CHAPTER-III
Concept of Peace: Galtung’s view and its implications.

The English connotation of the term ‘Peace’ is cessation of war, a state of quietness. The term ‘peace’ may in itself be peace productive; it produces a common basis, a feeling of communality in purpose that may pave the ground for deeper ties. There are also two compatible definitions of peace—viz, peace is the absence or reduction of violence of all kinds and peace is non-violent and creative conflict transformation. If we analyse these two definitions we find that ‘peace’ is the negation of violence. So, the first definition of peace is violence oriented. And if we analyse the second definition we find that peace is the context for conflicts to unfold non-violently and creatively.

To define peace one has to know and understand the nature of conflict and violence. Also the questions like ‘how is conflict transformation possible?’ ‘What are the causes of conflict?’, ‘how can violence be transcended?’ etc. are important in this regard for forming the right and adequate theoretical perspective for explicating the concepts of non-violence and peace.

So, any researcher or scholar who wishes to talk about peace has to explicate the concepts of conflict and violence.

Johan Galtung has focused on three methodological premises for understanding what peace is:

1. The term ‘peace’ shall be used for social goals at least verbally agreed by many, if not by most.
2. These social goals may be difficult, but not impossible to attain.
3. The statement ‘Peace’ is the absence of violence shall be retained as valid.

In the context of Galtung’s philosophy of peace and according to the methodological premises, peace is a state of affairs the possibility of which is founded upon countering violence and transforming conflict. Also it has certain
social philosophical connotations. Like Gandhi, Galtung would refrain from the idea of countering violence through violence and sustaining conflict with its potentiality to generate violence. For him, peace means 'non-violent and creative conflict transformation'. Hence the means of 'peace' another definition of which, according to Galtung, is that it is 'absence/reduction of violence of all kinds' has to be non-violent and peaceful.

Hence, in its existential and practical aspect, peace and non-violence is interlinked with the experience of violence and conflict. Conceptually and theoretically, peace and non-violence is explicable with reference to the definition of violence and conflict.

In Galtung's philosophy of peace, non-violence has a wide coverage that includes individual, social, cultural and political life of humans. This is for the reason that he traces the genesis of violence not only in human mind and society in its apparent shape but also in the structure of the society.

According to Galtung, a peace researcher cannot ignore the violence that originates from the structure of a society. Therefore, there is a need to extend the concept of violence to include in it the wider and subtle violence inherent in the structure of a society.

Violence is structurally present in a society when human beings are so conditioned that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations. Violence is here defined as the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, between what could have been and what is. Violence is that which increases the distance between the potential and actual, and that which impedes the decrease of this distance. When the potential is higher than the actual and the difference which is by definition avoidable prevails, then violence is present. And when the actual is unavoidable, then violence is not present even if the actual is at very low level. The potential level of realization is that which is possible with a given level of insight and
resources. If insight and resources are monopolized by a group or class or they are used for other purposes, then the actual level falls below the potential level, and violence is present in the system. In addition to these types of indirect violence there is another type of violence, viz., *direct violence*, where means of realizations are not simply withheld, but directly destroyed.

Indirect violence is within the social structure itself and it affects relationship among human beings and human societies in the world. And inside human beings there is the indirect, non-intended, inner violence that comes out of the personality structure. If we define violence as the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, the meaning of ‘Potential realization’ is highly problematic particularly when we move from somatic aspects of human life where consensus is mere readily obtained, to mental aspects.

In the third principle of ‘Peace’ Galtung stated that the statement that peace is the absence of violence should be retained as valid. Though this idea of absence the terms ‘Peace’ and ‘Violence’ get interlinked to each other.²

Galtung focused on six dimensions of violence, these are –

1. The distinction between physical and Psychological violence.
2. The distinction between negative and Positive influence.
3. The existence or non-existence of the object that is hurt.
4. The existence or non-existence of the subject who acts.
5. The distinction between intended and unintended violence.
6. The distinction between manifest and latent violence.

For Galtung ‘Peace’ refers also to the absence of *structural violence*. Traditionally violence is conceived as personal violence only, with important subdivisions in terms of violence and the threat of violence, physical and Psychological violence and intended and unintended. This taxonomy of violence is theoretically rich and non-violence becomes a counter-thesis of it.

Knowledge of this schematization of violence needs to be nurtured as a
safeguard for sustenance of peace and non-violence in every sector of human life.

Indirect violence is structural violence and direct violence is personal violence. The chief difference between structural violence and personal violence is that personal violence is meaningful as a threat, a demonstration even when nobody is hit, and structural violence is meaningful as a blueprint, as an abstract form without social life, used to threaten people into subordination. Personal violence is usually overt and the object of personal violence usually perceives the violence, and may complain as well. The object of structural violence may not perceive this at all. Structural violence normally evades the catch or perception of its object. Personal violence represents change and dynamism – not only ripples on waves, but waves on otherwise tranquil waters. Structural violence is silent, it does not show – it is essentially static, it is the tranquil waters. In a static society, personal violence will be registered, whereas structural violence may be seen as about as natural as the air around in us. In a highly dynamic society personal violence may be seen as wrong and harmful but still somehow congruent with the order of things, whereas structural violence becomes apparent because it stands out like an enormous rock in a sea coast, impeding the free flow, creating all kinds of eddies and turbulences. We can conceive of structural violence as something that shows certain stability, whereas personal violence shows tremendous fluctuations over time.

According to Galtung every unit has a structure whether it is a nation or a society. And for understanding the mechanism of the structure some ideas are necessary. The most fundamental ideas are the ideas of actor, system, structure, rank and level. Actors seek goals, and are organized in system as they are interacting with each other. When two nations are interchanging their culture, trading their goods, they are interacting with each other for a given set of actor.
It can then be referred to as a structure. In that structure an actor i.e., one nation, may have high rank and another may have low rank, and so on. But if we turn our eyes on one actor, i.e., on one nation, there are generally three major interpretations according to Galtung, viz, in terms of territories: a nation can be seen as a set of districts, a local govt. and individuals. Likewise in an association it can be seen as local chapters, and individual members.

In all the systems, there is interaction and as a result value is somehow exchanged. And the value of distribution has been made between egalitarian and inegalitarian distributions.

There are six factors according to Galtung for maintaining inegalitarian distributions, and can be seen as mechanisms of structural violence, theses are-

1. Linear ranking order
2. A cyclical interaction pattern
3. Correlation between rank and centrality
4. Congruence between the systems
5. Concordance between the ranks and
6. High rank coupling between levels.

In the first factor i.e. in linear ranking order the ranking is complete and it leaves no doubt as to who is higher in any pair of actors. In the acyclical interaction pattern factor all actors are connected, but one way there is only one correct path of interaction network. The fourth factor means the interaction networks are structurally similar. Concordance between the ranks is that if an actor is high in one system then he also tends to be high in another system where he participates.

Social systems have a tendency to develop all the six factors or mechanism unless deliberately prevented from doing so. Hence, the pattern is set for an aggravation of inequality, in same structures so much so that the lowest ranking actors are deprived not only relative to the potential, but indeed below subsistence minimum. Inequality shows up in a chain of interlocking feudal relationship. Inequality also shows up in different unhealthy rates between individuals in a district, the states in nation, the nations in an international organization. They are deprived because their structures deprive them of
chances to organize and bring voting power, striking power etc., because they are overwhelmed by all the authority top dogs present.

Inequality, which becomes a part of the system is one example of structural violence. Can structural violence be removed in a non-violent, peaceful manner? Galtung’s explication of the concept of violence and its deeper stretch even beyond the perception of the object of violence, that is, human sufferers reveals the importance and enormity of the task of countering it with peace process in a non-violent manner for the reason of structural violence is in an inexplicable relationship with the vast project of modernization. One cannot propose to use the apparatus of violence that is so friendly with this project to counter this project itself in terms of setting the entire project within a value perspective. It is interesting to note Rupesinghi’s observation in this context; “The modernization project has been accompanied by a highly centralized and standardized bureaucratic system whose apotheosis has been the development and articulation of a centralized state. The centralized state and its evolution was the project which was seen as the best vehicle for the evolution of human civilization. The evolution of the state has been the vehicle upon which violence has been mediated between itself and the people, through the evolution of a technocratic/bureaucratic structure which has taken upon itself the monopoly of violence. The evolution of the state and the process of standardization have meant that culture and languages have been, and continue to be, either eliminated, absorbed or incorporated into the modern project.”

Rupesinghe also points to the gradual erosion of state monopoly over violence and the emergence of various transnational forces that are able to arm, equip, and deliver lethal weapons of terror. Galtung defines violence “as any avoidable suffering” or “avoidable reduction in human realization” which is possible by initiating peace process shadding any fringe of violence in it. His contention that indirect or structural violence needs to be checked and set in a gradual process of
eradication in a non-violent manner has to be corroborated by the practice of non-violence at individual level too. ‘Peace’ which is by definition ‘absence of violence’ cannot be initiated with violence. Here lies the inseparable relation between peace and non-violence. While peace cannot be defined within a negative reference to violence, it cannot be initiated without at the same time translating the positive meaning of non-violence in action.

For sustaining peace in the society there is a need for designing peace process. For designing peace process there is a need for well planned elaborations of the design. Design of peace processes involves bringing together different types of conceptual and organizational factors to help in long term Peace building. Because for sustaining any kinds of value based concept there is need for well planned scheme to bring success to the project that the concept has. In the pre-negotiation period of a conflict situation the peace initiator should include application of design and strategies intended to bring parties into that negotiation process and thereby to frame the realistic goals for each stage for negotiations. Then peace initiation has to formulate and design a process which can create trust and confidence in both the actor. A more important thing is to reinforce the linkage between the actors who are directly involved in this peace making process. Designing of peace process in the pre-negotiation stage has thus a great importance as it obstructs to breed further violence and conflict.

In keeping with Galtung’s philosophy of peace, Rupesinghe suggested eight steps to frame the process

1. Diagnosis of the cause of conflict and violence.
2. Ownership of peace process i.e. to ensure sustainability of peace process there should be empowerment of local actors.
3. Identifying all the actors.
4. Identifying the facilitators.
5. Setting a realistic time table.
6. Sustaining the effort.
8. Strategic constituencies.

The First stage implies that for sustaining peace in the society there is need for a clear conceptual and theoretical understanding of the root causes of a given conflict. When we able to understand the root causes of the conflict we will be able to solve the problem and thereby we would be able to sustain peace in the society. Every conflict group whether it is an insurgent group or other violent group, emerges for different causes. The cause may be due to the frustration from unemployment, or from deprivation by particular community or group or for gaining freedom or more power. So, to ensure sustainability of peace process it is the duty of an initiator to know the root causes of conflict formation or eruption of violence. Until and unless we are able to know the cause we would not be able to reach them and their problem. The situation will then remain unchanged.

The second step to ensure sustainability of peace process must be the empowerment of local actors so that they become the primary role makers in the peace process.

The third step implies that accurate identification is necessary for all significant actors i.e. the visible, less visible, articulate elites and less articulate elites within a given society. In a violent conflict situation the military and non-military actors should be fully involved in the process.

After identification of all the significant actors, identification of all the facilitators is also necessary. It is also important to identify accurately who is appropriate for or fit to be involved in the design of a particular peace process i.e. who has sufficient skill and background knowledge to make positive contribution to design the process. If the work is assigned to an unskilled person peace can never be sustained in a society.
A realistic time-table is the fifth requirement for peace process because the facilitators must be able to devote their time to sustain peace. For various aspects of the design, from the identification of the root causes and significant actors through such phases to the elaboration of mechanism of political and social accommodation a clear and distinct time frame is necessary.

The sixth step is sustenance of the effort. A comprehensive approach requires an adequate investment of financial resources, patience and a sustained commitment from sponsors.

The seventh step is very crucial. The facilitators should know the main interests of the parties in conflict and they should also know the principles which were used for the said purpose, whether the local body or the others are paying interest or not, what type of obstacles came in the way in past and how the obstacles were overcome solved by the facilitators, and what alternatives they adopted to make the process successful. Without having knowledge of these factors the facilitator’s mission will stop in the midway, because there may be lots of obstacles to settle the problem. The facilitators may time and again fail in their mission but if they remain static in their position and if they study the previous history of success and failure they can be able to sort out the lacunae in their design. Hence evaluation of success and failure is of crucial importance.

The last element is strategic constituencies which imply that for designing a peace process there should be a constituent body which should consist of members from all levels of society. This constituent body is inclusive in nature. Various types of people and organizations are included within it like business personal, educationist, military official (ex), different govt. or non-governmental benevolent organization like NGO, Human Rights Organization etc. The idea of ‘doing good’ is generated and regenerated in this body. With the skills from various sectors of life members contribute to society in sustaining and their work also will be faster. So inclusion of this type of agency has importance. In this
constituent body, nominees from every sphere of the society are needed as every one has a role to play in peace building. Sometimes, people give indulgence to violence, but if they are involved in peace making they will automatically begin to think in a positive manner.

The principal aim of strategic constituencies should be to help building the political will to promote and maintain peace making. Their effort should be to create a relational space between the conflicting parties and also to involve different organizations and agencies in this relation so that they can contribute towards conflict resolution. Even the business leaders sometime remain passive in the face of violent internal conflicts, instead of their potentiality to influence decision makers and people on all sides and despite the apparent loss to business in the presence of violent social conflicts.

Galtung holds that external and internal inputs in peace designs should be combined with particular strategies for particular conflicts because each conflict situation or context should suggest from within itself how the process is to be designed. A general peace making theory must also include the particular and context-bound approaches by inventing in each specific case a strategy which fosters sustainable reconciliation through the development of mechanisms, institutions and attitudes rooted in accountability to citizens and which can maintain the momentum of peace.

Besides the above mentioned eight steps for sustainable peace design there are also some responsibilities of peace makers to establish peace in the society. Every deed implies a doer and without the good role of a doer a good work cannot be possible. Peacemaking is also a noble goal and for this noble deed a good doer must be there. So, for peace making the role of local and outside peace makers play a vital role.

Non-governmental peace makers from out side have important roles to play in alleviation or resolution of violent internal conflict. Adam Curle and other
Western thinkers stressed on the negative effects of the participation of outside peace makers. They thought that the outsider initiator came as sharers and supporters rather than initiators. They all the time consider themselves as strangers and they only participate only by sharing their views. They have no initiation from their heart to solve the problem. So, there is necessity of local peace makers and the role of local peace makers is of prime importance to sustainable peacemaking.

Local peace makers can include group of people of known integrity who agree to act as a catalytic agents. They may assist by sharing their opinion. In some cases where nationally or internationally sponsored public peacemaking processes are already being undertaken, it might prove beneficial to establish a number of parallel community based activities away from the glare of publicity. This type of peace building should be structured in such a way so that examination of solutions to various problems is possible.

Galtung feels the clear need of expertly designed framework which comprises various non governmental organizations. For this the training of local trainers is of utmost importance. Well-designed and well-delivered conflict resolution training involves carefully selected local actors with the potentiality to influence political activists. This training needs the empowerment of local actors with adequate support for sustenance of peace process.

For purpose of promoting peace, peace study is indispensable. Galtung holds that peace study is similar to health studies. In health studies one has to know causes of ill health / disease, the conditions of ill health, and the nature of problem. Similarly for peace studies, the researchers and actors in peace processes should know the causes, conditions and contexts in various spheres, nature, and human beings society.

The two definitions of peace (conflict related and violence related) i.e. peace is the absence or reduction of violence of all kinds and peace is non-violent and
creative conflict transformation are focused on human beings in a social setting. And this makes peace studies a social science with an added value orientation. Epistemologically, peace studies will share some assumptions with all scientific endeavors, like medical studies, social sciences even with architecture and engineering. Hence, peace studies envisage and obey the rules for scientific research.

There are three principal types of peace studies viz. empirical peace studies, critical peace studies, and constructive peace studies. Empirical peace studies informs the patterns and conditions of peace in the past, because from the past we get data. Research in social sciences requires collection of data, for analysis; it processes them and compares them to past and then conclusion follows. Critical peace studies examine the data about the present in general and present policies in particular in the light of peace. We can conclude such comparison with consonance or dissonance. In the latter case the conclusion is of the critic as 'reality is bad or wrong' not of the empiricist that the theories or values are true or false. Dissonance is the basis of changing reality so that the future data may show consonance. Though the very concept of critical peace studies implies negative meaning, but in reality it is not so. Another type of peace studies is constructive peace studies. It takes theories about what ought to work. Constructive peace studies offer constructive proposals, and it transcends what empiricism reveals. Constructive peace studies add a dimension of therapy or remedy to peace making and produce blue prints for the future vision or images. Galtung in his major work Peace by Peaceful Means stated five value theses of peace studies. These are-

1. Without values, peace studies become social studies in general and world studies in particular.
2. The core value, peace, has to be well defined but not too well defined.
3. Value knowledge differs from value holding.
4. A minimum of value consensus is necessary; a maximum of value consensus is undesirable.

5. Objectivity is inter-subjectivity, the condition for inter-subjectivity is explicitness.

The first thesis means that without the value of ‘Peace’ the critical and constructive peace studies are impossible. Particularly forecast and therapy are impossible without value.

The second thesis states that if the value of peace as the guiding light for peace studies then the term ‘Peace’ should be defined clearly. And if we are able to define the term clearly we would be able to understand the situation of a state of peacefulness and peacelessness and accordingly we would be able to act, and decide where to talk or where not to. So, this situation will clear up understanding method of peaceful state.

The third thesis states that to know value is important than to hold the value. That means that we can know peace even without believing in peace.

The fourth thesis is that for peace studies at least a minimum of value consensus is necessary. A minimum value consensus is needed for everybody. But a maximum of it will lose sight of the criticality.

The fifth thesis is that social science like all sciences is public, available to scrutiny of others. For this to be possible, everything has to be explicit. With explicitness, communication is possible, and with communication inter-subjectivity, comparison, dialogue-informed debate.

Objectivity in the sense of reflecting an underlying unchanging reality, objectivity as an inter-subjective dialogue based upon explicit premises means awareness of own assumptions.

Johan Galtung’s philosophy of peace has several important components or dimensions that make it cut a midway between pure philosophy and social science, social science and ethics, theory and practice. It is, on the one hand, a
philosophy defining peace and non-violence in the context of what they should be binarily negotiating conflict and violence. It is also a social scientific programme on the one hand in which value of non-violence and peace prevails all along. Presence of value within it straightway questions the concept of value neutrality in social sciences. The concept of peace that he proposes is realistic in the sense that it takes cognizance of the stark facts of conflict situations in society’s and conversion of conflict into violence. Conversion of conflict into violence is the negative expression of conflict energy.

For Galtung there are three aspects of conflict, viz. attitudinal (A), behavioral (B), and contradictory (C). The life history of conflict centers upon another subsequent conflict between conflict as such and the combination of attitudinal (A) and behavioral (B) aspects of it i.e. C and A+B. Contradictions produce both happiness and suffering. One can call it ‘conflict energy’. Contradiction between A+B and C give rise to both “positive energy, P, used to restore and enhance the wholeness of life (love, non-violent, associate action) and negative energy N, used to separate and destroy life (hatred, violent, dissociative action)”\(^6\). As energy does not die, conflict also continues as conflict energy. The value of life is assumed in terms of sustaining the P or positive aspect of the conflict energy through individual moral philosophical commitment to the value of peace and non-violence and social scientific programme of peace making. Peace process, for Galtung, is a never-ending process. Built on a violence concept beyond direct violence as to include structural (indirect) and cultural (legitimizing) violence, Peace means “direct peace + structural peace + cultural peace.”\(^7\) In its dynamic sense, according to Galtung, “peace is what we have when creative conflict transformation taken place non-violently”\(^8\).

Galtung’s explication of the concept of peace and non-violence is in close consonance with the position of Gandhi. But, like Krishnamurti, he also points to
the facts of violence (direct and indirect) and suggests that only on proper understanding of the nature of violence and conflict, we can develop a philosophy of peace and chalk out the programme for peace building. Unlike Krishnamurti, Galtung points to conflict and violence occurring not only in individual human mind but also outside it overtly in societal world. Hence, Galtung’s philosophy of peace, though amply indicative of a general concept of man or philosophical anthropology, is primarily programmatic in nature. Its practical importance is rather obvious. But when we try to glean a consolidated wisdom regarding the practical importance of all three thinker’s concepts of non-violence and peace, we should develop or at least try to envision an alternative standpoint,—a standpoint which may work at the deeper level and dimension of our individual and social existence.
NOTES AND REFERENCES:

8. Ibid P-265.