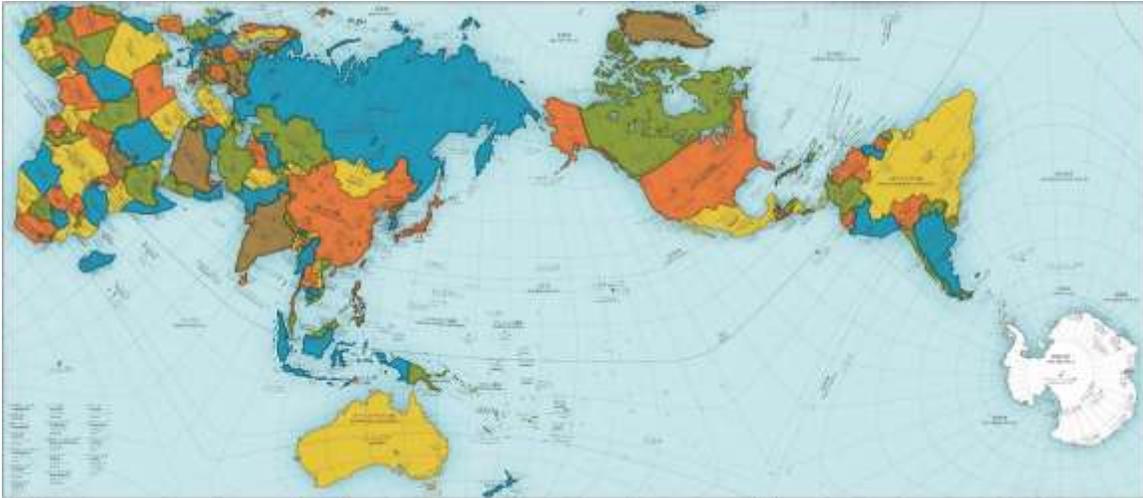


## **Reflecting on the Big Picture: Dignism – Nothing Less Than a New Look at Things**

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I ask you to embrace this look at the world. I know it is not easy, not even for me, but I will tell you why you should:

I understand that this image is contrary to everything you have ever learned and at first glance your very fibre rejects this image. I understand that you are disoriented in this view of the world and that simple things like up and down appear to have changed drastically. Loss of orientation is one of the major problems that the entire planet is facing and it is the core of all of the other problems that are forced upon you by the media. This very accurate map of the world is better than any other for a number of reasons. If you can accept this view of the world, we can change the world.

This map makes a radical break from fixed ideas of orientation. Simple truisms like North, South, East, West do not work here. There is no reason to cling to the dogma of North and South. Even the magnetic poles are not at the position of the congruence of the lines of direction - it is a faith, a truism, but not a fact. It is easy to grasp and widely taken to heart, but there is no reason to doggedly adhere to the past in a changing world. But exactly that is the human nature! It is the longing for the good old days. It is knowing that home plate in a game of baseball has an exact measurement. If the striker keeps kicking into the goalposts you do not widen the goal for his ease. Mother remains Mother and Father remains Father. Changes in the marital situation cause emotional damage in the children that manifests itself much later. People resist change. "Men and nations

behave wisely when they have exhausted all other resources,” Abba Eban, Israeli diplomat. An astute observation, and a warning.

Because people resist change, every effort to create a better world, just like a better map, has been thwarted from the moment that one humanoid picked up a rock to strike another. Those purporting change are dangerous to the natural order of things, they must be silenced, whatever the cost lest the unwanted change occur.

How shall we motivate to change? Certainly our ancient ancestors moved away from the fire that was burning too hot and closer to the dying embers. Did they stand up in time to fetch more wood? I'd say yes, justified by our existence in the present. Those who did passed their genetic perchance for change on to their children and were progenitors of adaptability.

Rats and humans are the most adaptable creatures on the planet, and arguably the most successful. Children and youth are more adaptable, as they are in a phase of learning and assimilating the world. This is an explanation for the "Fridays" protests: without the yoke of adult problems, youth take a wider view upon the world.

Sadly this aspect is lost upon those who have achieved a certain status or wealth, such members of society wish to retain this personal value at all costs. Unfortunately, they are in positions of decision.

"The more things change, the more they stay the same." Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr's satirical flippancy should not be dismissed too soon. A waves of radicalization have begun to roll over the shores of community like a rising sea level. The changes in truisms like church, country, family, or sexual orientation are disturbing to the status quo. We have to go back to the good-old-days when the world was simple. However, the world was never simple. The rose-colored glasses of reflection distort the view of the past.

How can I convince you to accept the new map of the world? For centuries now, there has been a tradeoff, a contract inherent with change. If you are good, you will be rewarded in the afterlife. If you only work diligently, you can go from dishwasher to millionaire. If you stop smoking, you will live longer.

This is the situation we have at this moment. If we stop doing what is addictive and comes naturally, we will all live longer.

Anyone who has tried to give up a vice knows how painful that can be. And that person will find myriad excuses to avoid the necessary change. “Men and nations behave wisely when they have exhausted all other resources,”

How shall we convince diverse humanity to accept dignity as a solution? More importantly: is it possible to win the status quo to a new paradigm of dignity? What can they be offered to do so?

Systematically, people are offered wealth and power for behaving in a certain manner. Dignity cannot compete on this level.

Systematically, people are offered a better world in the afterlife for tolerating having no wealth and power. Dignity cannot be an organized religion.

Systematically, people are offered a life in communal existence for giving up their personal rights. Dignity cannot be a political system.

My conclusion, based upon the information at present and adjustable to the future, is that Dignity must be a sort of religion without dogma. Humanism promoting the best attributes of humanity. Unfortunately, there can be no robes, hats, medals, or other accoutrements of membership. No extra value in being a dignitary. The rewards of taking part must remain the nods of the others and the joy of being authentically human in the best manner.

Each and every attempt to coordinate the masses has been corrupted. The best intentions are no guarantee that later killing in the name of the good cause will not occur. The human condition is not come very far in millennia. The radical stress factors that scratch down the veneer of civilization appear to increase. A gentler method of interaction is of the highest importance. Dignity top-down. Dignity bottom-up. Dignity is needed everywhere.

Although wise men have predicted the end of the world as we know it. This time it appears they are right.

How about an end to indignity?

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Thoughts for the Global Dignity Conference in 2019

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