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Relationships between four international 'human' discourses

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Abstract:

Human rights, human development and human security form increasingly important, partly interconnected, partly competitive and misunderstood ethical and policy discourses. Each tries to humanize a pre-existing and unavoidable major discourse of everyday life, policy and politics; each has emerged within the United Nations world; each relies implicitly on a conceptualisation of human need; each has specific strengths. Yet mutual communication, understanding and co-operation are deficient, especially between human rights and the other discourses. The paper tries to identify respective strengths, weaknesses, and potential complementarity. It suggests that human security discourse may offer a working alliance between humanized discourses of rights, development and need.

Keywords: human rights, human development, human needs, human security

[1] My thanks for their comments go to participants at the NFU 2006 conference in Oslo and in two GARNET meetings and other presentations in The Hague and Leiden.

1 – Four Abodes in the heaven of human discourses

Ethical discourses can have great influence in national and international affairs. Neta Crawford's *Argument and Change in World Politics* (2002) reviews five centuries of debates over imperial conquest, slavery and the slave trade, forced labour, colonization, trusteeship and decolonization. Crawford shows how ethical discourses can gradually structure and restructure pre-analytical feelings and analytical attention and how they can interact with and influence other factors—by the range of comparisons that they make, by the categories and default cases that they introduce and defend, by the ways they reconstitute conceptions of 'interests' and perceptions of constraints.

I take this position on the potential of ethical discourses as a starting point—based also on work by, for example, Audie Klotz (1995), Craig Murphy (2005), and the UN Intellectual History Project (Jolly *et al.*, 2005)—rather than seek to argue it at length here. But I start too from the findings by these and other authors that ethical discourses certainly do not necessarily have much or any influence, and that we should consider closely under which conditions and by which modalities which types of ethical discourse may exert which types of influence.

In particular, ethical discourse that remains disembodied, freefloating and not built and embedded into legal frameworks and planning methodologies, may have much less effect in development policy; less than does religious discourse. Major attempts to embed ethics within development policy discourse in recent decades include:

1. The conventions on human rights, notably on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), and those for women (CEDAW) and children (CRC)
2. The work on a Right to Development, from the 1970s on, via a UN General Assembly declaration in 1986, to a new wave of work since the late 1990s
3. Rights-Based Approaches to development: from the mid or late 1990s
4. The Basic (Human) Needs work, mainly in the 1970s and 80s
5. The successor capability approach (Sen), Human Development Approach (Haq), and capabilities approach (Nussbaum), from the late 1980s onwards, wings of a cooperative endeavour consolidated recently in a Human Development And Capability Association
6. The perspective of Human Security, from the mid 1990s. This is less embedded, at least as yet, but has received considerable attention in the last few years, led by the 2003 report *Human Security Now*, as in effect an attempt in the threatening setting of the new millennium to link the perspectives of human rights, needs, and human development, via the lenses of felt and actual vulnerabilities.

The present paper looks at the relationship between these discourses, at their potentials and requirements, competitiveness and complementarity. We will group the first three in the list above as a human rights stream, as is standard in the literature, while noting its component strands. As explained below, the other three strands can be grouped

together too, as a development set, associated with a body like UNDP. We give particular attention to the discourse of human security, since it is the most recent and least familiar and consciously attempts to integrate the other three streams. I have discussed elsewhere its relations to discourses of human development (Gasper and Truong, 2005) and needs (Gasper, 2005a, 2005b) and draw on that work here. In this paper I thus give relatively less attention to the discourses of human development and needs, and more attention to the discourse of human rights and its relations, actual or potential, to the others.

Section 2 will raise some key concerns for discourses of human rights (HR) and of human needs (HN). Section 3 tries to identify the contributions and limitations of 'human development' (HD) discourse, leading on to an assessment of what if anything 'human security' (HS) discourse adds. Section 4 attempts comparisons and an integrated evaluation. I implicitly draw throughout the paper on ideas from Crawford and Murphy concerning determinants and modalities of influence, to inform the analysis of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats. That will lead to identification of some possible directions for follow-up.

The four families of discourse form parts of a larger genus: all use the epithet 'human'. All add a distinctive human interpretation to a preexisting stream of thought and practice: they propose and stress unities amongst all human beings, and simultaneously perhaps provide a contrast to (other) animals, let alone inanimate entities; and they stress a moral prioritization of certain capacities and potentials. Human rights is a language of fundamental entitlements, contrasted with the preexisting language of legally embedded rights, not least of property rights. Human needs discourse tries to provide a basis for this moral prioritization, by assessing 'needs for what and for whom?' and distinguishing the needs of habit or addiction from reasoned and reasonable priority. Human Development stands opposed to inhuman development; and the concept of Human Security stands in contrast to state security and to exclusive attention to security of property or bodily security.

Not coincidentally, three of the discourses—human rights, human development, human security—are in important degree United Nations discourses, even if far from exclusively so. The language and practices of human rights have spread far down the global ladder. Human development discourse has rapidly extended to national and regional levels, providing through its annual reports a widely adopted language and perspective. While many of the recent Human Development Reports (HDRs) have taken human security (HS) as their theme (Jolly & BasuRay, 2007) and there is considerable academic research interest, HS discourse is more complex and more disputed. There are conflicting claimants to the HS label and fundamental doubts about the turn to security language. We add the fourth discourse, of human need, to this trio because it provides a grounding for the others.

Within the genus of human discourses, the relationships – like relationships in many other human families – are often surprisingly distant, even cold. Two main subgroupings

with more internal interconnection exist within the genus: Human Rights and the rest. The latter we can call, with Philip Alston and others, the development grouping. In a wider-ranging analysis one could with Uvin and others distinguish four source communities of practice—socio-economic development, conflict, humanitarian emergency relief, and human rights. Here we mostly look only at partners or reflections of the latter three streams of practice that are found in the socio-economic development field: human security, basic human needs, and rights-based development. Thus for our purposes development and rights are the two broader groupings.

Despite much work at their interfaces in the past generation, these two remain to a large degree 'Ships Passing in the Night' (Alston, 2005; see also Uvin, 2004, 2006). The picture given of 'the development enterprise' in two recent important presentations of rights-based approaches (Gready & Ensor, 2005; Uvin, 2004), for example, is far too narrow.[2] Even with respect to a project such as the Millennium Development Goals, Alston shows how work on the MDGs, national and global, has paid very little attention to human rights conventions and theory; and conversely how human rights organisations have remained predominantly detached from perhaps the central contemporary program in the international development field. MDG monitoring and human rights monitoring mechanisms have largely ignored each other (Alston, 2005: 814-25). 'Making the language and approach of human rights accessible to wider audiences has proved difficult' admits perhaps the leading figure who is attempting that, Mary Robinson, the inspiring former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights who spearheaded the move of human rights work out of its traditional ruts (Robinson, 2004: 868). '…we are far from arriving at a position where those working in the human rights tradition and those working in the development tradition feel that they speak the same language. If mutual curiosity has increased, confidence is far from being safely established' (Robinson, 2005: 31).

Viewed in historical perspective, however, the new half-fullness of the relationship between these streams (see e.g. Olowu, 2005) may strike the observer even more than the remaining half-emptiness and mutual strangeness. 'Over more than half a century, the four original pillars of the [UN] Charter (peace, development, human rights, and independence) largely pursued in parallel in the first few decades, came closer together, a remarkable and underemphasized advance. The integration of these important facets of the human challenge may be the most underrecognised achievement of the world organisation' (Jolly, Emmerij & Weiss, 2005: 12). Figure 1 outlines some of the intersections. These greatly increased from the 1970s, leading to important new thinking within the development and human rights pillars themselves.

[2] Uvin presents 'the development enterprise' as much younger than that of human rights, (p.12), because bizarrely it is equated by him to international development assistance (p.13). Other resources than those controlled by 'development agencies' are even defined as 'nondevelopment resources' (p.119). (See also Uvin 2004: 35-37.)

Figure 1: Some recent evolution of ideas of Human Rights, Human Needs, Human Development, Human Security (Bold = especially important for this paper)

	DEVELOP-MENT	*Intersection*	NEEDS	*Intersection*	HUMAN RIGHTS	*Intersection*	DEVELOP-MENT
1940s-60s	Emergence of national development plans and international development cooperation		Humanistic psychology. National social welfare schemes. Growth of international humanitarian-ism.	Geneva Convention on protection of civilians in war time	**1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. 1966 Human Rights conventions**		Origins of development studies
1970s-80s	Growing reliance on market principles of valuation, allocation	Development ethics (Denis Goulet et al.). **Basic Needs Approach.**	Sen on famine. Needs analysis of conflict (John Burton, Galtung et al.), → human security type framework.	Basic Rights (Henry Shue) **Entitlements analysis** (Sen)		1986 UN statement on Right to Development. Generalisation of Entitlements analysis	Growth of attention to: women, employment, environment, culture …
1980s-90s	Growing reliance on market principles of organisation. Capability approach (Sen)	'Human-scale Development' (Max-Neef et al., 1986). 'Adjustment with a human face' (UNICEF, 1987). **Human Development** (UNDP, 1990)	Max-Neef's theory of needs Braybrooke's and Doyal & Gough's theories of need	Needs as the basis of rights: Galtung	Conventions on women and children	Vienna Declaration 1993: indivisibility of Civil & Political Rights and Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights	Increasing assertion of property rights
Mid 90s – now	'Social Development'. Conflict. (Sustainable) Livelihoods Approach	Centrality of health asserted. **Human Security** (HDRs 1993-4; CHS, 2003). International Development Targets	Well-being and ill-being research. Ryan & Deci: self-determin-ation theory	Jubilee 2000: principles for debt relief.	Growing emphasis on duties to protect and promote as well as not to violate human rights	Right to Development (Sengupta). HDR 2000. **Rights Based Approach(es).** Nussbaum's affiliation to and Sen's qualified endorsement of HR approach.	Intellectual property rights; TRIPS. Capabilities approach (Nussbaum)
Trends in 2000s		**MDGs.** Human Security language connects to rights	Work on (un)-sustainable consumption.	Extreme Poverty as an HRs Violation (Pierre Sane, Thomas Pogge)	Rights Based Global Order (Mary Robinson, David Held, Pogge, et al.)	**Human Rights Based Approaches.** Rights to food, water, etc.	

Human development discourse has connected to human rights discourse notably in the *HDR 2000* and the spawning of human security discourse. The *HDR 2000* presented 'human development' as a justification principle for rights, and human rights language as

an essential format in policy operationalization. Such a linkage could be helpful both for human development work, connecting it to the politically vivid, forceful and institutionally embedded human rights approach; and for human rights discourse, providing it with fuller theoretical grounding and clearer priorities. Leading current formulations of human rights, human development, and human needs theory can be seen to have the same structure (see Gasper, 2005a or 2005b), with the justification of many claimed human rights to be understood in terms of fulfilment of priority needs. While human needs discourse has been more a part of the second subgrouping (human development thinking), it can play an essential role in connecting the streams (see e.g. Galtung, 1994) and will be discussed here together with human rights thinking, in Section 2. In Section 3 we see how human security discourse thereby builds an alliance between the three older 'human' discourses. It uses a human needs framework to provide the focus in prioritization that is required within the very wide reach of the human rights and human development discourses.

2 – Human Rights and Human Needs; the importance of channelling and partnering the Rights notion

Fundamental strengths of an HRBA?

Core contributions of a human rights based approach (HRBA) are: first, to offer a defence for the weak, each and every weakly situated person, counteracting elite dominance (Darrow & Tomas, 2005: 489); and second, to ground this defence in fundamental motivating forces: respect for human dignity and—even for people who have lost or never fulfilled their dignity in another sense—respect for common humanity, a respect for each and every person. Human rights are a powerful instrumental tool for defence of the weak, a tool that derives its instrumental power from the fact that it has independent normative appeal. Ordinary people can and do grasp and use the human rights concept (see e.g. Tomas, 2005); and the fact that people hold such values makes rights systems an effective policy instrument and driving force.

Lawyers typically propose two more core strengths. The third that they repeatedly stress is that the moral claims for defence of the weak and of all persons are embodied in a system of specific criteria, entitlements with carefully specified, intersubjectively stable content (Alston, 2005, e.g. 760, 782; Darrow & Tomas, 2005, e.g. 519-20).[3] Non-lawyers highlight instead that the concept of human rights helps to redirect and restructure our

[3] See ICHRP (2005, Ch.II) for a more elaborate comparison along those lines of human rights approaches with human development, good governance, and gender equity approaches. It underweights the typical problems in HRAs which we will consider: grounding, prioritization, and legalism.

attention in policy analysis and action: it changes where we look, the questions we ask, and how we try to answer them (Uvin, 2004: 176, 192; Gasper, 2007b).

Fourthly, lawyers emphasise that a human rights based approach connects to the rigour, force and compulsion of law, the machinery of legal decisionmaking and enforcement wherein rights are clarified, including by specification of duty-holders, and applied. However, argue some others, this orientation to the legal system can instead become a failing. The legal system is inevitably ponderous and remains in practice dominated by the rich, those who can access the courts, hire smart lawyers, or buy support in other ways. In addition, it might merge the human rights approach into a more general legal language-field of rights, within which the rights of most or many humans can become marginalized for the sake of property rights or so-called group rights. While ethical principles need to become embodied, the question is how far legal systems alone can be relied on to embody and apply them.

A strength of recent Rights Based Approaches (RBAs) work is their reduction of the preoccupation with the legal system – 'the legal reflex' (Gready and Ensor, 2005). RBAs concentrate on research and information provision, education and capacity building, influencing incentives, motivations and concepts, supporting public debate, and pressure via the political system. Alston considers these new RBAs far more fruitful than more legalistic and lawbook-bound work on the Right to Development (Alston, 2005, Section VI). Seeing rights as goals to be promoted in diverse ways, not only as legal cudgels with which to enforce, leads to more creative thinking: 'In cases where rights cannot be enforced through the courts [notably because there is not a single clear duty-holder], they can be asserted [and promoted - DG] through other democratic means, based for instance on parliamentary interventions, the electoral process, the media, international solidarity, street action or even civil disobedience' (Drèze, 2005: 58). Many of these methods act through 'influence on public perceptions of who is entitled to what' (ibid.: 59).

The label RBA would be unfortunate if it helped to trap the poor into primary reliance on a legal system which they can hardly ever effectively use. 'Human Rights Based Approach(es)' is a better label, as used by for example Robinson (2005) and Darrow & Tomas (2005). HRBAs have emerged precisely to correct and override narrower RBAs.

The disagreements over the third and fourth proposed strengths of human rights-based approaches, including over the role of legalism, illustrate that there is no single RBA (Mander, 2005). Each organisation seems to present its own core principles. Both Darrow & Tomas (2005: 471) and Alston (2005: 799 ff.), in their massive recent surveys, warn of the danger of disillusion with loosely conceptualised and applied RBAs. Besides the issue of legalism, two other fundamental disputes require attention: the handling of trade-offs and setting of priorities, and, related to that, the theoretical grounding for human rights claims. We will consider these three areas further, after an overview of objections to rights language.

Rights claims and their critics

We should distinguish: rights language in general; within that, human rights language; and within human rights language, approaches centred on legal rights and broader human rights-based approaches.

Figure 2: Realms of rights approaches	RIGHTS APPROACHES	
	NOT HUMAN RIGHTS	*HUMAN RIGHTS*
LAW-CENTRED	Diverse non primal legal rights	Human rights law & conventions
NOT LAW-CENTRED	Informal non primal rights	Wider HR-based approaches

Let us note first some criticisms of rights language in general, then of human rights in particular. These concerns lead us to such languages' need for partner discourses.

Rights language, in the variants that take rights as primary, central, and overriding, has been criticised in some, greater or lesser, degree from almost all angles in political and social philosophy except that of 'Liberal individualism, then, to which the theory of rights belongs' (Almond, 1993: 267).[4] Nearly all the critics accepted that rights have a role in a political order, but as a derived and more limited tool, not as absolute or predominant nor as a foundational principle such as 'natural rights' or 'human rights'. Many utilitarians have taken such a position, for example as in Bentham's famous attack of 1795 on natural rights.

- Economists have traditionally often disliked (human) rights talk: it gets in the way of aggregate utility- (or product-) maximization, and they query who is supposed to pay for these asserted rights (see, e.g., views in Frey, 1984).
- Certain leading conservative philosophers, such as Alisdair MacIntyre and Roger Scruton, have been critical of rights formulations, as are some feminists (e.g., Hardwig, 1990). The Kantian Onora O'Neill (1996) argues that obligations is a more basic (and broader) category than rights and gives a more adequate moral basis. (For a rebuttal, see Nussbaum, 2006.) Similarly, from the Thomist tradition, John Finnis (1980) prefers the language of duties to that of rights.
- Many Marxists consider rights talk as part of an ideology by which an elite in reality grabs resources and excludes others (Buchanan, 1982; Lukes, 1985). Some radical democratic theorists too hold that rights formulations in practice entrench bourgeois power and property. Lawrence Hamilton, a South African political philosopher, attacks the human rights framework as a dead end for justice in his country: one part of a spider's web of bourgeois liberal thought through which the weak are captured by the strong. Hamilton criticises a dominant 'rights-preferences couple' in "liberal political and economic theory and practice that *reduces* politics to the security of individual human rights, the aggregation of individual preferences, or a contrived

[4] See Sumner (2000) for a concise but solid survey of, and partial reply to, objections.

combination of both. This reduction excludes the two main components of politics: collective decision determined by the need to act, and collective evaluation determined by the requirement to control and enhance the development and satisfaction of individual human needs" (Hamilton, 2004: 193). Further, although 'human rights' discourse makes a claim for priority status, rights language bears too much the imprint of property rights, and ties fulfilment of priority human needs to the ability to expensively access a remote legal system. That system takes existing property rights as the default case: claims against them must be demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt. Basic needs of the majority can thus become downgraded in practice by being stated in the same rights language as that of established propertyholding (Hamilton, 2003a: Conclusion).

Some of the criticisms are specific to *human* rights claims, such as the familiar attacks on their proposed universality.[5] Human rights language is partly formally established in law, often not, and comprises claims to hold or obtain something because of a person's sheer status as a human being, thereby overriding if necessary many other possible rights. Freeman calls this a 'very unsatisfactory formulation' (2002: 60-61). I would say rather that it is not a complete argument by itself; one has to argue effectively which of the features of being a human imply rights, and why, and which rights and with what degree of force. (See e.g. Josephides, 2003.)

More selective in their target are critics of economic and social rights in particular, whether on utilitarian, conservative, or other grounds. A prominent conservative critic was Maurice Cranston. In contrast, many nationalists hold that the international human rights regime is a tool for imperialists to interfere and intervene when it suits them, while ignoring real need most of the time. Discussing human rights in an international context can render weak states open to intervention, and human rights becomes seen as an imperialist discourse – at least by actual or aspirant ruling groups in the South.[6]

From the Human Development stream, Amartya Sen wants to loosen up and deabsolutise human rights discourse (e.g. Sen, 2004); Martha Nussbaum thinks likewise, based on her intense involvement with the world of American law. At the same time, both now consciously affiliate to the international human rights tradition, in a deabsolutised form; 'the capabilities approach is one species of a human rights approach' says Nussbaum (2006: 7). Li (2001) considers that Nussbaum's approach thereby faces the same fundamental challenges as a human rights approach:

> '… over the past decade, in responding to criticisms and doubts, the main architects of the capability theory have gradually moved toward mainstream liberal constitutionalism and the international human rights approach. … a number of conceptual difficulties that the international human rights approach faces, such as the lack of specification of correspondent duties, the extensiveness of the list of rights

[5] For example: Wood (2003) doubts the relevance of some of the gender and marriage rights charter to poor societies where marriages are a key security arrangement for which there is no alternative.

[6] Whereas natural rights typically derived from God, human rights doctrine creates a sort of secular God: 'we have rights by virtue of being human and once we institute a global legal order we have a kind of global god. Monotheistic colonialism is alive and well.' (Hamilton 2003b: 45)

> declared "universal" and "human," which thus must all be protected and implemented, and the expensiveness in implementing them, can also be raised about the capability approach.'

To sum up, disagreements exist on: 1 - the status of rights relative to other principles; 2 - the content of rights; 3 - the relative importance of different rights (human rights can conflict with each other and with other sorts of rights); 4 - the meaning of justice and hence the grounding of rights (disagreements here underlie disagreements on the previous points); and 5 - the relative importance and role of different aspects of justice (commutative; procedural; distributive; contributive; retributive). Human rights theory requires then: a grounding, a prioritising apparatus, much complementing, and careful gradation and some deabsolutisation.

Let us consider in more detail the accusations of legalism, vagueness of grounding, and utopianism/absolutism. (Robinson, 2005 discusses other criticisms.)

Will democratic agendas be sunk or strengthened by rights frameworks? Is a legalistic language an advantage or not?

> 'The concept of rights can be used selfishly, but all concepts can be abused…' (Freeman, 2002: 73).

We have a choice between saying that human rights is a good concept which can be abused; or that human rights is a concept which can be used well and for good ends but also can be used badly and for bad ends. The advantage of the former stance is that it may better instil confidence and commitment; the advantage of the latter is that we become more self-critical, less self-congratulatory. We saw already a potential structural advantage, the force of legal backing, and a structural problem, namely that reliance on the legal system typically favours elites and disfavours those who are remote from and/or distrust the state. 'This [second part] is a challenge which human rights organizations have only recently understood' (Robinson, 2005: 37).

Rights language—including sometimes human rights language as used in practice—is far from necessarily egalitarian. Historically, rights language has often been associated with defending privileges or claiming privileges: benefits to be received by some and certainly not by all. Rights language—including the language of fundamental rights—is frequently used to defend immense inequalities and monopolistic practices.[7]

So, if human rights is a language of special priority, where do human rights end and other rights begin? Everyone wants to claim priority for their interests. Each sort of claimed right is in practice liable to be defended by saying that it represents a human right, as in the argument by Robert Nozick and Right libertarians that income taxation represents a violation of fundamental human rights to gain and hold property by fair

[7] Microsoft's refusal to give customers the freedom to buy Windows separately from Internet Explorer was defended with use of the language of freedom and rights: it prioritised Microsoft's freedom to manipulate customers. See e.g. 'A Petition Against the Persecution of Microsoft', www.moraldefense.com.

means, and a violation of a person's integrity and human right to be treated with utmost respect. Nozick's libertarian attack on John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice*, glitzily titled *Anarchy, State and Utopia* (1974), presented anti-egalitarianism as cool, smart, and pro-people. Arguments about fair, timeless 'social contracts' were opposed by arguments in terms of actual, historical contracts. Such arguments, for the absolute right to hold on to property and experience minimal interference, contributed to the 1970s and 1980s rise to dominance of neo-liberal and neo-conservative views, propounded by von Hayek, Friedman, Nozick and many others (see Gasper, 1986). This was amongst the reasons why land reform, for example, largely disappeared from the policy agenda. It connects also to the rise of the thinking and practice of 'intellectual property rights', the patenting by corporations of what others consider to be a common heritage, and the attempts by corporations to limit the use of knowledge that can save the lives of impoverished millions unless they are paid the price that they demand.

Even the Bretton Woods institutions now talk about human rights, though when they refer to 'the rule of law' they have typically attended only to property rights (Alston, 2005: 780). We have to face the question: how far are property rights human rights? To address it we would need to consider the theoretical grounding of human rights claims.

The grounding and weight of human rights claims: prioritisations, choices, trade-offs

One cannot by fiat limit 'human rights thinking' to UN human rights documents and sister legal statements. It antedates 1948, and, further, the 1948 Universal Declaration is a list without an explicit theory. Attempts to theorise can lead to somewhat different lists; for example, some do not include property rights as a human right, at least not of the same order as others. Property rights are included in the 1948 Declaration but were excluded from the 1966 Conventions. The assertion of property rights as human rights of equal priority to others undermines redistributive public activity – not merely land reform but also many forms of taxation. A massively wealthy movement mobilised in recent years in the USA to abolish inheritance taxation, and similar groups have placed income taxation on their target list.

Declarations of normative rights rest on conceptions of values and justice, and, in turn, on conceptions about other things. Fortunately, various different conceptions of values and justice may be consistent with the same declaration of normative rights; this is enormously helpful and has been a reason to not probe into the underlying conceptions. However there are also major disagreements, which force us to probe further.

We require a normative grounding in order to not only specify a list but also interpret and use it: what are priorities when different rights, or rights and other values, conflict? As human rights leaders like Robinson (2005) and Alston (2005: 802) acknowledge, the tradition has been averse to admitting conflicts of rights. Peter Uvin holds that 'the human rights community has hardly addressed' how conflicts between rights should be

handled (2004: 186). In practice, lawyers and administrators must and do consider such matters, and build up various conventions of practice, but the basis of theory can be weak. One dangerous option is to hold that rights which are given lesser priority in a particular case are then 'not real rights' (cf. Gasper, 1986). Uvin (2004) looks at prioritisation in his final chapter but does not distinguish contingent conflicts, namely those due to current shortage of resources, and inherent conflicts, those that no amount of resources will remove.

One possible role of principles is as inspirational maxims, proverbs, which one endorses without openly admitting that they are sometimes contradicted by other maxims. They are used as reminders, and conflicts are treated as challenges, as spurs to creative improvisation and never to admission of constraint. When may one take a step backwards on some valued axis in order to take two steps forward on another axis or later on the same axis? The human rights mainstream seems to say: never. Uvin (2004: 151) hallows this as 'the non retrogression rule'. Others call it the 'do no harm principle'. The implicit assumption is that one can and must always find feasible ways of immediately compensating for any retrogression that would otherwise be incurred. Non-inspirational analysts and managers from other traditions consider this absurd: it even jeopardises, as we saw, most taxation. Robinson (2005: 35ff.) accepts that 'human rights analysts have not thought enough about' such problems. But Darrow and Tomas take the counter offensive (2005: 492), and insist that HRBA in fact forces us to face conflicts. It indeed obliges us to look at costs incurred by individuals and groups, but this is not the whole of the issue. We can be forced to see conflicts, but we may fail to have any system for prioritising in response to them. Or, we may adopt the non-retrogression rule which asserts only one way of dealing with any conflict, the way of full compensation; and which can lead in strange directions, when rich and privileged groups—those who are best able to articulate and advocate their interests and operate in systems of law—adopt the languages of absolute respect for persons and of uninfringeable rights, in order to defend their holdings.

We have here a conflict and trade-off between two styles of practice: an optimistic inspirational quasi-religious style, that calls us to join the path of righteousness, and a more prosaic, calculating style. Each has its strengths and appropriate locales. In public and global policy, Romantic inspiration is important but will not suffice. Alston, one of the major figures in human rights research, is more hardheaded and critical here than Darrow, Robinson or Uvin: (H)RBAs must acquire priorities, an understanding of the division of mandates and responsibilities, and a grasp of the inevitability of phased change (Alston, 2005: 807-8); otherwise they could become a counterproductive theology. Correspondingly, they should ally themselves to the MDGs. 'In the future, human rights proponents need to prioritize, stop expecting a paradigm shift, and tailor their prescriptions more carefully to address particular situations' (ibid.: 826-7).

Some types of need theory, and their offspring in one version of the human security approach, offer a way of thinking, not just a set of labels, to engage in the necessary prioritization.

The importance of needs theory, and of history of ideas rather than creation myths

Basic needs normative theory is one systematic way to look at normative foundations, for rights or for any other normative theory. It asks:

- What are the requirements for a person to live in a way required by a particular normative theory?; e.g., to live as an independent, self-reliant, autonomous (self-directing) individual of the sort praised in a Nozick-type rugged individualism. In other words, it argues that each normative theory implies some basic needs.
- What are the implied requirements that are common to a whole range of normative theories? Some priority needs are found to be the same across a wide range of normative theories. These ones we can confidently call basic needs despite the disagreements elsewhere between the theories.

So, looking for foundations for rights (or other normative stances) leads somewhere, says needs theory (see e.g. Braybrooke, 1987; Doyal & Gough, 1991; Gasper, 2004, Ch.6; Gasper, 2007a). Conversely, failure to look systematically at foundations and to conceptualise needs carefully can lead to confusion. One common form of confusion arises from failure to distinguish modes of 'need', and another comes from presumption that basic needs means a set of commodities that sustain material subsistence.

A minimum set of distinctions specifies three modes and two levels. Mode A needs are drives, or strong wants, or things without which one suffers; Mode B needs are what one requires (S, a satisfier) in order to achieve something else (E, an end); Mode C needs (a subset of mode B) are approved requisites for fulfilling approved priority ends (like dignity) (Taylor, 1959; Douglas et al., 1998). Essential requisites (such as water) for strong priority ends (such as life) are candidate human rights. Within modes B and C we must distinguish levels of satisfiers and ends. Obviously not all mode A and mode B needs are mode C needs and candidate human rights; but candidate human rights are mode C needs or the approved priority ends.

Michael Freeman cites Jack Donnelly, that 'the need for dignity rather than needs as such is the basis of human rights' (Freeman, 2002: 65). Freeman queries Donnelly, arguing that 'the link between human rights and "dignity" is as problematic as the link with "needs": the right to security of person, for example, might be based on human need or a requirement of dignity' (Freeman, 2002: 65). In reality there is no dichotomy: the (satisfier-level) implications of a requirement of dignity would be one type of (mode C) human need. Thus when Freeman later remarks that 'The combined use of needs and dignity is implicit in the "capabilities" theory of Martha Nussbaum' (loc. cit.), it is not

that some of her priority areas are based on needs and some on dignity; they are all, in her view, the needs required for sustaining a life with dignity.

Freeman rightly notes: 'Most people most of the time "need" security, but it is not always needed for a life of dignity; soldiers, for example…' (Freeman, 2002: 65). From this we might conclude that soldiers do not have a right to security or have waived that right; that dignity is not the only priority end; or that rights to security are grounded in particular (E-level) needs, whether for dignity, or for being able to live as the type of agent assumed by whichever moral theory is adopted. That not all needs establish rights (e.g., some needs, such as friendship, 'would impose unreasonable demands on others' if stated as rights; ibid.), does not gainsay that 'Behind human rights are freedoms and needs so fundamental that their denial puts human dignity itself at risk' (Goldewijk & Fortman, 1999: 117).

The creation myths of both human rights based approaches (HRBA) and the human development approach (HDA) present basic needs theory as a primitive forerunner: technocratic, top-down, commodity-focused, a staging post on the path to right thinking. This sits uneasily with the fact that leading basic needs theorists—like Mahbub ul Haq, Paul Streeten, Frances Stewart, Johan Galtung—were also leaders of HDA or HRBA. Peter Uvin is representative here in describing the basic needs approach—which he considers still tacitly predominant in development work—as follows: 'All human beings, it is argued, have *basic material needs* for food, material, and shelter, and all development activities and policies should first of all promote the satisfaction of these basic needs; *only after that is done should more social and psychological needs be addressed*' (emphases added; Uvin, 2004: 34). This suggests scant knowledge of the work of leading basic needs theorists,[8] and of the oft discussed contrast between the 'basic material needs' and 'basic human needs' streams (see e.g. Hettne, 1982, 1990). The reductionist broadbrush treatment contrasts with Uvin's concern to tease out variants and alternatives within human rights approaches.

Reductionism becomes sloppiness when Uvin returns to the theme in his Chapter 4. If inmates of refugee camps have better indicators for nutrition, morbidity, mortality, and shelter than before they entered the camps, then according to him 'the basic needs and even "human development" approach as implemented by the main development actors' (p.123) would conclude these people are 'more developed' than before. He remarks that 'We intuitively feel that this is nonsense, of course. When people are deprived of their freedom, live in constant fear, cannot move or work as they wish, and are cut off from the communities and the lands they care about, development has emphatically *not* taken place' (p.123). 'Maslow is dead; there are no basic needs', he concludes (p.123). The Human Development Approach would say that the range of valued freedoms determines the meaning of 'development'—and typically includes mobility, community membership

[8] Kenneth Boulding, Galtung, Haq, Stewart, and Streeten, for example--let alone Braybrooke, Deci & Ryan, Doyal & Gough, Maslow, Max-Neef, Penz, and Wisner—are all absent from Uvin's bibliography.

and participation, freedom from fear, freedom to decide, and so on. Most Basic Needs theorists would say that these features are basic needs, as determinable using many possible decision criteria or procedures. Doyal and Gough's *Theory of Need*, for example, derives the features as implications of a priority commitment to the ability to function effectively as a member of one's society. Uvin's ringing assertion that there are no basic needs could lead us towards the relativism of pure consumer society, where my preference for a fifth home is morally indistinguishable from your wish for a first, and the decision procedure employed is to let us compete for housing in the market. We see here a link between much rights analysis's weakly elaborated theoretical basis and its problems in prioritization.

Eventually in the final few pages of his book, when seeking priorities, Uvin rapidly improvises a sort of basic needs position, under another name. To 'do at least something well', development funders should engage 'in each country in only three or four sectors, areas or goals, while staying entirely out of all the rest. These sectors could be chosen according to the specific and *urgent needs* of each country, or they could be *set in a fixed manner for the whole world*—there are advantages and disadvantages to each system. … A strong a priori [*sic*] would exist in favor of investing in education, nutrition, and health, as well as in doing so in rights terms. In other words, this approach would then amount to *a basic rights approach*, in which the international community seeks to guarantee every single person in the world access to the key elements of the right to life' (Uvin, 2004: 199). This sounds very familiar to basic needs analysts.

In contrast to HRBA and HD discourses, international humanitarianism has always openly affirmed and centred on concepts of need. 'At each stage in its evolution, humanitarianism has forged and then relied upon consensus on core political values: *people in need* should be protected from life-threatening harm (the principle of humanity); aid should be distributed *solely according to need* (the principle of impartiality).' (O'Brien, 2005: 202, emphases added). Needs discourse has been important too in analyses of conflict, and central in the disciplines of social policy, where 'needs assessment' is a continuing preoccupation. None of this implies that needs discourse is without major tensions and limitations (see e.g. Gasper, 2004). It suggests however that co-operative alliances and mutual learning are the appropriate form of relationship between these various 'human' discourses.

3 - **Human Development and Human Security**

Human Development Approach – key features

The Human Development approach (HDA)—rooted in UNDP and led by Mahbub ul Haq, Amartya Sen and their associates—has been a central part of the move beyond a dominant focus on economic output and economic growth. GDP is a measure of monetized activity not of human well-being. HDA stresses the lack of adequate connection between levels of monetized activity and levels of well-being: there are many other determinants of well-being, and frequently weak or unreliable or perverse links to well-being from economic growth. Part of GDP's continuing attraction tacitly to national elites may be that it also measures power over others: the power of governments to acquire weaponry and military capability, and the power of elites to acquire property: land, real estate, rivals' listed companies; the power to be heard, to travel, to communicate; powers to obtain, vet and disseminate research and information, buy control of mass media and buy influence more generally (sometimes with legislators, judges, police, and politicians who are in search of funds).

Let us look here at what HDA attends to instead, including its normative specifics, and both its contributions and gaps. I will comment (based on Gasper & Truong, 2005) on the approach of UNDP and its associates, not on Nussbaum's distinctive version.

1. Human development thinking has broadened the range of objectives that are routinely considered in development debate and planning; and it reduces GDP from an end to be just one possible means or instrument.
2. Specific objectives are ideally to be derived through reasoned and public reflection.
3. It has espoused and exemplified a form of 'joined-up thinking' which is not misleadingly restricted by national and conventional disciplinary boundaries.
4. HDA also takes a step towards what might be termed 'joined-up feeling', for as in human rights philosophy the field of reference is all humans, irrespective of their location in the world.
5. However, although it has a serious concern for equity, Haq's HDA did not establish guarantees for individuals, in contrast to the human rights tradition. (See e.g. Jonsson, 2005: 59-60.)
6. Further, HDA presumes rather than directly constructs and succours a motivational basis for such concern. Does it preach only to the converted?
7. Underlying the previous two points, while Sen and Haq sought to move beyond mainstream economics, they aimed to bring most of its practitioners with them. The subtitle of the *Journal of Human Development*—'Alternative Economics in Action'—reflected this disciplinary heritage and loyalty. Sen's capability approach and the HDA mainstream thus still bear some economics-style features which many other audiences can find problematic. The slogans of 'development

as the expansion of capabilities' and 'Development as Freedom' can be turned into a justification for consumerism.

Ananta Giri has argued that Sen's work lacks an adequate conception of personhood, personal growth, and human agency. 'Development…also means self-development on the part of the free agents where they do not just assert the self-justificatory logic of their own freedom but are willing to subject it to a self- and mutual criticism' (Giri, 2000: 1011.) Further, concerning a theory of mobilization and action, we have to move beyond 'the technocratic approach to social policy in which rich nice people do nice things to poor nice people' (Wood, 2003) and which assumes that those two are the only important social categories. The experience of independent India shows that formal political democracy certainly reduces famine but does not eliminate it; marginal minorities continue to be ignored. The struggle and empowerment orientations from human rights work are needed.

For deepening its motivational basis and defence of individuals, its conceptions of personhood, self-development, public action and political struggle, HDA has stood to benefit from the human rights tradition, as well as from the full resources of the basic human needs stream and well-being research. These moves have been underway from the time that HDA was formulated, and have involved its founders, Haq and Sen and Nussbaum, and back-up from the institutions they have fostered. In particular, Haq and Sen tackled parts of this agenda in their entry into human security discourse.

Human Security: concept and discourse; the relation to HDA

We saw how human development discourse decisively widened the range of development policy concern beyond economic growth. Mahbub ul Haq's concept of 'human security', introduced in the Human Development Reports of 1993 and 1994 similarly tries to humanize the treatment of security. He took the distinction between the security of states and the security of persons further, by re-visioning the latter as not merely the physical safety of individuals but more broadly their ability to secure and hold basic goods. When Mary Robinson (2005) now talks of human security she refers to primarily to the ability to secure basics: health, safety, an education. The 2003 report prepared for the UN system by the Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now* (*HSN*, also known as the Ogata-Sen commission report)—combines these elements to clarify the human security *concept*. Within [A] the widened range of concerns, the Human Development realm of reasoned freedoms, the concept provides [B] a focus on priorities, on basic human needs; including a concern with the physical security of persons (which was already present in the UNDP definition of human development); and [C] a concern for stability, not only averages and trends.

Haq and Sen's human security discourse is broader than a single concept. It synthesises concerns from basic needs, human development, and human rights. The other

elements of this human security (HS) *discourse* are: [D] a normative focus on individual persons' lives and [E] an insistence on basic rights for all; and [F] an explanatory agenda that stresses the nexus between freedom from want and indignity and freedom from fear (Gasper, 2005a). Figure 3 connects this itemization of features to the earlier characterization of human development discourse.

FIGURE 3: A comparison of Human Development and Human Security (HSN) approaches

HD	**HS**
1: Broader range of objectives than GNP	[D] A normative focus on individuals' lives
2: Focus on reasoned freedoms	[A] Focus on reasoned freedoms…
7: A more generalised and economics-oriented language	*[B] In contrast, a focus on basic needs*
5. Serious concern for equity but without guarantees for individuals	*[E] In contrast, an insistence on basic rights for all, and*
	[C] A concern for stability as well as for levels
3. Joined up thinking	[F] Nexus between freedoms from want and indignity and freedom from fear
4. Joined up feeling but…	[G] Joined up feeling (cosmopolitan concern)
5. …the motivational basis is presumed rather than constructed	*D, B, E → stronger motivational basis, mobilizing attention and concern, and sustaining [G]*

Overall, 'The human security discourse is a discourse for getting priority, and priorities, in national and international policy. … The HS *discourse* includes, besides the concept, strong attention to the interconnections between conventionally separated spheres, which helps it to link diverse organizational [and disciplinary] worlds; and a motivating focus on human vulnerability and the human rights that flow for every human being from basic human needs.' (Gasper, 2005a: 241-2). The HS discourse both rests on the Basic Human Needs work in which Haq was prominent, and adds to it, and shows the consistency of the human development, human needs and human rights languages.

For the types of 'boundary work' which the concept and discourse attempt, intellectually, emotionally, ethically and politically, there are threats as well as opportunities implicit in security language. The 'human security' *label* well matches the contents and purpose of the concept and discourse, but it is competed for by national security studies; and the associated policy agenda is at risk of distortion by the psychological insecurities of the rich. We discuss this later.

The Human Security framework in use

Jolly and BasuRay (2007) review various criticisms of the UNDP-Haq treatment of Human Security, in the light of thirteen examples of national Human Development Reports [NHDRs] which have taken human security as lead theme. These cover a wide

range of countries, from Latvia to the Philippines to Mozambique. Has the approach added value? They itemize the criticisms (p.459; italicized below) and comment on each in turn.

1. '*Human security, they [the critics] argue, merely involves renaming problems which have already been recognised in other contexts and which already have perfectly good names. What is gained by combining them together under a new label?'* Jolly and BasuRay find significant benefits from 'joined-up thinking': 'Almost all the reports develop links between [physical] security, human security and development as an integrated whole' (p. 462). The reports generate significantly different priorities between countries and compared to what outsiders might have expected in advance.

2. '*Human Security does not have any definite parameters, therefore anything and everything could be considered as a risk to security.'* Finding: 'The human security approach strives to contextualise this understanding of security in order to develop appropriate policy responses. The NHDR reports show that such a process is entirely possible, and reveals a far more comprehensive picture of the security needs and situations of individuals than a state-based approach would do' (p. 463). Again in effect the argument is that joined-up thinking better reflects reality and leads us to helpfully see things afresh.

3. '*Human security, when broadened to include* issues like climate change and health, complicates the international machinery for reaching decisions or taking action in relation to the threats identified.' Jolly and BasuRay respond that indeed: 'Decision making and implementation of a much broader approach will neither be easy nor always fit easily within conventional thinking and procedures. On the other hand, if the causes of insecurity have broadened, if new issues of human security have displaced traditional threats, it would be absurd to continue along old routes, rather than finding new ways to deal with new problems' (p. 465). The NDHRs illustrate how this can fruitfully be done. O'Brien (2006) argues similarly with specific respect to climate change, showing how the focus on persons helpfully breaks away from conventional nation-centred analyses.

4. '*Human security risks engaging the military in issues best tackled through non-military means.*' Jolly and BasuRay found no support for this from the NHDRs. They note that the UN and many supporters of a human security approach emphatically oppose the (military) securitization of development, as typically counterproductive, and show in detail how the approach instead generates alternative policy implications.

5. '*Human security under the UN risks raising hopes about the UN's capacity, which it cannot fulfil.*' The study is more sanguine. It dispels the notion that an HS approach implies 'centralised decision-making—let alone taking all issues to the Security Council' (p. 469). Human security analysis and programming, like human rights analysis, will not be limited to a single milieu.

'The paper concludes that the UNDP concept of human security, when applied at national level, is both robust in showing answers to these criticisms and operationally

useful in identifying policy measures and action to tackle serious problems of insecurity of people within the countries concerned.' (Jolly & BasuRay, 2007: 459).

Seen from some other corners, the UNDP version of Human Security discourse may not only be viewed less favourably, it may not register at all. Almost none of the human rights authors whose work has been used in this paper seem to give it any attention.[9] They work instead with a concept exclusively of physical security of persons.

4 - Assessment of HR, HD and HS discourses – towards a SWOT analysis

Let us review and compare the policy discourses we have discussed, with special reference to human rights based approaches and the Haq-Sen conception of human security. My intent is not to fashion a superdiscourse that serves all purposes best, but rather to further mutual insight and cooperation. Multiple intellectual and policy communities, operating in a variety of niches across complex and diverse social, political and operational environments, are each busy with their own particular tasks and challenges. We need not think of intellectual unification, but can promote more fruitful exchange.

Human Rights discourse has enormous strengths. It appears readily understandable and near universally acceptable as a format, by ordinary people as well as officially by governments. The worldwide *Voices of the Poor* study generates a set of priorities close to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, suggest both James Wolfensohn (2005) and Darrow & Tomas (2005). Further, in operational terms, HR discourse provides a rallying call and a set of benchmarks which have definite, specific content, that do not allow the normative thrust to dissolve into nothing. It is connected to a vast legal apparatus, and is yet at the same time more struggle oriented than most development discourse. As Wood reminds us (2003), typically the poor must confront the privileged and act with strength in order to be able to turn claimed or declared rights into delivered, honoured, entitlements.

Human Rights discourse has also had serious shortcomings and dangers, mentioned in Section 2. The weapon of struggle can become a weapon of struggle for privilege. The tactical vagueness around the justification of human rights can sometimes become a major problem in face of conflicting interpretations and limited resources. A rights approach may steer and constrain action by reliance on an enormously costly and remote legal system. However only HR approaches which centre on the legal system can be stifled in the legal embrace. Characteristic of recent ***Human Rights Based Approaches*** is that they seek to avoid this.

Urban Jonsson argues as follows (Jonsson, 2005: 59-60):

[9] See for example even the valuable surveys by Marks (2005) and Andreassen and Marks (2006).

> 'There is an emerging consensus that HRBAP [a human rights based approach to programming] has significant advantages compared to basic needs and human development approaches to programming. … 1. Increased accountability as a result of explicitly defined claim-duty relationships. These are different from entitlements which do not identify any specific duty bearer. A duty is also different from a promise or an interest. 2. HRBAP makes most good programming practice obligatory, and not just optional. ….'

In these first two features we see a sort of management thinking added to ethical aspirations (see also ICHRP, 2005).

> '3. HRBAP offers better protection of people who are poor by ruling out trade-offs that are harmful to them. … HRBAP, therefore, pays more attention to exclusion, discrimination, disparities and injustice, and emphasizes basic causes.' (Jonsson, 2005: 60)

As we saw, this insistence structures planning and policy assessment so as to put an onus on creativity to find ways forward that do not harm poor people, rather than structuring assessment so as to easily permit sacrifice of the poor. It leaves some difficulties that we observed.

While the above points are characteristic of all human rights approaches, point 4 is more characteristic of HRBA: it aims to engage the power of the law but not rely on 'the legal reflex'. In the final point below we will see that it still aims very high.

> '4. HRBAP focuses on legal and institutional reform, and promotes the rule of law. … In HRBAP, justice is seen as a social process, not just a legal one. …. 6. In a human rights approach to development, development assistance can no longer be based on charity or solidarity only; it will be a result of national and international obligations …' (loc. cit.).

Jonsson would likely agree with Gready and Ensor's judgement that 'Not only are human rights possibly reinventing development, but development has the potential to reinvent human rights' (2005: 14). The tendency in his presentation though is to see the issue as either-or—choose this discourse or that—not in terms of complementarity and of distinct roles in distinct niches.

RBAs are easy to elaborate on paper. In practice no mechanical project planning package will be adequate (Uvin, 2004: Ch.5). How, for example, do we choose a manageable focus within a 'joined-up thinking' which seems to indicate connections of everything to everything else? Here Sen's entitlements analysis has been one major and acknowledged inspiration and exemplar for HRBA work. Not all that work however shows familiarity with the relevant literature and tools (e.g. Uvin, 2004: 161 ff.). Uvin argues elsewhere that Sen's *Development as Freedom* is beloved in aid agencies because it combines uplifting talk with no specific operational commitments (p.126). Yet what he sketches briefly himself (p.161 on), for tracing causes and effects in terms of human rights impacts, treads just the sort of path that Sen's entitlements analysis opened up (see e.g. Drèze & Sen, 1989; Gasper, 2007b). If 'An RBA is about promoting the establishment and strengthening of formal and informal, legal and nonlegal mechanisms of creating and enforcing claims' (Uvin, 2004: 182), then it is the daughter or younger sister of entitlements analysis (see e.g. Gasper, 1993). Insofar as HRBAs centre on political struggle, not legal claims, they may indeed go further; with human rights seen as

mental tools that provide direction, moral energy and motivation, but never a substitute for political struggle (Uvin, 2004: 176). Rights plus empowerment create entitlements.

Compared to the ***Human Development Approach***, human rights approaches provide stronger motivating force and greater guarantees for individuals. Their roots in natural rights argumentation provide intrinsic as well as instrumental arguments for rights (see e.g. Gready & Ensor, 2005). The HDA, including entitlements and capability analysis, has however provided a framework for joined-up thinking that rights approaches require, plus more willingness and facility to engage with the frequent inevitability of trade-offs, partly thanks to its roots in basic needs theory. If basic needs too become defined very extensively and as absolute rights, essential and indivisible, then the problem reemerges.

Human Security discourse confronts head-on the importance of prioritization. It has several strengths, arising out of its attempt to synthesise and undertake 'boundary work' at the interfaces of needs, rights, peace and freedoms. We can identify and cultivate a range of strategies incorporated in HS discourse seen as a discourse in politics:

- First, the ethical appeal to human sympathy and solidarity (asking 'whose security?'), including both justice/fairness concerns and virtue/solidarity concerns: 'joined-up feeling'.
- Compared to HDA the human security discourse may have greater motivating power, through its focus on substantive priority areas. Further, the focus on such issues—of violence, disease, trafficking, and so on—may also produce richer and more probing analyses than in some HDA work: motivation enriches analysis as well as action. (Compare perhaps the journal *Disasters* with the *Journal of Human Development*.)
- Its probing of the roots of national and global tensions and conflicts provides arguments to the rich and privileged for change on grounds of prudence, not only (but also) on grounds of justice and sympathy. This 'joined-up thinking' raises questions about the viability of a gated enclave society and asks 'Will action X really increase your longer-term security?'.
- Drawing on Human Development research and the growing tide of well-being work, the Human Security approach at the same time reconsiders the nature of well-being and therefore of prudence and self-interest, asking what are real human interests, which routes promote them and which fail to do so and in fact endanger them.
- How are those four types of probing undertaken and communicated? By joined-up talking, 'boundary work', that seeks long-term influence on mental frameworks by using new and old professional networks.
- But in addition, HS work contains the struggle orientation of providing and employing tools for establishing and demanding accountability: notably via human rights law, the MDGs, the SPHERE convention, and so on.

There are continuing worries over human security discourse. Don't we have enough languages already? Is this one not too vague, too broad-ranging, too overlapping and competitive with other languages? I suggest elsewhere that this is not so (Gasper, 2005a).

Further, however, does adoption of the 'security' label make us fight on the wrong terrain? The danger in boundary work is of conceding too much, in order to be heard. Lakoff advise: 'Don't Think of an Elephant!':

> To negate a frame is to accept that frame. … To carry out the instruction 'Don't think of an elephant' you have to think of an elephant. Rebuttal is not reframing. You have to impose your own framing before you can successfully rebut. The facts themselves won't set you free. You have to frame facts properly before they can have the meaning you want them to convey. (Lakoff: 2002: 419-20)

Does taking over the 'security' label render the human security approach too capturable by the fears and agendas of the rich? Part of HS strategy has been to make the rich see that war, disease, and insecurity are often promoted by some aspects of the rich's present postures. Unfortunately, the psychic fears of the rich are not well correlated with objective measures of security/insecurity. Heightened fears may contribute to a search for psychic security through group affiliation and 'other-ing': the mental creation and real exclusion of 'the other'.

A short response to these worries is that human security discourse needs to continue partnered by human rights approaches and human development analysis. A supplementary longer answer could run as follows. The anti-terror agenda is already with us, and the question is how to counter its predominating mindset. It is hard to see how one can leave for others the key terrain and rhetorical trump-card of 'security', just as we cannot abandon the key discursive terrains of 'development', 'human', and freedom'. Sen's success has been by taking freedom seriously, always asking: Whose freedom? What are the preconditions for meaningful freedom? and What balance of different freedoms? Similarly with 'security', we have to constantly ask: Whose security? [including via applying Joined-up Feeling] and Will such-and-such measures by the rich really increase their security? [Joined-up Thinking]. One aim is to humanize and influence the military and security worlds, through wider thinking and feeling, induced by direct communication and through feeding public pressure. As Caroline Thomas (2004) remarked, this strategy rests on a testable hypothesis.

Clearly, human security discourse should extend to systematically deal with subjective insecurity. Since security is both objective and subjective, HS discourse may presently walk on only one leg. .

A second reason for more attention to emotions and motivations is to ground and sustain 'joined-up feeling'. HS work contains a methodological gap regarding building and maintenance of concern. It requires a methodological broadening, to partner its broadened scope in terms of themes and sectors. This calls for methods from the arts and humanities, including methods with emotional depth such as life narrative and intimate studies of life spheres. Schaffer and Sidonie (2004) argue that there are major interconnections between the rise of human rights discourse and the parallel rise of accounts of individual lives. We need to deepen the understanding of and *feeling* for 'human', not only deepen the *analysis* of development and of security.

This connects us to a bigger agenda of Human Development, such as in Nussbaum's work. For what, let us suppose, if people show little interest in their contemporaries and in future generations? Both ethical appeals and prudence appeals involve trying to re-frame the way that privileged people conventionally think: including reconfiguring how they think about 'self', 'us', 'interests' and therefore 'self-interest'. *Human Security Now* spells out such a policy and research agenda (CHS, 2003: 122-142), including for education on human rights, shared human identity and diverse social identities, interdependence, and mutual respect – education that should include 'the police, the armed forces, private security forces and others with access to the means of coercive force' (CHS, 2003: 122).

Human security discourse brings in the themes of 'caring systems' – examination of how far principles of care can be embodied in welfare systems at levels other than the family – and 'well-being regimes' (Wood & Newton, 2005), going beyond the study of 'welfare regimes' based on intra-North comparisons (e.g. USA–Germany–Scandinavia), to a more comprehensive examination of the systems, extant or conceivable, that promote or, especially, prevent well-being.

The human security thrust initiated by Haq and sustained by figures like Jolly and organizations like UNICEF has perhaps its largest current expression in the MDGs. The MDGs are manifestly crude and top-down targets. Their rationale appears to be political, as accountable commitments, with accountability both domestically and internationally. Haq was not a patient man. He wished to set definite targets against which those in authority would be held accountable. If the targets work directly, well and good; if the targets are not achieved the implicit ('win/win') hypothesis was that this would bring down a cleansing public wrath—with a gamble that it does not instead lead to total disillusion. How good or bad the MDGs are as an operationalisation of a human security agenda is open to debate and experience. They are only one of the possible means for pursuing it.

Alston (2005) calls both for enrichment of MDG work by ideas and inputs from human rights bodies, and for focusing scattered human rights work by reference to the MDGs. He adjudges that the MDGs have better potential to become customary international law than do the full International Human Rights (IHRs) package (p. 773). Human rights purists attack the MDGs for being too narrow (not covering all the stated IHRs) and too minimal, which is the opposite of the widespread claim by others that they are unrealistic and unattainable. These critics ignore the issues of necessary prioritisation and coalition building around targets that can motivate, that stretch but do not strain to breaking point.

Conclusion

We do not face either-or choices between these discourses, but instead a need for effective alliances within a family of valuable discourses, based on co-operation and mutual learning. These can build a bigger picture, an ecumenicism in place of sectarianism. Disagreements can be valuable provided they drive investigation rather than close it off. Some valuable integrated perspectives for analysis and policy already exist.[10]

A summary of the paper's central points is provided in Table 4. It broadly follows the sequence of the paper. For each of human rights, human development and human security discourses it highlights major merits, in the first column. The enumeration of points is based on and extends that in Table 3. The second column summarises major dangers that have been mentioned. Where relevant these are matched to corresponding merits. More especially the dangers are matched horizontally to possible responses, listed in the third column. This provides, I hope, a fuller and more balanced 'balance-sheet' than others currently available (see e.g. ICHRP, 2005). It indicates the required partnership of the three discourses.

Further work on the various human discourses' respective roles and complementarity can investigate to which organizational and discursive niches, levels or functions particular discourses and variants best fit. Some discourses are more global-level; some discourses might fit better, or require adaptation, for another level and niche: national, local, organizational, household or personal. With respect for example to the vital interface between human rights and property rights, human rights discourses have to mould the policy contexts and practice contexts in which property rights are interpreted and applied. The principle of non-retrogression has to be refined and focused. Further, each of the discourses possesses considerable openness of meaning and contains various potentials. We have to study the usages in practice and the practices in use. A more detailed intellectual history of, for example, the various notions of 'rights-based approach' might yield interesting insights.

[10] For example, David Held's 'Global Covenant' project matches human security (pp. xiii, 110-11, 148, 174-5) and human rights (pp. 56, 125, 137, 170 ff.) frameworks.

Table 4: Comparative overview

	MERITS	DANGERS	RESPONSES?
Human Rights approaches (HRA; section 2 above)	I - Even stronger focus on the person than in HDA II - Stronger mobilizing force (for helpers and for oppressed); grounded in fundamental perceptions III - Stronger guarantee; 'do no harm principle'. Defence for the weak. IV - Stronger guarantee: specific right and specific duty V - Massive established organisational & institutional infrastructure VI – Can rechannel our attention in policy analysis (HRBA)	i - Traditional domination by civil and political rights ii - Crude universalism iii - Vagueness of grounding iv - Absolutism and Panglossian dogmatism: an unwillingness to theorise trade-offs can become defence of privilege v – Inertia of a legal system in which presumption of rectitude lies with existing property-holders, and which is only accessible to or capturable by the privileged? vi – Capture of human rights language by litigationist me-first property-rights culture?	i. The stress on indivisibility of rights; but also must be partnered by HDA, HSA. ii. In practice, flexible. iii. Partnership with needs theory. iv. To be guided by HS in prioritizing. v, vi. Can HRBA avoid all this? → by avoiding 'the legal reflex', being a multi-level approach; Human Responsibilities discourse
Human Development approach (HDA; section 3 above)	1. Broader range of objectives than GNP; underlain by concern for individuals' lives 2. Focus on reasoned freedoms 3. Joined up thinking (JUT) 4. Joined up feeling (JUF; cosmopolitan concern) but…(→5)	7. A more generalised and economics-oriented language 6. Serious concern for equity but without guarantees for individuals 5. …motivational basis presumed rather than constructed. 7 cont. Limited conceptual basis? * Consumerist potential * but includes 'development by the people'	- To be partnered by human security approach, MDGs. - To be partnered by human rights approach - To be partnered by HSA, HRA, deeper reflection on 'human', and link to well-being research - Link to human rights-based approaches (HRBA)
Human Security approach (HSA; section 3 above; italics indicate extensions beyond HDA)	[F] JUT: Nexus between freedoms from want and indignity and freedom from fear [A] Focus on reasoned freedoms *[B] A focus on basic needs* *[C] A concern for stability as well as levels* [D] Heightened normative focus on individuals' lives *[E] Basic rights for all.* *D, B, E → stronger motivational basis, mobilizing attention and concern: sustaining [G] Joined-up feeling.*	Is the nexus sufficiently demonstrable? Is security talk 'Thinking of an Elephant?' Capturable by psychic fears and agenda of the rich?	JUT, JUF, plus: o Work on rethinking identity and well-being o Extension to consider subjective insecurity o Methodological broadening o Deliberate investments in boundary work o Struggle orientation; establishing criteria and demanding accountability o Partnership with HDA & HRBA

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