

From a data analysis point of view, the two inner circles are the capacities of the community, and the outermost is the vulnerability of the community. The HWVA (holistic worldview analysis) is thus a sort of a diagrammatic representation of the survival strategy of the community. That is the framework I am using. There is thus the empirical stuff and then they engage with the supernatural. It is an emergence. At an early stage, the community did what it could. When it could not, it brought in people or engages with people who can help them. And then, if the two of them together, the empirical components, were not able to do what was required for survival in that community, they engaged the supernatural. In some countries you would see temples dedicated to those areas of gaps, with the size giving an indication of how vulnerable the community is.

That is how the connection to the supernatural emerges. Now, being human beings, they still want to be able to influence that area. And some are sort of caretakers of that engagement; they could be the local priest, the shaman, and so on. They thus engage with this supernatural, which becomes a holistic part of its survival strategy. That is the frame, and it is in that context that I want to explain the three questions.

I will start with what is known about the capabilities approach, which appears to be mostly from an economic perspective, especially considering some of the prominent economists involved. It talks about being a theoretical framework that looks first at freedom to achieve well-being. For the capabilities approach, that freedom is of primary moral importance. The second thing is that well-being should be understood in terms of people's capacity, their capabilities and their actual functioning. Looking from that point of view, one might assume that once the constraints are removed or provisions are made for these areas of vulnerability, people would be able to develop a moralistic framework to address those gaps. This is too long an issue to discuss in this short time, but suffice it to say that the supernatural or the spiritual dimension is a prominent part the community's survival strategy.

When you go into the developing world, you see it. They are already holistically integrated between the empirical and the supernatural. Christians talk about being integrated between the empirical and the spiritual. There is a little difference here. The spiritual is supernatural, but the supernatural is not necessarily spiritual. When it comes to the worldview of communities, when there is a gap, they will use anything to address it. And they will listen to anyone who will address that gap and accord to them the status of being spiritual or connected with the supernatural. They do not make any distinctions between what is moral and what is not; as long as it works, it is god to them. To answer the first question then, how important is a

Christian conversion experience to formation of deep morality and optimal human development? Of course, many of us here would have a biased opinion that it is important for us to look at it from a Christian perspective, because there are strong influences in this area of gap, and they are all contending with ways to get and exploit the community in those specific areas. If we just assume that once the ratios of the gap are taken care of, the community would naturally turn to a moralistic framework, that is a dangerous assumption.

The second question is "does the capabilities approach provide a certain alternative moral basis for human development than what is typically associated with transformational paradigms? In what ways do they contradict, complete, or even correct each other?" And one of the things we have discovered in community development is how important it is for those with a strong moralistic framework to be engaged in that way because of the gaps. Again, I say that with a bias, because one who is not inclined that way would say "How dare you presume that there is a moral gap?" And the reason is that in development strategy, as areas of vulnerability are removed, we add them to the capacity or build the capacity of the community at the core to take care of those areas of gap. If we do that, then vulnerabilities disappear. They are now more in charge of their community and its development. If there is no moralistic framework, what is going to happen is they are going to completely exclude the supernatural or spiritual dimension and become strongly secular and humanistic in their approach. We see this happening in many communities. The more they control and are able to take care of, the more they push or centrifuge God out from their world. This is a tough area to deal with. The caution here is we need to see that centrifuging the moral and supernatural out of their lives is a danger.

Let us return to the third question: "Why should religion be taken seriously by secular development practitioners?" It is all linked to our aim to integrate the empirical and the spiritual. I also clarified that the spiritual is supernatural, but the supernatural is not necessarily spiritual. Therefore, as we move towards transformational development, we need to keep this frame with a moralistic, supernatural understanding, which of course is a Christian bias. In the Christian approach we talk of engagement with God as the means for it to happen, something we have seen over and over. The communities in the developing world are integrated between the empirical and the supernatural. We are conscious of that, but this has led to a great deal of slavery to that area of vulnerability, if not guarded against.

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Ravi spoke of the potential for the spiritual dimension to drop out in purely rational or humanistic models of development, as forwarded by people like Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen. But even though they do not speak much of spirituality outside of a collective basis for bringing people together, codifying a collective moral sense that includes justice seeking, nor speak much about the benefit of religion, they are nevertheless very much akin in their discussion of practical reason in relationship to natural law theory forwarded by Aquinas and C.S. Lewis in *The Abolition of Man* that the moral sense or the moral framework is inherent to human nature rather than necessarily imposed externally through a religious system. That is, human beings have the capacity for reason, for an innate moral sense, conscience, free will, and the pursuit of truth and happiness. Aquinas would say that would ultimately give them the potential to lead them to union with God. Of course, those who do not have naturalistic assumptions would not necessarily perceive that as the “end,” but I do not think the capability model is shorn of a moral framework.

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