely achieved a satisfactorily clear conceptualization of the economy, but in addition a ready source of all-round - and what is more, quantifiable - information.) The outcome has been a proliferation of grand theories: awe-inspiring yet in the last resort gratuitous exercises of the intellect that never leave a doubt about the social-philosophy origins of much sociological thinking. Each and everyone is doomed to remain speculative and classificatory: a main source of frustration to the oncoming generation, to whom man's instant and full control over his context is at once a matter of firm belief and of agonizing horror.

Either way, sociology has suffered - if not more than economics has, then certainly more noticeably - from two fundamental drawbacks, inherent in the very nature of its conceptualization and theory-construction. One is ethnocentrism and the other is uncertain verifiability. Together, these two constitute a fundamental problem of relevance: not relevance in the absolutized, personal-emotional sense in which it is too often used nowadays, but in the sense of a demonstrable and if needs be manageable relationship between ideas and reality.

As regards ethnocentrism: the plural composition of mankind is recognized but the peculiarities of each component tend to be envisaged as recurrent and regular rather than as discrete and unique. Thus, they

will to a considerable extent be extrapolated, one way or another, from one's own unit: whether society, economy or polity. It is a tell-tale circumstance, in this connection, that sociologists will perhaps - but rather not - be tempted into considering culture, but they will shy away, without fail, from cultures.

As regards verifiability: in economics, the mutual relevance between reality and theory is supposed to be ensured by application of theory, i.e. policy making, and research, conceived as two movements of the mind in complementary directions. Again for lack of a central denominator of society as his field of study, the sociologist keeps running into difficulties relating to his own involvement in society. These preclude verifiability to such an extent that there is cause for concern<sup>9</sup>.

Referring once more to the bifurcation between the macro and micro approaches (or, as some say, levels), an additional observation is in order. Somehow suspended in the void between macro and micro, a handful of dedicated sociologists have occasionally tried to respond to an increasing awareness of dramatic changes all around. They have launched a specialism that for quite a while has carried the near-stigma of being supererogatory: social change. In so doing they were at a double handicap. Whilst caught in the middle between micro and macro, they were yet quite separate from the more fashionable concern with the middle range. At the same time they had to work concepts and patterns of conceptualization that proved most unwieldy<sup>10</sup>. The upshot was that when challenged to become involved with development even these specialists in social change found, no doubt to their utter dismay, that they came in from the cold. Development was not a normal and natural extension to what they were already doing. It turned out to elude their grasp, conceptually and theoretically, and it

baffled them as a state of affairs requiring action.

This brings to mind yet another basic feature of sociological thinking which, like ethnocentrism and uncertain verifiability, proves acutely problematic under present circumstances of rapid overall change and of development. This is the presupposition of a given societal frame of reference: in the last resort a (more or less Platonic) ideal state of affairs, not really affected by time or circumstance. No doubt, both ethnocentrism and uncertain verifiability are each in its way symptoms of the same syndrome. It is this - always tacit - presupposition that renders a good deal of sociological thinking (indeed the most influential part of it) a fundamentally adaptive proposition<sup>11</sup>. Such variability and variety as sociology is called upon to explain is supposedly no more than a matter of variation upon a given (if not necessarily fully known) theme. Just think of the sociology of the melting pot, of the underlying philosophy of social work. And what could be the sense of all the little pieces of research that the leading periodicals in the field will publish, virtually to the exclusion of everything else, if it could not be assumed that the apparently non-cumulative and thereby inconclusive nature of this stream of publications is not a real problem since its solution is given a priori? However, assumptions like these are breaking down most alarmingly under current circumstances of a dramatic shift in the manifest frame of reference for human sociocultural existence. If there exists such a thing as a sociological establishment, its main distinctive feature is no doubt its lack of readiness to show concern about matters like these, which indeed affect nothing less than the foundations of the discipline. But it is a dangerous alarmist who will categorically see absence of concern where he sees no show of it.

All in all, a gloomy picture? For those who would like to believe that in regard to development, all is moonshine and roses in sociology: gloomy indeed. When the concern with development emerged, sociology was engaged elsewhere; and in attempting to change its course in order to come to grips with development it has suffered from the perfectly normal handicap of its own natural inertia. Those who have believed that, at Evian, the profession was ready for the conference theme, were disappointed. On the other hand those who have seen the Evian theme as a viable means to provide the profession with a needed impulse to move in a necessary direction retain full credibility.

This raises the second question announced above: how shall sociology come to terms with development?

The repeated comparisons, in the preceding, between economics and sociology could appear to imply the suggestion that sociology do as economics has done. No such suggestion is intended. There is not enough real parallelism between the two to warrant the expectation or desire that the one follow the example of the other. It seems more realistic to anticipate that sociology will work its own access. Also in respect of economics there are certain considerations that would support such an anticipation. One is the increasingly visible rift between econometrics and institutional economics. To the outsider this appears as a possible symptom of approaching fundamental difficulties in the economists' dealings with development. In other words, by imitating the economist, the development sociologist might be heading for trouble ultimately, like that which seems to be in store for economics. This fear is strengthened if it is imagined that in following economics, sociology might have to establish its own pars pro toto reasoning according to which development would be the same as

societal development, or something to this effect. For one thing, it is dubious, to say the least, that this construct - the sole theoretical prop supporting the virtual monopoly of economics in matters of development - can outlast another Development Decade. The consideration that extra-economic or non-economic matters are internal affairs to the developing countries and thus out of bounds to international development action, is wearing thin for various reasons. For another matter, it seems impossible for sociology to support this type of pars pro toto reasoning, given the fact that it is devoid of an accepted central denominator of reality that determines, once and for all, what society is as a categorical notion and what, consequently, development can be.

There is consolation, indeed hope, in the realization that for sociology these several drawbacks and dead alleys might conceivably add up to constituting the advantage of the late-comer: - cherished notion of many a development worker.

In considering what sociology might do about development it is proper to take into account, firstly, what is expected, perhaps even demanded, of it. The point in so doing, is that the demand is bound to be specific to the present period. It could hardly be the same as the demands made upon science, or for that matter upon economics, when these faced their respective challenges: original demands that have been subject to some modification but that have not disappeared. A summary comparison will clarify. Engineering and technology, man's supreme tools in mastering his context, began, and to an extent still feature basically, as fall-out from science. On the other hand, in economics, the application of theory has never really rated as a mere



second or secondary consideration. Pure theory and the application of theory rate on a par. Few people are thrilled by pure economic theory in the manner in which others will delight in pure science or pure mathematics. Sociology, at this writing, is in a different position again. Its theory is expected to be patently and demonstrably relevant to reality. Its supposed raison d'être is to be available - that is, subservient - for controlling or steering social processes. The proof for this assessment is easy to provide: because it does not meet these expectations in anything like a convincing manner, the discipline has low rating in the eyes of non-initiates and frustrates quite a few of its adepts.

At this point, however, the preachers of gloom should beware. It is by no means certain that sociology, in facing the challenge, is doomed. There is cause for reckoning with the possibility that, precisely under the pressure of current demands, sociology - if it is not to succumb and vanish - will be compelled (and also, for sheer lack of solidity, prove able) to relinquish a good deal of the shackles of inherited thinking. As noted, its central conception of societal or sociocultural reality is by no means clear or definite. This vitium originis may prove a virtue once the discipline would manage to converge upon a common basic conception: one that would not merely be common but at the same time prove a fitting one in the light of current demand. As soon as that were to happen, the muddled past will be obscured and forgotten; indeed the history of the discipline will be written anew.

To indicate a bright perspective of this sort would be a vain act of pure fantasy, were it not for certain tendencies that may be read as symptoms of an emergent trend. There are signs that could indicate an emergent trend to envisage reality as meaningful interaction

between variably defined entities<sup>12</sup>. Part of this budding awareness implies the need, and perhaps the readiness, to substitute intersubjectivity as a key concept for the inherited subject-object dichotomy (which in its turn was representative of western man's effort at maximal, subjective mastery of man over context). A further implication, specifically referring to intellectual effort and discipline, is the perception and appreciation of any one discipline of the mind as an aspect-wise approach, necessarily limited, to the comprehensiveness of reality. The way concepts and theories are sprouting, it is no simple matter to identify this trend. After all, no new theory has a chance to be considered, let alone accepted, that does not carry the hallmark of seriousness in the form of a backlog of inherited thinking. On the other hand, if exchange theory and systems theory - to mention two random examples - be considered apart from the inherited ballast that serves as their legitimation, it is possible to recognize them as two, more or less complementary, moves in the direction just foreseen.

So much is already clear, that a sociology with these fairly novel characteristics would have no problems like those ensuing from the pars pro toto philosophy, exposed in the preceding. In the same manner, the inherited drawbacks, exposed in their turn, that hamper sociologists in their attempts to come to terms with rapid overall change and especially with development, would no longer apply<sup>13</sup>.

It is time to return to the question that the sociologist must answer with respect to development. Can his discipline be counted upon to make a dent into the matter? If yes, at which point (or points), and how?

As argued, it appears that an affirmative answer to this question is conditional upon the correctness of the assumption ventured

above, namely that the discipline is going through a metamorphosis, partly in response to this very challenge. In case the assumption would prove mistaken, it seems unlikely that a satisfactory answer would be forthcoming before long.

In scanning the horizon for possibilities, it is natural that more than one approach would appear open to sociology in its effort to come to grips with development. At the same time it is likely that some putative approaches will appear which, upon closer scrutiny, will prove mere temptations into fruitless effort. It is now proposed to enumerate three examples of the former and one of the latter kind.

The three possible access roads that appear worth mentioning here refer to (1) the unit of development, (2) the modalities of the urge towards development and (3) control over and involvement in development. The one illustration of dead alleys will refer to model building.

As regards the unit of development, a new wind has begun to blow. Sociology may conceivably catch some of it in its sails.

Hitherto there has existed something like a tacit consensus to the effect that the nation-state - or, as some have pointedly rephrased it, the state-nation - is the one natural unit of development. Economists have readily, and without much evidence of argumentation, treated the economy and the state as virtually synonymous. They have no doubt been induced to do so by the circumstance that available data and available instruments for decision making and policy implementation referred equally to both. Sociologists, in following suit, have found additional reason for doing so in the tide of nationalism that accompanied decolonization, this in its turn appearing as the main event

ushering in development problems. Thus they have been somewhat at a loss when reminded of things like the Marxian distinction between state and society. Indeed, as true adherents to the already mentioned underlying adjustment philosophy, a number of sociologists have taken the nation-state as a datum and started work from there: witness the spate of studies on nation-building, national integration, national elites, even national accounting.

There are increasingly visible signs that the nation-state is subject to diminishing returns, both as an analytic concept and as a functioning proposition. It is beginning to prove unsatisfactory in respect of manifest needs<sup>14</sup>. Upon further consideration, this need cause no surprise. From a viewpoint of culture history, it is just another manifestation of the optimal sociocultural unit: a basically incidental matter<sup>15</sup>.

This is not to suggest that the nation-state is on the way out. But it does indicate that it is hardly advisable to put all our eggs into this one basket. In economics, regional development is beginning to take converts away from national development. In sociology, the champions of community development have always held out - too entrenched no doubt, and with weak theoretical armament - against those dedicated to macro developmental phenomena. This trend toward diversification is to be welcomed. But diversification will not help if the several entities or units identified remain mutually isolated propositions. There is a need to open a broad, general inquiry into the nature and characteristics of the sociocultural unit - more accurately: units - that will feature as development propositions. Thus phrased, this need shows two dimensions. It refers to the plurality and variability of units, in terms of order of magnitude and in terms of main features, as possibly one broad spectrum. It also refers to the mutual

definition that is bound to occur between development as process and unit of development. The latter one is a most profound issue. The fundamental significance of development, as symptomatic for a crucial shift in the parameter of human existence on earth, has been pointed out above. It means little less than that to an extent (which remains to be ascertained) the crucial features of the human collectivity are being remade or at least reshuffled. Hence the impossibility to continue along the well-established lines of what has just been described as adjustment sociology. Hence, again, the patent possibility to turn a new page.

A second topic on which sociology may offer a significant contribution is the modalities of the urge towards development. It has just been suggested that there is bound to occur mutual definition, to an extent, between development on the one hand and human collectivity on the other: not categorically but rather as between an instance of the one and an instance of the other. There are a number of factors or considerations that play into this mutuality of perspective and that in so doing will give it a specific hue. It is customary to sum them up in one catch-all term, namely goals. Goals, in their turn, have customarily been taken as known: if not in all detail then at least generally (in the sense that beyond a mutatis mutandis clause no caution was due in distinguishing goals in one situation from those in another). The (usually implicit) basis for so much assuming was a combination of (1) aprioristic definition of development with (2) ethnocentrism, -- both of which have been exposed in the preceding as not really tenable. The consequence of exposing them is that, at this point, there is need for a statement to the effect that the matter of development goals requires to be approached in a new, much more circumspect manner.

The required effort has two main components. First, the identification of development goals will need renewed care<sup>16</sup>. Most probably it will have to encompass rather more aspects than are customarily taken into consideration. In thus being more catholic it will not merely have to avoid exclusive focussing, in pars pro toto style, on one or a few allegedly salient or crucial needs or aims. On top of this, the ever so many tributaries to the development urge that will thus be analytically identified, will have to be synthesized into a consistent and workable picture. A picture that, surely, is bound to differ from one unit of development to the next.

The second part of the needed effort is to identify the variable distribution of component elements of the development urge: first, as between components of a "population" constituting a given unit of development and, secondly, as regards the manner in which one unit interacts with another (whether in juxtaposition or in the manner that one is a component of the other).

It bears repeating that work on the nature and characteristics of the unit of development and work on the specificities of the development urge constitute a mutuality of perspectives, for purposes of (sociological and other) understanding as well as for purposes of steering actual developments. It is this very consideration that invokes the third matter in respect of which sociology appears to have a calling, namely control over and involvement in development. These are the phenomena that bestow life upon anything that could occur where development unit instances development urge.

In any development situation (like in any other situation but perhaps a trifle more emphatically so), the people concerned will be involved at least in the sense that they undergo, and get some share in, the development. Many of them will be involved, additionally, in

that they will attempt to influence, steer or control development. In either case, development as an overall process, i.e., as the specific condition of the human collectivity concerned, is more comprehensive than either variant of involvement. The former could be described as a partial experience and the latter as the exertion of a partial impact: but in either variant those concerned will be naturally tempted to adopt a pars pro toto interpretation when relating their own limited experience or role to the comprehensive reality to which it refers.

The actual manifestation of these two kinds of involvement appears as a broad spectrum of phenomena, some of which may not even appear related at a first blush. By way of a crude approximation, they may be summed up under three headings. One complex may be invoked by a combination of the terms power and information. Another can be suggested by a triad of concepts, namely communication, participation and collectivization. The third would reside somewhere in the field of tension between innovation and conservation; health, wealth and security would appear as key concepts in the connection.

The most crucial manifestation of the first resides in institutionalized power, often of the state, yet wielded - according to one formula or another - by a specific category of people over all or most others in the unit concerned. Recognized conditions of development will appear to legitimize the stepping up of power and power exertion but will render power exertion more difficult at the same time. Almost equally crucial as a manifestation, but usually considered as being of a more long-run nature, is control over the course that development will take. Mostly this is considered piecemeal: planning and policy making are distinguished from policy implementation. Something that is not usually considered in the connection, but that is of outstanding importance, is that control in its several

aspects connotes the underlying conception, of those concerned, as to their spatiotemporal universe. Differences, in this regard, between one culture context and another or between one sector of a population and another, are too often neglected, and the fines paid in consequence - in lost opportunities and otherwise - must be immense. In its turn, the nature and distribution of information, amongst all those concerned, is a major determinant of development possibilities. In the case of those characterized by the exertion of power or control, it shapes up, inter alia, as feed-back: more critical under development conditions than in most other circumstances. It is also to be remembered, in this connection, that any privileged access to information is a potential source of power.

The matter of information introduces the second complex: any unit of development will feature as a unit on the strength of communication: both internal and across the unit's boundaries. What is more, the nature and the intensity of communication will be the two main determinants of the characteristics of the unit concerned. This consideration is the more important since development is, amongst other things, a matter of increased (and - complicating factor - increasingly mediated) communication. A major expression of communication, and one that is quite amenable to institutionalization, is participation, i.e., the effective partaking by any member of a given sociocultural entity in matters involving a plurality of members, a fortiori all of them: the realm of public affairs. A crucial consideration, in this connection, is where lies the natural limit (by the standards of those concerned) to such participation, for any given purpose: whether within the boundaries of the unit concerned, coterminous with it, or perhaps beyond its boundaries. Another consideration refers, obviously, to the nature and definition of the



concern or complex of concerns to which the participation relates. One of the ways in which communication and ensuing participation become expressed in societal terms is collectivization. The unit that has, in the preceding, been referred to most of the time as were it a given, is in fact the resultant, one way or another, of collectivization. As stated above, development and unit of development will to an extent define one another mutually. What remains to be added at this point is that a tendency to collectivize at the expense of the self-assertion of components (whether individuals or groups) is likely to result from certain notable corollaries of development. Some of these are internal to given development units, for example nationalism and increased control by authorities. Others refer to the world-wide situation of which development is one symptom, such as the frictions resulting from the dogma of sovereignty for any and every state.

It is part of the current conception of sociocultural reality to distinguish analytically between two simultaneous, countervailing tendencies, one towards innovation and one towards conservation. The labels differ a great deal but the basic conception is fairly common. There are relatively many who, on the basis of this definitional standpoint, will envisage development as the prevalence, if not the exclusive vigour, of the former tendency. To them, whatever forces of conservation remain will rate as a backlog or as stumbling blocks. It is somehow puzzling that such a standpoint, based on a blatant logical error, should find adherents at all. It should be only too obvious that the perception of reality just quoted will admit of one approach to development only, namely as a state of affairs where, one way or another, the innovative aspect of things gets more of the lime-light than the conservative aspect. In the necessary mix between the

two, one gains out for the moment. That being so, the question is which are the manifestation points of such a state of affairs. Actual situations all over the world - not merely in the so-called developing countries - show a preoccupation with matters like wealth, health, knowledge (but this was discussed above, under the label of information) and, more generally, security. A customary label for this sort of thing is values; but given all the wear and tear it has had, the term seems too tired and worn to render much useful service any more. Nor does it, in its usual meaning, cover exactly the same ground as the concepts just enumerated. What matters in regard to each of them is that their uneven distribution amongst members of the same socio-cultural entity is somehow up for revision and that in the process their basic meanings are being revised. On both counts, they tend to feature at once as incentives for development and as yardsticks by which to assess achieved development.

Thus concludes a tantalizing tour d'horizon of all the things that sociology seems called upon to do in regard to development. It should be repeated, at this point, that work is actually in progress in respect of most of the issues just listed. And it hardly needs repeating that much more work will be required. The main reason for attempting the tour d'horizon is that it might help to lessen the much-bewailed discrepancy between departures and arrivals. It could help to clarify the manner in which all the scattered efforts should, and might indeed, become cumulative and, hopefully, conclusive.

Lest this paper end on a undue note of hallelujah - it is much too early for that -, one word about what sociology must avoid if it ever is to get anywhere in respect of development. This is the gran-

diose scheme, the omnipurpose solution. The most dangerous example of this kind of thing is the development model, preferably quantified. Although there probably is no better way to lose friends and to make enemies, the word must be out: the development model is a mirage now and it will remain so for some time to come. A social science that has not yet found its Copernicus has no cause to clamour for its Einstein.

The development model, whether quantitative or qualitative - whatever that might mean -, for which the demand is explicitly underscored by those inaugurating the Second Development Decade, presupposes that development is basically sui generis. Upon closer inspection this proves a double presupposition, neither element of which, unfortunately enough, is justifiable. It assumes that development is basically the same wherever a developing country, area or situation is identified. It also assumes that development is specifically and recognizably different from any other state of affairs, indeed that it is an exceptional condition with readably recognizable limits both in space and in time. The former assumption cannot be held up for the simple reason that it involves circular definition. The latter can be validated only at the price of upholding a perception and conception of (sociocultural) reality that is increasingly under attack on account of its being deemed obsolete<sup>17</sup>. As if all this were not enough, both the implied assumption that a model will enable man to control development once and for all, and again the implied assumption that quantification is crucial to the achievement of efficacy, are liable to come under exactly the same kind of attack. The outcry for the development model is the final gasp of an approach to development that scholarship is obliged to

replace, during the Second Development Decade, by an approach that had better be considerably less frustrating to all concerned.

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N O T E S

1 From the viewpoint employed here it is natural to expect a newly emerging concern, along with a concept to denote it, of virtually if not effectively world-wide application. The expectation is not borne out. The concern is no doubt traceable, but its global nature escapes many. This is due to the absence of a global concept to render it visible. Some will speak of development as a problem that, one way or another, occurs everywhere. But the term is mostly used with reference to specific parts of the world only. It refers to the underdeveloped or developing areas, not to the developed ones. Nor does it have a counterpart that would naturally convey the same basic meaning with reference to the latter. It could well be that the demand for such a complementing concept is somewhat obliterated by the circumstance that at least part of the matter involved is hidden from sight. The concept of development aid, in seeming to establish the linkage between the developed and the underdeveloped sections of mankind, obfuscates an equally important consideration, namely that it refers to one aspect or symptom of the same basic concern just mentioned, as experienced in the so-called developed areas.

2 Upon closer inspection, development is one of two counterpoised symptoms. The other, which is complementary to it whilst being in many ways its logical opposite (and, notable fact, more visible in the developed than in the developing sections of mankind), is the urge to drop out of society: whether individually by self-destructive means such as moral-sexual depravation or drug addiction or collectively by politico-economic subversion and the like. Note that some of the major movements in the advanced countries, such as social protest and the ecological scare, represent a virtually inextricable combination of the "negative" urge signalled in this footnote and the "positive" urge (called development in the developing areas and virtually nameless in the developed ones) signalled in the text above.

- 3 Arnold Toynbee, The World and the West, London (Oxford U.P.) 1953, p. 68 ff.
- 4 Lester B. Pearson c.s., Partners in Development, Report of the Commission on International Development, New York (Praeger) 1969.
- 5 United Nations, Economic and Social Council, 47th Session, Resolution 1447(XLVII) of 7 August 1969. United Nations, General Assembly, 24th Session, Resolution 2571 (XXIV), of 29 December 1969.
- 6 A fascinating matter, especially if considered in terms of cultural history. Western civilization has at one time become more or less unique - i.e. different from what J. Romein has called the Common Human Pattern -, inter alia by a segmenting perception of reality. For purposes of conceptualization and of subsequent action, it rendered the experienced totality and comprehensiveness of reality manageable by purposely and systematically taking it piecemeal. This segmentation, coupled to the urge towards conflict resolution, is part of the creative impulse underlying western development; it also has engendered some of the more vital problems of western civilization. Be this as it may, Marxian, Marxist and neo-Marxist economic philosophies constitute a gradually more effective attempt to revert to a more totalistic or holistic perception of reality, starting out what what is indubitably a partial, segmentary conceptualization. In these and similar philosophies, the pars pro toto model serves as a device not so much for conceptualization as for intended human action in respect of reality.
- 7 Nor is desire - or, for that matter, need - the only relevant consideration. Manifest concern is yet another. Using this as a criterion, it is hard to uphold the primacy of economic considerations for all developing areas of the world. Indeed there are many areas where political matters (questions about the nature and institutionalization of the polity in the first place) or cultural self-renewal or self-realization catch the limelight (if perhaps not the headlines of western news media).

8 Note that this statement goes far beyond the customary objections against the primacy of economics in development theory and policy. These - rightly - turn against any non-economic approaches being relegated to secondary status or subservient role. It is a necessary sobering exercise, at this point, to state that the act of exorcizing "economocracy" is a negation and that it is not easily followed up with something more positive or constructive. For example, to say, as against the economists, that development is really a matter of changing values and attitudes is useless and meaningless. It is conceptual play with no pay-off: it merely substitutes one pars pro toto for another and chances are that it is not even a better one.

9 It should be unfortunate and highly undesirable if this concern, which no doubt is one of the major factors in the emergent antagonism between the so-called sociological establishment and the self-proclaimed sociological radicals, were to be obfuscated in the process in which this rift is becoming articulated. Unfortunately, at this writing the tendency for either side seems to be to become entrenched in positions where the crucial problems of relevance and verifiability need not be raised. When radicals will decry the establishment as "do-nothing" the natural rebuttal is "know-nothing", and basta.

10 Nonetheless there are few indications, if any, that this prompted a critical review of basic presuppositions. Comp. my Social Scientists in Pursuit of Social Change, The Hague (Mouton) 1966.

11 Comp. E.W. Hofstee, "De toekomst van de Nederlandse samenleving", in Wegwijzers naar een goed bewoonbaar Nederland, Beschouwingen (...) Vink, Alphen a.d. Rijn (Samson) 1967, p. 1 - 42, esp. p. 9.

12 The main definitional feature of sociocultural entities would have to be that most forgotten yet most crucial sociological concept: identity. The tacit presupposition in any definitions and discussions of groups, society and many more, it is normally left in the dark. Were it to be highlighted - as seems inevitable - in the course of the developments here foreseen, it would in all probability appear

as a complex affair, - more exactly, as a proposition involving logical complementarity. Identity is, at once, self-assertion vis-à-vis (yet regardless of) context, and interaction with context. Consequently, varieties of identity will reflect modalities of this two-pronged life process.

13 Some will feel induced to wonder whether in pointing out the prospect of such major changes the writer may either be preaching revolution unawares (fairly naive, for a sociologist) or alternatively trying to misrepresent an actual revolution by depicting it as a mere gradual overhaul (whatever that could be). The answer is that the question is unimportant, indeed irrelevant, being a mere product itself of undue polarization in sociological opinion.

14 Both internal to the states concerned (the state, especially the welfare state and the development state, functioning as the monopolist of welfare/development, and consequently as the virtual "owner" of its citizens - or rather, subjects - and even more conspicuously of alien residents) and external as between states (the world pattern of sovereign states, exemplified and institutionalized in the United Nations, as virtually impotent, at crucial points, in regard of needed interaction between components of mankind). Nationalism, the alleged prime base of the nation-state, is increasingly an instrument in the hands of wielders of state power.

15 Comp. my The Nation and the Ideal City, The Hague (Mouton) 1966.

16 Comp. my "On the Identification of Development Goals", Development and Change, I/1, The Hague 1969; Development, A Challenge to Whom?, The Hague (Mouton) 1969.

17 Comp. my Society as Process, The Hague (Mouton) 1962; Intelligible Fields in the Social Sciences, The Hague (Mouton) 1967.