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Traditional theories of development versus the theory of symbolic sites of belonging

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Abstract

The study aims to investigate traditional theories of development versus the theory of symbolic sites of belonging via comparative qualitative research methods. As a result, globalization is the abolition of people's identities in favor of one nation or rather one system, which has a lot of mechanisms of robbery and predominance. In conclusion, the concepts of modern colonialism and dependency of the West are no longer convincing to interpret the reasons for the failure of developmental efforts, but it necessary to expand problems to include intellectual, cultural and social components.

Keywords: Culture, Development, Modernity, Symbolic site.

Teorías tradicionales del desarrollo versus la teoría de los sitios simbólicos de pertenencia

Resumen

El estudio tiene como objetivo investigar las teorías tradicionales del desarrollo versus la teoría de sitios simbólicos de pertenencia a través de métodos de investigación cualitativa comparativa. Como resultado, la globalización es la abolición de las identidades de las personas a favor de una nación o más bien un sistema, que tiene muchos mecanismos de robo y predominio. En

conclusión, los conceptos del colonialismo moderno y la dependencia de Occidente ya no son convincentes para interpretar las razones del fracaso de los esfuerzos de desarrollo, pero es necesario ampliar los problemas para incluir componentes intelectuales, culturales y sociales.

Palabras clave: Cultura, Desarrollo, Modernidad, Sitio simbólico.

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of development was used to formulate several theories which, altogether, formed the western development discourse in the form of different theories. Some of these theories focused on the case of time in explaining the process of underdevelopment in the third world countries or the countries of the South. The other theories have attributed to colonialism as a reason for the backwardness of these countries, which suffer from multiple forms of underdevelopment. One of the most important of these interpretations was what Dependency theory presented, where it considers the economy of certain countries is linked to the growth and expansion of the economy of other countries by domination and hegemony, and other viewpoints that interpreted the complexities in the development process. Other theories provided several other interpretations, such as those that focus on increasing productivity in developing countries, whether through using new methods in economic production and increasing available resources or even increasing productive capacity effectively and renewably as one of the most important methods to achieve development.

Generally, some underdeveloped countries attempted to present theoretical models, but they have failed to do so. For example, the

modernization theory attempted to interpret the underdevelopment process in view of the historical context of Western societies, which have achieved the transition from the agricultural production stage to industrialization, then to modern capitalism by going through consequential stages as stipulated by this theory. No doubt that this model did not suit the non-Western societies, such as Asian societies which have progressed without going through the same stages that the modernization theory mentioned. Japan is the best example (AL-TAI, 1996).

2. METHODOLOGY

For a long period, development is considered as an asymptotic process between developing and developed industrial countries, i.e. development means achieving high national income in line with the market economy, in a society which is characterized by division of labor and a society which does not produce only what it needs, but it produces what other countries consume (BROCKER, 1995).

The interest in economic aspects goes back to several reasons, most notably; the economic differences between the underdeveloped and developed countries are most noticeable in the economic aspect, especially the size and structure of the national economy. Besides, there is a widespread perception among who is interested in development issues, that is the attention must be given to the change in the economic aspect first and foremost. The colonial countries are

interested in encouraging the growth of certain sectors which were increasingly in-demand. Besides, enhancing the purchasing power in these underdeveloped countries aims basically to enhance the marketing of products of developed countries (PANHUYS, 2004).

This belief lasted, indisputably, until the mid-1960s in underdeveloped and developed countries and international institutions, then some transformations started with questioning the feasibility of the relation of development with the consuming society. Other interpretive non-materialistic approaches tended to emphasize the psychological, social and cultural rather than economic factors. They attempted to focus on issues that are more relevant to the circumstances and resources of the Third World. These new interpretative approaches focused on attributing the development to quality of the programs and policies that developing countries develop and how these countries have employed the appropriate technological tools, and the administrative and pedagogical systems, and how did these countries use its resources in consideration of the environmental, social, political and economic needs, in a way that avoid dependency of third world countries on developed countries (RORTY, 1998).

Nevertheless, this approach seems to form a theory. If there are many and huge difficulties faced by any development policy in any developing country, it can be said that there is a unanimous agreement on that each country has its circumstances, thus, it is difficult to formulate a fully comprehensive theory to be applied to all countries. There is even a trend says that each country must follow the

procedures that suite it. However, there are many methods used by international economic influential power that impede countries' freedom to choose whatever they want. Therefore, a theory that is consistent with the culture of the community and place, and categorically rejects the inevitability which is promoted by Capitalism, is presented in this research.

Through this article, the researchers try to present the theory of the symbolic sites of belongings, which holds that the local culture is the standpoint for the development of any society (place or site), is the vessel, where all the material and moral conditions gather, and at the same time, they can bring the society out of the place from underdevelopment into development. Therefore, the most important development theories explaining this phenomenon will be briefly presented, then the theory of symbolic sites will be presented.

The objectives of this research:

- To discuss development discourse post World War II
- To discuss and critically analyze the theory of symbolic sites by Hasan Zawal

The researchers analyze these theories. Then they will present the theory of symbolic sites and belonging that firmly rejects the western or imported theories, and believe that each community has a site or place that would be an engine for development, and can easily

detect the factors of underdevelopment and overcome them (KHREISAN, 2001).

3. RESULT

This section presents briefly some development theories from western scholars which were mostly originated in Europe. This theory holds that any society must go beyond the traditional stage to achieve progress. This theory rejected the conflict drivers that the Marxism stipulated. It emphasized that the underdevelopment of developing countries was not due to colonialism, as some suggest, but to traditional institutions that are characterized by fatalism and metaphysics, which develop irrational trends among individuals, in terms values that do not appreciate the work, but direct individuals towards consumption and disrespect for manual labor (JAMSON, 1994).

This theory also emphasizes that societies must go through several stages to achieve progress and development, i.e. a transition phase, whereas the modern institution gradually replaces the traditional institution. This theory also concentrates on industrialization and that the market is the development mechanism, not governmental planning, thus, economic growth is the main tool for achieving development in Arab countries, which requires directing the efforts to achieve continuous growth in the gross national product (GNP). This theory also points to the importance of broad popular participation. Where

modernization renews ideas and replaces step by step the traditional, authoritarian and non-creative pattern that prevails in a traditional society leading to continuing its underdevelopment (LATOUCHE, 1990).

What is criticized in this theory that it believes Third World countries and societies headed toward a similar image of modern Western capitalist societies and neglected the structural cultural specifications of these Arab societies (KHAMASH, 2004). No doubt many scholars support this theoretical approach, they even tried to adopt and apply it, disregarding the contextual differences. The Dependency Theory's followers emphasize that underdevelopment and progress are two sides of the same coin which was initiated along with the emergence of capitalism. The theory argued that underdevelopment emerged at the same historical moment that the progress has appeared at the centers of the capitalist world. Additionally, the followers of this theory emphasize the depletion of the surplus of the underdeveloped countries and export it to the capitalist centers. This is exactly what the world's history and colonial plundering confirmed in which the major states exerted on small (FUKUYAMA, 1992).

Moreover, this theory describes under development in the developing countries through their dependency on the capitalist west, where the latter consumes the surplus of the developing countries and prevent them from accumulating extra production (REHIM, 2008). The supporters of this theory also agree that the imbalance between central capitals and peripheral parties which is based on assuming that

the formation and expansion of the capitalist system in the world shaped the needed conditions for underdevelopment in other parts of the poor world. Besides, the supporters of this theory also emphasize the alliance of interests between the dominant capitalist powers from the outside, and the internal forces controlling the Third World. Rather, the center's strategy is to create subordinate or servant ruling groups whose legitimacy depends on serving the economy, where these groups become supportive of dependency, facilitate infiltration capitalists inside these countries and accelerate fully integrated into the global capital market.

The most prominent contribution to the theory of dependency was that of Frank André G. Frank, who formulate and promote the famous phrase (development of underdevelopment), to describe what he considered distorted and subordinate economies in peripheral states, or according to his term the dependent States to the more advanced centers. In his book *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, he believed that the Third World is sentenced to be stagnated because of the advanced capitalist countries which dominated its achieved surpluses through institutions such as multinational corporations. Besides, Frank insisted that developing countries will not achieve growth unless they break relations with capitalism and adhere to their socialistic development strategies. (AMIN, 2000).

Lots of people have criticized the theories of dependency, the most important criticism that has a strong emphasis on the external factors and their impact in the development process showing that these

factors are the reason behind the weakness or break of development. Therefore, the underdevelopment is due to the impact of the spread of liberal capitalist composition. Despite the criticism from this theory to its ancestor, Theory of modernity, however, it has not succeeded in proposing effective mechanisms to reduce or eliminate dependency. The disadvantage may be that this theory assumes solutions in the wrong place, and China is perhaps the best proof of this!

Western thoughts of development, including globalization, are understood as an attempt to eliminate all identities and attempt to integrate them into one, which is as required by US-led global companies. Besides, these companies dominate the largest capital in the world including the sources of technology, trying to facilitate the movement of the economy and capital. They are trying to achieve this goal by persuading the whole world with new manifestations such as technology that has turned the world into a small village and facilitated the world's events to be got instantly. Moreover, it provides people with recent means of knowledge and global variables. This development is considered as one of the most important achievements of globalization in this era. However, the shortcoming of this achievement is the attempt to abolish others and proclaim the unipolar hegemony, that is, the control of thought, culture, and aspects of American life to bring the world to the neo-capitalist liberal system that obliges people to join it as it is the source of their luxury. Otherwise, they will vanish their civilization because truth has been lost in our life. Therefore, they are bewildered to be with or against the global system. If they are with globalization, their identity will be

disappeared, and if against, they will face the pressure of the global economic system.

Consequently, as Charles R. Darwin (1809-1882) stated the survival of the fittest, because globalization forces people to be afraid of searching reality by confusing what philosophy wants from people to do and with what US imperialism enquire by globalization.

Authoritarianism was known since philosophy was initiated by Plato who wanted to establish his ideal republic at the expense of the poor. Then came Saint Augustin (354-430) who tried to establish justice or (the city of God) based on the idea of usurping the throne of God by a human being. Georg W. Hegel (1770-1831) was not differed from his predecessors when he proclaimed the end of history with the realization of the absolute spirit inside the German individuals, the Great German State, and then the establishment of European centralism. Thus, the rest of the world must inevitably follow this centralism.

As a result, economists have exploited this philosophy's vision to justify their needs and desires, gain the highest profit and then loot the world's bounties to change it into a consumption world depending on a few products. So, it can be concluded that globalization is the abolition of people's identities in favor of one nation or rather one system, which has a lot of mechanisms of robbery and predominance. If the concept of identity means that, the thing is itself, this concept has no more value in a time of globalization. This is because the thing is

not the same, but it is something else. Before globalization, identity was distinguished by its uniqueness and distinctiveness but with its existence, symmetry and similarity between cultures have become the identity of globalization. Thus, this is considered against logical laws and overcoming the mind to impose a unipolar system.

Within this theory, the symbolic site is a tool to combine between Economical material and cultural morals. A site is where values and symbols of a particular group of individuals can be linked in terms of economic developmental practices and activities. Zawal asserts that it is illusory to believe that economics and technology can be operated without inducements or symbolic mechanisms, and the motivation of local representatives. The cultural factor cannot be determined by a structural level defined only by laws, but by a place or location that gives it meaning. Therefore, we try to show the concept of location as part of the cognitive theory that is used to define the social environment. Away from our belief that it is something subjective, society is a dynamic and effective place at both the individual and collective levels.

This theory is based on the assumption that subsequent corporate bankruptcy in South societies is the state's creation, i.e. the responsibility for this failure is the development policy of the countries of the South. In this context, the theories that explain the crises of the countries of the South focused on the responsibility of the state for these shortcomings. This view is further complicated by the increase

of external crises after Western societies, which increased in the mid-1980s.

According to Fouad Noura's opinion, the concept of symbolic sheds lights on the economic activity that is inseparable from the symbolic dimension. All values and beliefs are essential indispensable factors. The other important factor which activates development is to rely on the principle of small local spaces and work on developing them.

It is important to recognize that the site is a place to produce all the common meanings. In addition to the norms that regulate the behavior of individuals. In every social organization site is the determinant of the rules of conduct: Myths, rituals, etc. it works to form relationships and combat chaos, and also plays an active role in psychological stability, because it can be seen as a psychological organization (KHERDJEMIL, 1998).

4. CONCLUSION

Symbolic sites are considered as points of conflict identification that can eliminate external chaos in any environment. In this regard, Zawal argues that the failure of development in certain communities as a result of closed and reserved sites. It has not achieved what has been expected and deteriorated leading to increased dependence, economic and social disintegration of their underdeveloped societies.

The author of this theory recommends changing the procedures of establishing a culture of development, which in his view forms the basis of economic and non-economic development, consequently, his opinion of the initiative symbolic site theory proposes an alternative development to urge local representatives without external interference. This theory was a reaction to the previous theories, especially those Western theories with the imperialist and imperative capitalist dimension. At the same time, it recognizes the existence of development within each community or place that can activate all its norms, laws, standards, social, cultural, political, spiritual and ritual systems, as well as its material potential to serve the development and a fertile area for its activation.

According to this theory, the concepts of modern colonialism and dependency of the West are no longer convincing to interpret the reasons for the failure of developmental efforts, but it necessary to expand problems to include intellectual, cultural and social components. Every success and achievement in development work is usually achieved as a result of an integrated process, starting with a realistic extrapolation of the place or the site: its needs, capabilities, and aspirations. Then, a practical concept that defines the features of the work, its tactics and methods, and how to deal with its data, follow-up, and evaluation.

This is achieved based on the official and popular support of the site taking its culture into account. Let us try to apply this theory on the Arab-Islamic land according to the site or place, no doubt we can

certainly make our Islamic heritage the subject of this place, and at all levels: cultural, economic, social and other different life conditions. Our culture, heritage, and civilization are rich in their place or site. This theory can be a guide for us to work in this place or site and the material and spiritual elements of our moral cultural-religious reference. It can be placed in a template that applicable at the physical and spiritual levels.

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