

DPT: Diagnosis-Prognosis-Therapy

Overcoming and building: like for health that spells action, not only analysis. And action should be based on solid knowledge, a grip on what the future might hold, and proposals for overcoming and building.

Gnosis is "knowledge"--dia stands for "by means of"--pro is "beforehand", and therapeia is cure, healing. Healing built on analysis and forecasting. Peace studies is based on all three. Reduced to analysis it collapses to IR, sociology, psychology, biology, weberian "value-free" science--to those unconscious of their own values. The problem is how to do D, P and T.

Of the two best known epistemologies--the aristotelian-cartesian based on atomism--deduction and the daoist based on holism-dialectics--the choice here tends toward the latter. There is nothing esoteric, mystical in that; the choice is guided by what holism and dialectics have to offer.

"Holistic" stands for big units and big variable clusters. To understand a wound in a finger look at the whole hand, for the hand the arm, for the arm the body, for the body include mind and spirit, for humans include social context. For the wound how deep, broad, bleeding and septic, how much tissue damage. Where is the limit? When no more insight flows from expanding further.

"Dialectic" stands for contradictions, between something and something standing in its way, force-counterforce, built into the holon; dissolving if and only if the holon changes character. The contradiction in the former Soviet Union between having liquidity and nothing to buy was built into the system. The system had to change basically--through sabotage, a shadow economy with smuggling, black market--to overcome the contradiction. Or, if not, the total collapse of the system, the Soviet plan economy.

Looking at the world through holism-dialectics lenses we see much more than by focusing on two variables, X and Y, independentdependent, and small units, like individuals, only. Which holism and dialectics is a matter of intuition, trial and error.

X=class and Y=attitude-behavior is a useful perspective. But we see more by adding groups of individuals and using a cluster of variables, like age and gender, income and education high and low, job and economic sector high and low, center vs periphery in a country, cities vs countryside. Then we would capture more of the social situation and the individual contradictions, imbalances, between being high on some and low on others; using the highs to climb up from the lows of others, peacefully or aggressively.

Imagine being close to the top except for one dimension: age, gender, race. What would we expect? Groups of individuals with the same profile would come together for youth, feminist and black revolts--sometimes for two, or all three combined. They will try to change societies that put down young, women, non-white. Young students have a resource, education, and even more so if it makes society more transparent (sociology, philosophy). Obviously we get student revolts from those departments. Gender and race do not change, ages does, so we expect youth radicalism to taper off.

Do the same for old civilizations that have been dominated by newcomers, like Egypt and China by the UK, and later by that UK offspring, the USA. We would expect efforts to equilibrate the present to the past. China worked on that ever since the 1910-11 and 1949 revolutions, Egypt in the present "youth revolt" with so many references to Egypt's past, Russia unsuccessfully with one big jump, France fighting not to slide down that slippery plane. No success is guaranteed. But the effort is an obvious prognosis.

Thus future conflicts can be predicted, along age, gender and race lines, often coming as a surprise for X,Y analysts.¹ And internationally along atimia--loss of status--lines, contradiction between past and present status, and between present high and low status. What looks like "stability", "order" to the unguided has major changes in its womb; "chaos", "disorder", "instability".

Simplistic analysis will focus on one or two characteristics of the disorderly, the unruly, like being educated, unemployed or both, or resource-rich/economy-poor or both for countries.

But that only tells us where action is likely to originate, not why. The why is in the verticality, inequity, of social orders and world orders. "Order", a better perspectives on flagrant verticality would be "disorder". Equality-equity-horizontality would be, and the "unruly" would be the champions of order. Why?

Because much protracted conflict is rooted in verticality and topdogs imposing their "order". The more untractable a conflict, the more remote a new reality with the incompatibility solved; the more unsolved the conflict, the more likely the violence. That may also apply to horizontal systems, but then the violence is only direct; in vertical orders it is also structural in the hierarchy sense. The more vertical, the more violence potential.

But, to threaten established verticality is trouble-making.

Healing, when successful, or pretending to be so, produces status. Physicians gradually moved up, but not if their focus was the poor, as higher life expectancy could produce "disorder". In inter-state and inter-nation systems "cure" has been the monopoly of statesmen, diplomats, top military. Empower women for conflict resolution through UNSC 1325, and women rise in social status; to preserve status quo women will be tamed as JDs, PhDs or diplomats. How to predict the decline and fall of empires, that epitome of verticality? By understanding them so holistically that basic contradictions can be identified. If an empire is a transborder coordination of economic, political, cultural and military power, then that list already indicates four types of contradictions: between exploiters and exploited, dictators and the obedient, the conditioners-cloners and the conditioned-cloned, the perpetrators of violence and their victims. An empire is a tetrapus, sucking wealth, obedience, clones; and, if those three prove insufficient, blood. Being transborder there has to be something intra-border to put the tentacles where they suck best: the local elites. They have to be well remunerated, much wealth in return for obedience, for being conditioned to do that job so that force, covert or overt, will not be directed against them. Imperialism comes with a price; if inadequate Center-Periphery contradictions may arise.

How to predict the end of the Soviet Empire and the Cold War, and the fall of the Berlin

Wall? Again holistically, focusing on power imbalances. The Soviet empire actually directed much wealth to the Periphery, away from Russia itself that monopolized force; creating major disequilibria with no Periphery military-political but much economic-cultural autonomy. Communist ideology came across as official discourse, but not as credible unifier. Hence the urge for independence in satellites from Cuba to Mongolia, and for autonomy in republics from Estonia to Armenia to Tadjikistan. The whole countryside was smarting under city rule, and the proletariat under the rule of state-party bureaucracy. Add how the contradiction between the communist myth and Soviet reality made the system absurd, and absurd systems crack at the weakest point. The point was the Berlin wall. And with it the Cold War.

How to predict the decline and fall of the US empire? The same way, looking at contradictions increasing on and among the four powers and between US and Periphery elites who do what Atlantic Seaboard elites once did. For the rest see The Fall of the US Empire - And What Next?-also for Israel's regional empire. The contradiction between reality and the American dream is basic.

How to predict 9/11? By seeing state terrorism and terrorism dialectically as breeding and nursing each other. What "Blowback" sees as "unintended consequences" was highly foreseeable, given the last two centuries of the West unleashing enormities of violence on the muslim world. How naive to believe it would be absorbed and forgotten; how naive not to see the possibility of nonviolent revolts against Soviet and US repression in their client regimes, DDR+ in Eastern Europe, Egypt+ in the Middle East!

How to predict economic collapses, like 1987, 2008? By looking at the whole economy; the real economy of products for end consumption and the finance economy of products for buying and selling (with a commission!), and their dialectic. If the finance economy has a DJI growth of, say, 83%, in the two years 2009-10, and the real economy a GNP growth of, say, 5-6%, the ratio 83:5 spells an asynchrony with a crash as obvious prognosis. Add to that the M2 case of growth of dollars (and pounds) by printing, and there is a \$ bubble to burst.

Contradictions have limits. The wet snow slides off. A branch breaks. Or the tree collapses.

How to predict the ecological collapse? As a contradiction between a finite material world, and growth measured by processing and trading material resources (GNP). Not by improving health and education (HDI), with very little pressure on the environment. The problem is not growth, but the kind of growth; material or not.

How to predict the 1973 "oil crisis"? As a contradiction in the age-old colonial formula between suppliers of cheap resources (and labor) and Center demand to live off the value-added. That system had cracked politically in 1960 with massive decolonization (Art. 73 in the UN charter). And in 1973 it cracked economically at its weakest point, oil; the demand being (almost) inelastic. Organized like OPEC, this could be repeated for other commodities. Importers-consumers will try their best to bust such unions.

How to predict the 1978 Iran revolution? As a contradiction between an overwhelming--and mainly impoverished--shia majority and a regime based on Westernization and zoroasterism.

How to predict the rise and decline of the Japanese economy? That brings us to the Orient, more conscious of contradictions, and brilliant Japanese social both-and engineering overcame such cherished Western contradictions as State vs Capital, Capital vs Labor and Labor-intensive vs Capital-intensive production. That worked well for Japan Inc., but they forgot were contradictions in Japanese society at large, like men vs women, top universities vs all others, state-capital vs nongovernment-nonprofit, and indeed, the contradiction with the rest of the world, untrained-unschooled as the Japanese were in thinking globally. Their push, force produced counterforces: US limitations on imports, Third world protests, and imitations in China and the four mini-Japan-Chinas. The same prognosis could today be used for a too clever China.

How to predict the oscillations in Chinese policies? By seeing their three culture holistically, as daoism with yin-yang dialectic between a confucianism legitimizing growth and buddhism legitimizing distribution. The changes seem to take place about every 9 years, with a four years confusion break 1976-1980.

How to predict the Tiananmen uprising spring 1989? As an outcome of the contradiction between the age-old Chinese class structure, shi'h-nung-kung-shang, intellectuals-rulers, farmers, artisans, merchants, and the Deng Xiaoping 1980 policy favoring farmers by marketing their products and merchants by putting the capital to use--leaving behind budding intellectuals and workers. They were both at Tiananmen; the workers were worst repressed. But the students won: the Party is now dominated by intellectuals.

If holism and dialectics are indispensable for diagnosis and prognosis, so also for the mediation of conflict=contradictory goals, and conciliation of perpetrator vs victim after trauma. A new reality, accommodating legitimate goal and means, is a key to acceptability. But for sustainability watch the contradictions with deep culture and structure lest they sabotage the solution. An equitable solution with parties so "exceptional" that they feel entitled to much more than equity is hardly sustainable.

To ride on the medical analogy: if therapy, healing, has to address body, mind and the spirit, then mediation-conciliation have to address not only the conflict-trauma, but also how reality is conceived of by the parties in their collective subconscious, the deep structure and culture. This is why there is a separate book dedicated to those two subjects.

For health as for peace there are two types of prognoses: without therapy and with therapy; what will or may happen with no intervention, what will or may happen with intervention. Those engaged in therapy will be tempted to make the two prognoses very different to enhance the significance of their therapy, and to increase the likelihood of the client accepting the therapy proposals. Let that be a warning to therapist and client alike.

1 All the predictions reported in this section of the chapter were published well ahead of the events confirming them.