

# **A Dignity Economy**

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## **Abstract**

The increase in humiliating effects from existing economic practices and institutions that can be observed all around the world in myriad manifestations has forced this author, together with her colleagues, to question present-day economic frames. A book titled *A Dignity Economy: Creating an Economy Which Serves Human Dignity and Preserves Our Planet* was published in 2012. In this book, it is suggested to replace notions such as “capitalism” and “socialism” in the public discourse. These terms have degraded into hot-button markers for cycles of humiliation, while few remember what these terms actually mean. The suggestion is to create a new terminology, starting from dignity, such as *dignity-ism*, or *dignism*. A world informed by dignism could be described as a world where every newborn finds space and is nurtured to unfold their highest and best, embedded in a social context of loving appreciation and connection. A world, where the carrying capacity of the planet guides the ways in which everybody’s basic needs are met, a world, where we are united in respecting human dignity and celebrating diversity, where we prevent unity from being perverted into oppressive uniformity, and keep diversity from sliding into hostile division.

## **Introduction**

“We live between two worlds – an old order that is dying but not yet dead, and a new order that is conceived but not fully born,” this is the first statement that guides this paper.<sup>1</sup> The second one speaks to how the transition to a new order may best proceed. It is a notion penned by author Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) and published in 1862, namely, that the highest that we can attain to is sympathy with intelligence, rather than knowledge.<sup>2</sup> In 2012, Stuart Firestein chimes in from his neuroscience lab at Columbia University when he speaks of “thoroughly conscious ignorance,”<sup>3</sup> or the wisdom of accepting what it is we cannot be entirely sure about.<sup>4</sup> The same can also be expressed more poetically: poet Rainer Maria Rilke recommended embracing uncertainty and loving the questions.<sup>5</sup>

With a doctorate in medicine, and another one in psychology, I feel profoundly unqualified to write about economics. Yet, the increase in humiliating effects from existing economic practices and institutions that I observe all around the world in myriad manifestations has forced me, together with my colleagues, to question our present-day economic frames. A book titled *A Dignity Economy: Creating an Economy Which Serves Human Dignity and Preserves Our Planet* was published in 2012.<sup>6</sup>

Four decades of global living on all continents have provided me with a deeply anchored sense of the impact of present-day economic structures, and shown me to which degree these structures form the largest, unescapable frames within which human activities unfold globally

and locally, and to which extent they affect all spheres, from cultural, to social, to psychological. Forty years of doing more than merely traveling to, or visiting other cultures, forty years of becoming part of many cultures and acquiring knowledge of the major language families, have widened my personal experiential realm so that it is not just monocultural or bicultural or multicultural, it is by now trans- and metacultural. The vantage point that emerges from this life path permits me to ask: If global frames introduce systemic humiliation, in the way apartheid did, would not this be extremely significant? Under apartheid, since it was an all-encompassing system, all lives and relationships were tainted with humiliation. It was impossible to dignify apartheid by being kinder to each other or by creating well-intentioned small-scale initiatives: the entire system had to be reshaped at the appropriate larger-scale level. What if today's apartheid is represented by the fact, among others, that never-ending growth is incompatible with our finite planetary boundaries?<sup>7</sup>

On November 25, 2014, I saw Suzan-Lori Parks' play, "Father Comes Home from the Wars" (Parts 1, 2 & 3) at the Public Theatre in New York City.<sup>8</sup> A slave named Hero is the lead figure in this play. The play reflects on freedom in its various manifestations. Hero is a thoroughly well-intentioned honest man, a man who, for instance, is opposed to stealing. Therefore he will not run away from his master, since a slave like him has a considerable monetary value and running away would be like stealing. At the same time, Hero is not without freedom, at least in certain ways, freedom, for him, is whatever choices are placed in front of him within his slave-status. He cannot fathom freedom outside of that status; he cannot envision the freedom of "owning oneself." Slavery is an unescapable frame of life for Hero, like a law of nature, and he has difficulties grasping that this frame is made by humans – and that it can therefore also be undone by humans. Slavery, including living with a never-ending sense of fear and terror, is a "given" for Hero. Hero accepts and succumbs to a system of domination that is human-made, rather than forced upon him by nature's constraints.

To me, this play made palpable the wide-spread inability, also nowadays, to fathom the possibility of wider definitions of freedom. A number of frames of contemporary life, far from representing laws of nature, are human-made and can be changed, as there are, among others: the clinging to the need to dominate, be it over nature or "enemies," despite the opportunity to let go of this cultural script by intentionally nurturing global interconnectedness for the stewardship of the world's ecological and social spheres. There is no need to bow to sentences such as "we are a business and no charity," which insinuate that profit maximization is a first-order frame with the status of a law of nature. Like Hero, we, as humankind, seem to fail to recognize that we are agents, and that we, particularly at the present juncture in history, a juncture of risk and possibility, may need to reconsider what we should accept as givens. There might exist unnecessary limitations to our freedom, limitations designed by us, humankind, that can be un-designed.

Why not sit together today, as humankind, liberate ourselves from all limitations that flow from human-engineered domination, while lovingly accepting and respecting only the limitations that indeed have the status of laws of nature, such as the finiteness of our planet? It is laudable to be well-intentioned and honest; nowadays, global challenges urge everybody who has good intentions to shoulder responsibilities that earlier generations did not have to shoulder to the same degree, namely, reaching beyond one's immediate surroundings, and envision and engage in responsible global systemic change toward a dignified world, within which, then, dignity can also flourish locally.<sup>9</sup> Like Nelson Mandela, who shouldered the responsibility to promote deep paradigm change for a whole society.

## State of current affairs

Robert Paehlke is “Canada’s Environmental Voice,” he is professor emeritus at Trent University, where he taught environmental policy and politics for 35 years. He observes that the decoupling of economic growth and throughput growth has not succeeded anywhere yet, not least because no society has really tried so far.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, most do the exact opposite, he observes, namely, subsidize the extraction of materials and energy disproportionately. What is neglected is renewable energy, energy efficiency, and organic, local agriculture, for example.

Stephen Purdey is an international relations specialist and here is his view on why economic growth is still a top policy priority around the world:<sup>11</sup>

First, economic growth is politically expedient. Growth, as John Kenneth Galbraith once called it, is the ultimate social lubricant. It draws support and approbation from all sectors of society – rich and poor, employers and employees, public and private sectors alike, because they all stand to gain. The “rising tide lifts all boats” mantra is universally appealing and therefore politically compelling. It is also, of course, a utopian economic model which hints at an abrogation of governmental responsibility, even as it helps us understand the lure of growth.

Second, and more to the point in this conversation, the growth paradigm is morally convenient. It serves as a surrogate for distributive justice, as an easy way to sidestep the difficult ethical choices which governments would otherwise have to make in an economic context circumscribed by physical limits.

Purdey explains how the growth paradigm serves as an “irresistible image of the future that is cornucopian, equitable, and ecologically benign” and promises that by integrating developing and transitional economies into the free global market, global issues such as North-South fault lines will be overcome. However, he warns, this is an illusion. It is an illusion to believe that in the future constructed capital goods will be there to safely replace the resources depleted now, and that the beneficence flowing from prosperity will protect non-human species and their habitat. It is an illusion to hope that there will be no need to share with the poor, or with future generations, or with other species. He warns of an “economic surrogate spawned by the false belief that betterment follows necessarily from the unrestricted freedom to grow.” Purdey concludes, that as long as ethically robust socio-political oversight remains absent, ecological degradation and other pathologies will continue on a planetary scale. Philosophy, ethics, and perhaps religion too must be key ingredients in the process.

“Recovered economist” as he calls himself, Kamran Mofid, who has taught economics in England for 20 years, before “waking up,”<sup>12</sup> has discovered a letter to the editor of *The Times* by Lord Kalms from March 8, 2011, concerning the prevailing values, or lack of, at the London School of Economics: “Sir, Around 1991 I offered the London School of Economics a grant of £1 million to set up a Chair in Business Ethics. John Ashworth, at that time the Director of the LSE, encouraged the idea but had to write to me to say, regretfully, that the faculty had rejected the offer as it saw no correlation between ethics and economics. Quite. Lord Kalms, House of Lords.”<sup>13</sup>

While I write these lines, on May 15, 2015, the Norwegian Farmers and Smallholders Union broke negotiations with the new neo-liberal government in Norway, because the government focuses on large agricultural enterprises and neglects the small.<sup>14</sup> The new government emphasizes the paradigm of profit-maximizing industry for agriculture over that of protecting the environment and culture. As it is a market fundamentalist neo-liberal government, it caters to what environmental activist Berry Wendell warns against, namely,

that the general purpose of the present economy is to exploit, rather than to foster or conserve.<sup>15</sup> All over the world, I observe the same trend toward centralization and large-scale projects, in which people are turned into cog wheels, preferably “highly motivated” cog wheels. It is a new form of global colonization, which manifests in wealthy countries in moderate forms, particularly in Norway, where the cultural heritage basically is opposed to this trend and the new government needs to invest much effort to overcome resistance. This trend is much more massive in other parts of the world. I use the example of Norway here to show that this is a global problem, not just a problem of the Global South, or “the wealthy countries exploiting the poor countries.” Citizens in all countries, including the most wealthy, are now put under the same pressure. I am a personal witness, on all continents, of the destruction flowing from large-scale mining, dam building, land grabbing, or shopping mall invasions, to name but a few examples. Understandably, it is easier to steer one big entity toward exploitation and allow profit to be siphoned off by a few, than this could be done with many stubborn self-reliant small entities. In Norway, in addition, the climate is unfavorable to large-scale industrial farming, even if its cultural heritage were favorable to it. In other words, Norway shows that explanations, such as “improved effectiveness,” for wanting to damage functioning practices and a culturally shaped landscape, are invalid; the only reason left is to facilitate the squeezing out of more profit.

Please allow me to be frank and share at this point my personal reactions to the ways humankind currently arranges its affairs on our planet. I deeply resonate with Michael Pirson’s warnings – and I do so not just theoretically, but with my entire being: Pirson warns that “marketing as usual” cannot continue, as resource use is increasingly unsustainable, inequity is on the rise, and societal trust declines.<sup>16</sup> Please allow me to precede my very personal testimony by saying that I do not expect others to resonate with me, that I do understand people who find dignity within present-day frames. Yet, I am proud, I must admit, that my own sense of dignity makes me so fragile and vulnerable that I am unable to adapt to a context that I perceive as undignified and undignifying – I am the proverbial child that calls out: “but the Emperor has no clothes!”<sup>17</sup> I must admit that I feel personally humiliated when I am expected to find meaning in status or monetary remuneration.<sup>18</sup> Only stature – and I define stature as the quality of my pro-social contributions – can elicit my interest, rather than status, social rank, class, or money. I work very hard, seven days a week, for the common good, and I receive neither traditional status nor salary for my efforts. My motivation is entirely independent from remuneration. If it were, I would not be able to live with the degradation and humiliation. As much as possible, I avoid being drawn into classical “positions” or “jobs” that would constrain me into national or corporate interest.

Some people pity me, or admire me, for what they think is my idealism or altruism. I ask: Is my path altruistic or egoistic? It is both, I would reply, because I would not survive the humiliation of seeing myself as a status- or salary-maximizing cog wheel in a larger machinery that endangers the common good. I am not a Pavlovian dog who needs status or monetary remuneration as incentives to work. I do not need petty carrots and sticks to be hard-working; it would never occur to me to be “lazy” and neglect the responsibility that my privileges and my inner potential represent to me. The emptiness of meaning and poverty of spirit of reacting to carrots and sticks would have the opposite effect on me, it would deeply demotivate and depress me. Already small children have a natural internal inclination to unfold their highest and best, which is undermined, not strengthened, when they receive external incentives.<sup>19</sup> I am therefore not astonished that depression is on the rise in many societies. Only meaning motivates me. Being reduced to a thing destroys me, and being myself complicit in such objectification, would destroy me doubly. Philosopher Immanuel Kant explains this when he says that “everything has either a price or a dignity. Whatever has

a price can be replaced by something else as its equivalent; on the other hand, whatever is above all price, and therefore admits of no equivalent, has a dignity.”<sup>20</sup>

Defining my purpose in life primarily in terms of being a supplier or a target of the sales of products and services, would not just insult my life philosophy, it would severely damage me psychologically. Allowing myself to feel deficient lest I buy or sell something, would humiliate my humanity to its core. My dignity is independent of my ability to produce sellable products or services. If I were to go as far and reduce even my own creativity to serve “personal branding,” so as to become a product of and to myself, I would feel like I were in *Pleasantville*.<sup>21</sup> I react with disgust when I am called upon to buy something because it is “cheap” or discounted, or to pay a high price because “you are worth it.” I am profoundly sickened by advertisement. I am not a wallet on two legs. I profoundly resent being taken for an idiot who is unaware that only human connection can create happiness, an idiot who falls for the ridiculous belief that owning or using products beyond what furthers the common good, which includes everybody’s own good, can bring deep happiness. Filling my life with momentous excitements over “owning” stuff, excitements to which one quickly adapts, is absurdly void of meaning to me.

Some might think that I suffer from a “sour grapes” syndrome and “opt out” because I am a “loser.”<sup>22</sup> Indeed, with two PhDs, I would have access to highly paid positions. With all my qualification, still, I do not wish to market myself for “work” so as to “earn” livelihood or fame. I “opt in” much more thoroughly than others, by working extremely hard, for the common good, and I would even sacrifice my life for it; just as Nelson Mandela did not earn his livelihood. I am a highly responsible person, which means that I do not connect my dignity and my responsibility to being “independent” and “standing on my own feet.” The African philosophy of *ubuntu* warns against such illusionary *lone hero* dreams that give a glamorous cover for a lonely rat race, by reminding us that “I am because of us.” Particularly in a globally interconnected world, it becomes utterly clear that everybody’s individual self-interest to want to live a dignified life is bound up in the common interest of all humankind to do so.

Cleverness is repulsive to me – nothing of what I do is done because it is smart – and I draw no satisfaction from petty power games. I only engage in activities that are profoundly meaningful to me. I respond to the fact that I have to eat, clothe myself, and have a roof over my head as far as possible in ways that do not require me to compromise what I regard as meaningful, on the contrary, all contributes. I do not wish to have “a job,” I do not wish to find dignity “in or at work,”<sup>23</sup> I do not wish to have leisure time or a private life as opposed to a working life, I do not wish to have a work-life balance, I only wish to have *one* single dignified life. I have a mission, rather than a “job.” I am profoundly selfish in this point because I could not live otherwise: the humiliation would eat my soul and my dignity from inside.

Many feel provoked and react with anger when I share these gut reactions with them. They feel that I let them down, just like Hero feels that slaves who run away are immoral. Yet, I am less and less alone these days. Political philosopher Eric Zencey observes: “Intelligent undergraduates with any kind of deep personal connection to natural systems tend to find the study of standard economics unattractive, displeasing, even soul-deadening. This leaves the field to those most willing to bracket off as irrelevant to their professional purpose any question about the moral and ethical consequences of economic activity, any question about the health and maintenance of nature, any question about the economy’s relation to the larger social and natural systems within which it operates.”<sup>24</sup> Zencey uses the example of ancient king Midas to point out how humankind arrived at such a dire predicament. The estimated energy return on investment (EROI) that petroleum offered in the early 20th Century was in a ratio of 100 to 1. Future economic historians will shake their heads when they grasp to which

degree the average economist of today is oblivious of the relationship between EROI and wealth creation, writes Eric Zencey, to which degree we are programmatically blind to the physical origins of our fortunes, and misattribute it to policies based on algorithms divorced from reality.<sup>25</sup> Future political economists will be shocked with how much blissful ignorance present-day generations burn high-EROI coal and oil, an energy supply and an EROI never seen on the planet before or since, and they will ask how it ever could happen that during that period of glut any human could ever starve from want. In other, words, the unprecedented exploitation of the “ancient sunshine of fossil fuels” is the real dynamo of past economic “success,” thinks Zencey: “In effect the discipline of economics has a free rider problem – it’s been given a free pass by the enormous power of oil to misunderstand itself and its subject matter. You could also recognize it as having a Midas Problem. Like the power granted to that legendary king, the power of wealth-generation that oil granted to our economy, made it impossible for the discipline of economics to connect in any fundamental way with otherness, including the otherness of the planet and its role in the very processes that economics presumes to model.”<sup>26</sup>

I personally react to the blindness of the discipline of economics, coupled with its overwhelming defining power, globally and locally, with designing my life in radically alternative ways. I am both an extreme individualist, one may say, and at the same time acknowledge that humans, including me, are supreme relational beings. I bring together both, individualism and collectivism, in taking the liberty to respect and unfold my relational potential to its fullest, and I do that by nurturing collectives of unity in diversity, of unity in respect for the equality in dignity for all and for their diversity. I am an individualist insofar as I refuse to sell out my soul for the sake of belonging to a majority, and I am a collectivist insofar as I honor the human need for belonging. I do not need any religious legitimization for this orientation, the definition of my “religion” is: “love, dignity-humility, and a sense of embeddedness in awe and wonderment in the face of a universe so much larger than what we humans can fathom.” I am undisturbed by the fact that dignity cannot be reified into fixed definitions abstractly, on the contrary, my global experience has given me courage to embrace dignity as a grounding experience.<sup>27</sup> I do not wish to cling to illusionary fixities, I enjoy to “swim” in the flow of this experience. As a result, I am filled with a deep sense of happiness, satisfaction, and fulfillment. Yet, as I mentioned above, I do not expect others to understand or emulate me, my aim in sharing my vantage point is simply to offer inspiration.

### **How paradigms shift**

Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (HumanDHS),<sup>28</sup> of which I am the founding president, is a global transdisciplinary fellowship of concerned academics, practitioners, activists, artists, and others, who collaborate in a spirit of mutual support to understand the complex dynamics of dignity and humiliation. We wish to stimulate systemic change – globally and locally – to open space for mutual respect and esteem to take root and grow, thus ending humiliating practices and preventing, discontinuing, and healing cycles of humiliation throughout the world. We do our best to cultivate a relational climate characterized by dignity, walking the talk, and mutual growth. For more than a decade, our relational approach has been more than sustainable, it has offered a new model of collaborative action, a *replenishing relational-organizational climate* that is constantly evolving and growing with – rather than at the expense of – the people involved.<sup>29</sup> We walk our talk by being a social movement that nurtures diversity, rather than a traditional top-down organization, where one opinion rules. This means also that not all of my opinions are necessarily shared by all members in our movement, nor should they. In a world in which the concept of *Homo*

*dominator* and *Homo economicus* seems to be the call of the day, our work flourishes by sharing the ego-free, renewable “super fuels” of *Homo amans*, which are love and humility. The nomination for the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize gives all our members great courage.<sup>30</sup>

We are currently around 1,000 personally invited members from all continents, and our website is being accessed by between 20,000 and 40,000 people from more than 180 countries per year since its inception in 2003. In 2011, we launched our World Dignity University initiative,<sup>31</sup> and our publishing house Dignity Press, which has published many books since 2012.<sup>32</sup> We organize two conferences per year. We gather for one global conference at a different location each year, which has led us to Europe (Paris, Berlin, Oslo), Costa Rica, China, Hawai'i, Turkey, New Zealand, South Africa, and Chiang Mai in Northern Thailand. Then we come together a second time each December for our Workshop on Transforming Humiliation and Violent Conflict at Columbia University in New York City, with Morton Deutsch as our honorary convener. We have held 25 conferences all around the world since 2003.<sup>33</sup>

Our experience underpins Monika Kostera's insights that people from all walks of life, all social classes and all countries now have the qualifications to take over the responsibility for social organizations without becoming part of corporate power structures, by turning to self-management and self-organization.<sup>34</sup>

In my writings, I attempt to draw together the core aspects of academic inquiry in various fields and reconstruct them from the perspective of dignity and humiliation. As for my books, so far, I have done so with war and genocide,<sup>35</sup> international conflict,<sup>36</sup> gender and security,<sup>37</sup> and economics.<sup>38</sup> The latter book highlights the psychological damage that flows from present-day economical arrangements, such as, that society is increasingly permeated by mistrust, that abuse becomes a legitimate means of “getting things done,” that fear becomes an overwhelming and debilitating feature, that false choices crowd out important choices,<sup>39</sup> and that the human spirit is being poisoned by the *Homo Economicus* model.

We are four people at the core of this global dignity family, and we work without a salary. Our dignity movement has a near zero budget. We avoid “fundraising” as much as possible, because our experience shows that dignity is easily lost as soon as fundraising becomes a priority. We wish to steer clear of becoming yet another “profiteering” not-for-profit organization.

We do our work without wanting to “be paid.” Yet, say people, “this is ok, since you love what you do. It is like a hobby and one pays for a hobby rather than be paid.” Allow me to ask: Does that mean that all paid work is unloved work? Does this mean that, as soon as somebody loves their work, they no longer need to be paid? Is this why people say, “I am lucky to be paid for what I love doing?” Does this mean that the typical case people are unlucky and are paid for work they do not love? Should people start demonstrating – rather than for keeping their jobs – for a society that promotes dignified concepts of lived life, a society liberated from the notion of “finding a job” as life's purpose, whereby “job” is defined as the unsustainable project of attracting ever more consumers for ever more “stuff”?

Philosopher of science Thomas Samuel Kuhn describes in his work how paradigms shift.<sup>40</sup> Before they shift, they rigidify, with some people identifying with them strongly and standing up for them. Then they are toppled by a new generation of people who ask new questions that undermine the edifice. In the past, many such shifts budded, only to fall back again and disappear either by violence or by way of “mission creeps.” Our experience with nurturing a global dignity movement shows us, and the above questions are intended to illustrate it, which kind of transition is presently unfolding, and at which point we stand.

Allow me to take a brief look back. As it seems, there are two core concepts of human nature around, that of *Homo economicus*,<sup>41</sup> and that of *Homo amans*, a loving being.<sup>42</sup> Both concepts are embedded into a larger context. Throughout the forty years of my global life, a

kind of *Leitmotiv* has crystallized for me, a *Leitmotiv* of present-day affairs that connects all continents: what I see manifesting everywhere is a gigantic struggle surrounding the transition from a divided world driven by the *dominator* model of society, to use the terminology of social scientist Riane Eisler, to an interconnected world grasping that only the *partnership* model is feasible.<sup>43</sup> In my terminology, it is the transition from *traditional ranked honor* to the *equality in dignity* that human rights inspire, or from “higher-born” beings presiding over “lesser” beings toward a world where everybody is ranked as equal in worthiness.

From the Pharaohs of Egypt to the Aztecs of Meso-America and the samurai of Japan, the dominator model reigned for the past ten millennia with a few exceptions almost everywhere on the globe. Over time, domination rose to ever higher levels of sophistication. Within a context of competition for domination, those at the top have a range of options to keep followers in line who are not flocking to them voluntarily, and these options range from the use of brute force to more subtle and covert approaches. The highest level of sophistication is co-option. Co-opting underlings not only to accept and maintain their own bondage voluntarily, but to *misrecognize* it as “honor” and “heroism,” or as “freedom,” is the ultimate refinement of what I call “the art of domination.”<sup>44</sup>

The *Homo economicus* concept appears to conceive of basic human nature in terms of a slave mentality, or a calculating machine. From that perspective, poor people are “lazy leeches,” free-riders, who simply cultivate an undue sense of entitlement “without wanting to get out of bed,” as American *Fox News* would warn.<sup>45</sup> From that perspective, poor people are responsible for their own predicament, and poverty is a flaw of character, not a systemic problem. *Just world* thinking characterizes this view, or the belief that everybody gets what they deserve.<sup>46</sup> *Blaming the victim* is part of this outlook.<sup>47</sup>

Philosopher, sociologist, and historian Michel Foucault uses the word *governmentality* for the kind of governing that emerged in Europe during the sixteenth century, when an earlier form of governmentality, namely, feudalism, was declining. Governmentality was realized through the creation of specific “expert” or “professional” “knowledges,” as well as the construction of experts, institutions and disciplines, as, for example, medicine, psychology and psychiatry.<sup>48</sup> Economist William Russell Easterly speaks of a “tyranny of experts,” be it experts of divine or secular manipulations.<sup>49</sup> Sociologist Amitai Etzioni picks out a prime present-day example, namely, the ways in which various major food marketing corporations spend millions of dollars to study human urges and then to design, package, and advertise foods that are beneficial for corporate profits, rather than necessarily beneficial for health.<sup>50</sup>

People “learned” many things through the “the art of domination.” For instance, they learned to abhor “laziness” – including its invaluable companions, as there is the sense of embeddedness into the rhythms of nature and the creativity that flows from contemplation.<sup>51</sup> Instead, people came to obey the much more mechanistic laws of what is called modern work ethics. Sociologist Max Weber linked the protestant work ethic, particularly the Calvinist branch, with the spirit of capitalism, yet, this thesis may be turned on its head: in England, it might have been “bloody legislation” against those who had been put off their land by the enclosure of the commons, which was given legitimacy by Protestant work ethics.<sup>52</sup> (A supportive factor seems to have been literacy.<sup>53</sup>)

Economic historian Deirdre McCloskey, who calls the Industrial Revolution “the Great Fact,” explains its rise by changes in rhetoric surrounding the dignity of business and markets, first in The Netherlands, then in the United Kingdom.<sup>54</sup> She disputes explanations such as the exploitation of wage workers, slavery, colonialism, Protestantism, Catholicism, science, temperate climates, temperate citizens, political revolutions, and lower transportation costs and the resulting expansion in trade.

As it seems, through a combination of coercion and religious, philosophical, and cultural legitimization, facilitated by technical innovations, willing workers emerged, who volunteered



to be proud of becoming cogwheels in a large machinery that undoubtedly was in many ways what one could call successful, yet, over time, at the price of being complicit in transforming the concept of work ethics and dignity from something potentially promising into something overly limited and narrow. Deirdre McCloskey plans to write a book on how markets and innovation first became virtuous, 1600 – 1848, and how they then became suspect.<sup>55</sup>

As alluded to earlier, I feel personally humiliated when I am expected to act one-dimensionally, as mere *Homo economicus*.<sup>56</sup> I am multi-dimensional and, first and foremost, I am a *Homo amans*, a loving being.<sup>57</sup> Jane Austen, in her novels, brought to us the drama of people of her time and class no longer wanting “to marry for money” but wanting “to marry for love.” Many, particularly in Western societies, would agree and regard marrying for money as something rather pitiable and deplorable. Yet, why do we then accept “living for money”? Why do we accept spending the largest parts of our lives without friends, acting “professional” with colleagues, meaning that we are careful to avoid mixing friendship and work, relegating what is most valuable, namely, friendship, to the few hours of free time that are left to us? Money destroys friendship, this is a well-known warning, why do we then prioritize money in our lives?

Respecting the dignity of people means assuming that they wish to contribute to society, particularly when society includes them. Contributing to the common good is not the same as toiling like slaves for having the right to eat or for having the means to participate in society. The *Homo amans* concept of human nature, in contrast to the *Homo economicus* concept, is a concept that allows for dignity to flourish. Anthropologist Alan Page Fiske found that people, most of the time and in all cultures, use just four elementary and universal forms or models for organizing most aspects of sociality. Interaction can be structured according to (1) what people have in common, according to (2) ordered differences, (3) additive imbalances, or (4) ratios.<sup>58</sup> When people emphasize what they have in common, it is Fiske’s model of communal sharing they give priority to. Family life is often informed by communal sharing. Trust, love, care, and intimacy can prosper in this context. This is the arena for the dignity of a *Homo amans*. Tamás Szirtes carried out a case study of a consulting firm, and he explains, “Communal Sharing relationships are formed among people who are considered and who consider themselves equal (in one or more aspects). The participants in this relationship feel togetherness; they are bounded; they have something in common (interest, origin, blood, etc.), and refer to themselves as ‘we’.”<sup>59</sup> When people set out to create ordered differences, it is the model of authority ranking they use. Authority ranking involves asymmetry among people who are ordered along vertical hierarchical social dimensions – it can be a good parent or a brutal dictator who follows a *Homo dominans* path. Equality matching is the model for arranging interactions in terms of additive imbalances and implies a model of balance such as taking turns, for instance, in car pools or babysitting cooperatives. The market pricing model views relationships as defined by proportions or rates, and this is the arena of *Homo economicus*. Indigenous psychologist Louise Sundararajan recommends to study Fiske’s insights, not least since many indigenous communities give primacy to communal sharing and the caring version of authority ranking as guiding principles for their social and societal life, rather than allowing it to be defined and thus impoverished by less comprehensive frameworks, such as equality matching or market pricing.<sup>60</sup>

At the current point in history, Germany is a country envied by many: it is called Europe’s dynamo. Yet, “clinical depression costs economy up to 22 billion euros each year,” is the message of a 2011 report from a big German insurer, Allianz Deutschland AG, and the Rhineland-Westphalian Institute for Economic Research (RWI), titled “Depression – How an Illness Weighs on our Souls.”<sup>61</sup> In 2001, still sixteen percent of the employees in Germany were highly motivated, while ten years later, there are a mere thirteen percent left.<sup>62</sup> This means that the vast majority of 87 percent of German employees goes to work without loving

it. “Innere Kündigung” is the German word for self-detachment from the job, resignation in all but name, demotivation syndrome, resigning in spirit, mentally giving up, inner resignation, inner or inward withdrawal.<sup>63</sup> It means that employees turn up at their work place and leave their souls at the door.

Is this the goal of development, to exchange poverty for depression? Shall all people in all countries in this world become “depressed dynamos”?

As epidemiologists Richard G. Wilkinson and Kate Pickett have put it:

Economic growth, for so long the great engine of progress, has, in the rich countries, largely finished its work. Not only have measures of well-being and happiness ceased to rise with economic growth but, as affluent societies have grown richer, there have been long-term rises in rates of anxiety, depression, and numerous other social problems. The populations of rich countries have got to the end of a long historical journey.<sup>64</sup>

From 1984 until 1991, I worked in Egypt as clinical psychologist and counselor. The more I learned about the exceptional conflict resolution mechanisms in large families in collectivistic societies such as the Egyptian society, the more I became impressed. Children have many homes, not only with their parents, but with aunts, uncles, and grandparents. Since families are large, there is always somewhere to go. And since there is no closed-off private sphere as in individualistic Western societies, a child can get help from other family members in case of problems with her parents. Family alliances can solve the problem and protect the child. As a counselor in Egypt, I thus encouraged my clients to make use of these traditional conflict resolution systems. As I found out later, during the following years of my global living, almost all traditional societies are acquainted with this way of living, not just Egypt.

Also many Western clients came to me for counseling. I was amazed to see the difference. My Western clients often had one single core problem, namely loneliness; the kind of deep non-belonging that makes one ask, “but who’s going to cry when I die?” My Egyptian clients would have been unable to even imagine this kind of loneliness. They had other problems, problems that had to do with family solidarity being too tight and too hierarchical. As mentioned above, I later lived in other collectivist societies and my conclusion is that the Nile Delta culture succeeds with creating the best balance I personally came across between unity and freedom, the very balance that dignifies conflict resolution.<sup>65</sup> In other collectivist societies, there is often much less individual space for freedom than in the Nile Delta, and family bonds are more overly oppressive. The individualistic Western culture, in contrast, goes too far in the opposite direction and pays for freedom with the sell-out of belonging. And, clearly, also social cohesion in Egypt is currently being eroded by Western influence. Many begin to believe in what Buckminster Fuller once warned against:

We should do away with the absolutely specious notion that everybody has to earn a living. It is a fact today that one in ten thousand of us can make a technological breakthrough capable of supporting all the rest. The youth of today are absolutely right in recognizing this nonsense of earning a living. We keep inventing jobs because of this false idea that everybody has to be employed at some kind of drudgery because, according to Malthusian Darwinian theory he must justify his right to exist. So we have inspectors of inspectors and people making instruments for inspectors to inspect inspectors. The true business of people should be to go back to school and think about whatever it was they were thinking about before somebody came along and told them they had to earn a living.<sup>66</sup>

Social theorist Margaret Archer holds that dignity is of the utmost importance.<sup>67</sup> However, the question is: which kind of dignity? Sociologist Mark Regnerus describes a “mission

creep” of dignity, from what he calls Dignity 1.0 to Dignity 2.0.<sup>68</sup> Dignity 1.0 held sway from times far back before Catholic Pope Leo, up to Immanuel Kant and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whereafter it was used less during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Then it re-emerged in the 1990s, however, as Dignity 2.0. Dignity 2.0 is similar to its predecessor insofar as it has to do with inherent worth, the reality of the good, and rights seen to be flowing from dignity. Dignity 1.0 pointed at the ability to “flourish as the person one is and should become” and to help other persons to do the same. In contrast, dignity 2.0 seems to disregard flourishing in favor of freedom, autonomy, and independence. And this happens, as another sociologist, Christian Smith, warns, while “flourishing personhood” needs to be nurtured by all social practices, institutions, and structures, to avoid damaging it.<sup>69</sup>

If we look at the background of these three sociologists, we notice that they have a Catholic background.<sup>70</sup> Archer emphasizes the four pillars of Catholic social teaching: human dignity, solidarity, subsidiarity, and the common good, and she calls for transforming late modernity into a “civilization of love.” These authors stand for a rather “revolutionary” Catholicism, sympathetic, for instance, with liberation theology,<sup>71</sup> and by doing so, they form the same bridge that also my work intends to build, namely, between two counter-movements against modernity that often are hostile to each other, the *traditionalists*, those who wish to turn back into an imagined past, and the *cultural creatives*, some of whom turn their attention *inward* to gain new levels of consciousness, while others turn it *outward* and become activists.<sup>72</sup> In my life, I connect all three in my personal “religion,” which is “love, humility, dignity, courage, and awe and wonderment.”

The same mission creep that the concept of dignity goes through, affects all other spheres of life as well. A forager or traditional farmer-gardener still had “a life” and did not “go to work.” Such is the most comprehensive anchoring of a person’s being-on-this-planet, or what Fiske calls community sharing. As discussed earlier, nowadays, every aspect of life is moving into a much less comprehensive anchoring, namely, a calculus, or what Fiske calls market pricing. On the surface, in official rhetoric, this is done for the benefit of everybody, yet, covertly, statistics of rising inequality show that its underlying *raison-d’être* might be to benefit a few. As mentioned above, also Deirdre McCloskey, in her planned book on how markets and innovation first became virtuous and then suspect, will elucidate this mission creep.<sup>73</sup> The internet is perhaps the most recent example, as it is being nudged from an arena for liberation to a tool of economic exploitation.<sup>74</sup>

This mission creep is the result of a successfully applied “art of domination,” and it is not just a present-day phenomenon, it seems to have affected all aspects of human affairs throughout history. In the past millennia – and in my work, I suggest, that this trend began with the Neolithic Revolution – when dominator societies became strong, liberation movements only had a short time span to thrive: as soon as they came out from “under the radar,” they were subjugated, either openly, or hijacked by art-of-domination strategies as soon as they attempted to become institutionalized. Dignity and work ethics are only two examples of many. Examples range from political revolutions to religious uprisings to philosophical and scientific revelations. Religions such as Christianity and Islam, for instance, teach ideals of equality, yet, these ideals did not move to the forefront of Western consciousness until about 250 years ago in the form of human rights ideals, ideals, which are under “mission creep” onslaught since, overtly and covertly.

A new kind of mission creep – a kind of counter-creep one may say, a creep with the aim to save this paradigm shift from being hijacked – is now in the making as well, the one I alluded to earlier, away from domination and toward partnership. This paper is part of this effort, an effort to nudge the world away from competition for domination to dialogue among equals. And this time, it has a better chance to succeed in saving this liberation movement from falling back than ever before, and the reason is global interconnectedness. Global

interconnectedness entails the potential to weaken what political scientists call the *security dilemma*: “I have to amass weapons, because I am scared. When I amass weapons, you get scared. You amass weapons, I get more scared.”<sup>75</sup> In the context of a strong security dilemma, the dominator model of society thrives, and out-group relations follow the motto of Vegetius, “if you want peace, prepare for war,” or that of Carl von Clausewitz, “the best defence is a good offense.” Only in the context of an attenuated security dilemma can Gandhi’s tenet unfold, which is “There is no path to peace. Peace is the path.” The security dilemma can only be effectively attenuated when a global citizens movement diminishes the fear and mistrust that feeds this dilemma, and this is what I dedicate my entire life to.

Support for this effort comes from all corners of the world, not just from thinkers inspired by catholic liberation theology alone. Philosopher Thaddeus Metz, professor at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa, connects cooperation and dignity in ways that show the path to a future dignified world society. Also he offers an alternative to the most influential conception of dignity in the West, where dignity is increasingly seen to inhere in human rationality or autonomy. Metz invokes an Afro-communitarian conception of human dignity and develops the idea that human beings have a dignity in virtue of their communal nature, in virtue of their capacity for what he calls “identity” and “solidarity.”<sup>76</sup> Consensus is the foundation of this communal practice, rather than the will of a majority or of a monarch. Even when retributive punishment is meted out after a violation, it still contains elements of reconciliation between the offender, his family, the immediate victim and the broader community.

“The dignity of human beings emanates from the network of relationships, from being in community; in an African view, it cannot be reduced to a unique, competitive and free personal ego,” says the South African theologian H. Russel Botman.<sup>77</sup>

Metz analyzes two concepts, that of identity, or sharing a way of life and to identify with each other and to conceive of themselves as a “we,” and solidarity, or caring for others’ quality of life, or what English speakers would call love or friendship. Metz finds that in sub-Saharan thought identity and solidarity are brought together in the concept of community, even though they are different sorts of relationship: “One could identify with others but not exhibit solidarity with them – probably workers in relation to management in a capitalist firm. One could also exhibit solidarity with others but not identify with them, e.g. by making anonymous donations to a charity.”<sup>78</sup> African thought combines those two logically distinct kinds of relationship:<sup>79</sup>

To exhibit solidarity with one another is for people to care about each other’s quality of life, in two senses. First, it means that they engage in mutual aid, acting in ways that are expected to benefit each other (ideally, repeatedly over time). Second, caring is a matter of people’s attitudes such as emotions and motives being positively oriented toward others, say, by sympathising with them and helping them for their sake. For people to fail to exhibit solidarity could be for them to be indifferent to each other’s flourishing or to exhibit ill will in the form of hostility and cruelty.<sup>80</sup>

Metz lines up a number of sub-Saharan descriptions of its sense of community: “Every member is expected to consider him/herself an integral part of the whole and to play an appropriate role towards achieving the good of all”;<sup>81</sup> “Harmony is achieved through close and sympathetic social relations within the group”;<sup>82</sup> “The fundamental meaning of community is the sharing of an overall way of life, inspired by the notion of the common good”;<sup>83</sup> “(T)he purpose of our life is community-service and community-belongingness.”<sup>84</sup>

If we follow Metz in defining dignity in virtue of human communal nature, then the innocent have rights not to be killed, enslaved, or tortured because such actions disrespect the

capacity for community of all involved, victims and perpetrators. When our dignity is grounded in our capacity for communal or friendly relationships, then to degrade this capacity means violating human rights. If the project of what is known as Western culture is to destroy communal practice and the dignity connected with it, then, we may predict, it does so at its own peril.

## Outlook

Monika Kostera's view on the Occupy Movement is interesting and important, not just for students of management, but for everybody who seeks to find new ways into a dignified future.<sup>85</sup> As mentioned earlier, to my view, only a global citizens movement is large enough to face the scope of present-day obstacles to a decent world society.<sup>86</sup>

On November 16, 2011, writer and peace scholar Janet Gerson brought me to Zuccotti Park and The Atrium in New York City, where most of the Occupy Wall Street activities took place then.<sup>87</sup> We discussed how a dignified future for human kind could look like. Janet is an avid advocate of the work by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum.<sup>88</sup>

We spoke of guiding principles for a world society, such as unity in diversity. We noted that already at this point, there is a problem that needs overcoming. Most people think that unity in diversity is a zero sum principle: they believe that if you want more unity, you have to give up diversity, and vice versa. This misconception feeds the fear that global unity can only be had at the price of global uniformity and that this will end in an Orwellian world. Global superordinate rules and regulations that could remedy the current situation of a global power vacuum being abused, are therefore shunned. What most fail to see is that when unity is defined by dignity, when what unifies us are our shared values of equality in dignity, then unity in diversity means *more* unity and at the same time *more* diversity. Unity in dignity can only be manifested by nurturing diversity and letting it flourish. It is a win-win situation. Both, unity and diversity, need and can be boosted if dignity is what defines unity, and both need to be guarded: unity needs to be guarded against losing diversity through letting it degrade into uniformity, and diversity needs to be guarded against the destruction of unity when diversity degrades into division.

In my book on a dignity economy, I suggest replacing notions such as "capitalism" and "socialism" in the public discourse, as they have degraded into hot-button markers for cycles of humiliation, while few remember what these terms actually mean. Why not create a new terminology, starting with dignity? Why not *dignity-ism*, or *dignism*?

A world informed by dignism could be described as a world where every newborn finds space and is nurtured to unfold their highest and best, embedded in a social context of loving appreciation and connection. A world, where the carrying capacity of the planet guides the ways in which everybody's basic needs are met, a world, where we are united in respecting human dignity and celebrating diversity, where we prevent unity from being perverted into oppressive uniformity, and keep diversity from sliding into hostile division.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> We thank Libby and Len Traubman for conveying this quote by Ambassador James A. Joseph to us. Libby and Len Traubman are esteemed member in the Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies network, [www.humiliationstudies.org](http://www.humiliationstudies.org).

<sup>2</sup> Thoreau, 1862. See also “The Diffusion of Useful Ignorance: Thoreau on the Hubris of Our Knowledge and the Transcendent Humility of Not-Knowing,” by Maria Popova, *Brain Pickings*, May 14, 2015, [www.brainpickings.org/2015/05/14/thoreau-walking-ignorance-knowledge/](http://www.brainpickings.org/2015/05/14/thoreau-walking-ignorance-knowledge/).

<sup>3</sup> Firestein, 2012.

<sup>4</sup> See also Jacob Bronowski, 1973, admonishing against the dark side of certainty, and Wendell Berry, 2005 championing the way of ignorance. Wendell wrote:

Because ignorance is thus a part of our creaturely definition, we need an appropriate way: a way of ignorance, which is the way of neighborly love, kindness, caution, care, appropriate scale, thrift, good work, right livelihood... The way of ignorance, therefore, is to be careful, to know the limits and the efficacy of our knowledge. It is to be humble and to work on an appropriate scale....

The career of rugged individualism in America has run mostly to absurdity, tragic or comic. But it also has done us a certain amount of good. There was a streak of it in Thoreau, who went alone to jail in protest against the Mexican War. And that streak has continued in his successors who have suffered penalties for civil disobedience because of their perception that the law and the government were not always or necessarily right. This is individualism of a kind rugged enough, and it has been authenticated typically by its identification with a communal good.

The tragic version of rugged individualism is in the presumptive “right” of individuals to do as they please, as if there were no God, no legitimate government, no community, no neighbors, and no posterity. This is most frequently understood as the right to do whatever one pleases with one’s property. One’s property, according to this formulation, is one’s own absolutely, see also “Wendell Berry on Our Contempt for Small Places and the Perils of Our ‘Rugged Individualism’,” by Maria Popova, *Brain Pickings*, April 22, 2015, [www.brainpickings.org/2015/04/22/wendell-berry-way-of-ignorance-rugged-individualism/](http://www.brainpickings.org/2015/04/22/wendell-berry-way-of-ignorance-rugged-individualism/).

Note, furthermore, a related quote, “the chief responsibility of a great scientist is to remain uncertain,” by Richard P. Feynman, 1999, and the case made for living with mystery in the age of knowledge by astrophysicist Marcelo Gleiser, 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Rilke, 1929.

<sup>6</sup> Lindner, 2012.

<sup>7</sup> Rockström, 2015, Rockström and Klum, 2012. I thank also sociologist Ingrid Eide for making me aware of the work of three other relevant Scandinavian scholars, namely, Trygve Haavelmo, recipient of the Nobel Prize in Economics, see Trygve Haavelmo (1989), mathematician Benoit Mandelbrot, see Benoit B. Mandelbrot and Richard L. Hudson (2004), and economist Katrine Nyborg, see Karine Nyborg (2007). The conversation with Ingrid Eide took place in the context of the 2nd International Conference on Democracy as Idea and Practice, Oslo, January 13–14, 2011, [www.demokrati.uio.no/arrangementer/konferanser/2011/2nd-Democracy-as-idea-and-practice-jan-2011](http://www.demokrati.uio.no/arrangementer/konferanser/2011/2nd-Democracy-as-idea-and-practice-jan-2011).

<sup>8</sup> See the Theater Review: “Ulysses as an American Slave,” by Charles Isherwood, *The New York Times*, October 28, 2014, [www.nytimes.com/2014/10/29/theater/father-comes-home-from-the-wars-by-suzan-lori-parks-at-the-public-theater.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/29/theater/father-comes-home-from-the-wars-by-suzan-lori-parks-at-the-public-theater.html?_r=0).

<sup>9</sup> Nussbaum, 1998, Sen, 2001.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Paehlke, in his contribution to the Great Transition Network list in a discussion on the topic of “Economics for a Full World,” May 15, 2015, see also Purdey, 2010 and <http://stephenpurdey.com/>.

<sup>11</sup> Stephen James Purdey, in his contribution to the Great Transition Network list in a discussion on the topic of “Economics for a Full World,” May 15, 2015, see also Purdey, 2010, and <http://stephenpurdey.com/>.

<sup>12</sup> “How it Began: My Story and Journey,” by Kamran Mofid, *Globalisation for the Common Good Initiative*, September 22, 2009, <http://gcgi.info/how-it-began>. Kamran Mofid is the Founder of the Globalisation for the Common Good Initiative (GCGI). Kamran Mofid is an esteemed member in the global advisory board of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies, [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/board.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/board.php).

<sup>13</sup> “Can Business Education and the Business Schools Advance Sustainability and the Common Good? Unleashing the Power of Passion & Purpose,” by Kamran Mofid, *Globalisation for the Common Good Initiative*, August 29, 2011, <http://gcgi.info/news/133-towards-an-education-worth-believing-in>.

<sup>14</sup> “Småbrukerne brøt – Bondelaget godtar tilbud på 400 millioner kroner,” by Eskild Gausemel Berge, *Østlandets Blad*, May 15, 2015, [www.oblad.no/Sm\\_brukerne\\_br\\_t\\_\\_\\_Bondelaget\\_godtar\\_tilbud\\_p\\_400\\_millioner\\_kroner-5-68-58593.html](http://www.oblad.no/Sm_brukerne_br_t___Bondelaget_godtar_tilbud_p_400_millioner_kroner-5-68-58593.html).

<sup>15</sup> Berry, 2005.

<sup>16</sup> Varey and Pirson, 2013.

<sup>17</sup> Harris, 1997.

<sup>18</sup> Adapted from Lindner and Desmond Tutu (Foreword), 2010 p. xxiv.

<sup>19</sup> See, among others, Hennessey and Amabile, 2010, or Bråten, 2013. Stein Bråten is an esteemed member in the global advisory board of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies, [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/board.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/board.php).

<sup>20</sup> Kant, 1785.

<sup>21</sup> *Pleasantville* is an Academy Award-nominated 1998 film written, produced, and directed by Gary Ross. See also *The Clonus Horror* (1979) or *The Island* (2005). As to “personal branding,” see Lair, et al., 2005. I discussed this topic in January 29, 2007, in Harrania, near Cairo, Egypt, with Sophie Wissa-Wassef, who makes a point of protecting her artists’ creativity by not disclosing to them whether their art sells or not. See [www.humiliationstudies.org/intervention/art.php#ramseswissawassef](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/intervention/art.php#ramseswissawassef) or [www.wissa-wassef-arts.com/intro.htm](http://www.wissa-wassef-arts.com/intro.htm). See also Douglas Rushkoff (2009); I thank Keith Grennan for this link.

<sup>22</sup> Lamont, 2000.

<sup>23</sup> Hodson, 2001, Bolton, 2007.

<sup>24</sup> Eric Zencey, Gund Institute, in his contribution to the Great Transition Network list in a discussion on the topic of “Economics for a Full World,” May 18, 2015. See also Zencey, 2012.

<sup>25</sup> Eric Zencey, Gund Institute, in his contribution to the Great Transition Network list in a discussion on the topic of “Economics for a Full World,” May 18, 2015.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. See also author Matt Ridley, 2010, who highlights the role of coal as having been crucial for the Industrial Revolution’s rise in the United Kingdom.

<sup>27</sup> See also Kateb, 2011.

<sup>28</sup> Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (HumanDHS), [www.humiliationstudies.org](http://www.humiliationstudies.org).

<sup>29</sup> Lindner, et al., 2012.

<sup>30</sup> See [www.nobelwill.org/index.html?tab=7](http://www.nobelwill.org/index.html?tab=7), and [http://nobelwill.org/Lindner\\_nomination.pdf](http://nobelwill.org/Lindner_nomination.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> World Dignity University initiative, [www.worlddignityuniversity.org](http://www.worlddignityuniversity.org).

<sup>32</sup> Dignity Press, [www.dignitypress.org](http://www.dignitypress.org).

<sup>33</sup> See for a list of past and future conferences [humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/annualmeetings.php](http://humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/annualmeetings.php). See the current status of our work at [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/whoweare.php#status](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/whoweare.php#status).

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<sup>34</sup> Kostera, 2014.

<sup>35</sup> Lindner, 2000.

<sup>36</sup> Lindner, 2006, and Lindner, 2009.

<sup>37</sup> Lindner and Desmond Tutu (Foreword), 2010.

<sup>38</sup> Lindner, 2012. See more on [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin.php).

<sup>39</sup> See also Schwartz, 2004.

<sup>40</sup> Kuhn, 1962.

<sup>41</sup> Frey, 2008, Frey and Stutzer, 2007.

<sup>42</sup> Scheler, 1923.

<sup>43</sup> Riane T. Eisler, 1987, social scientist and activist, has developed a cultural transformation theory through which she describes how otherwise widely divergent societies followed what she calls a *dominator model* rather than a *partnership model* during the past millennia. See her more recent book, Eisler, 2007. Riane Eisler is an esteemed member in the global advisory board of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies, [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/board.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/board.php).

<sup>44</sup> See more on the notion of *misrecognition* in Chapter 8 of my book *Emotion and Conflict* (2009), pp. 129–137. Concepts such as *méconnaissance* (misrecognition) and naturalization were used by Roland Barthes, Pierre Bourdieu, and Michel Foucault (among others). They address how power structures use the concealed nature of habitus to manipulate not just overtly but covertly and stealthily, making it much more difficult to rid oneself of these manipulations.

<sup>45</sup> “Obama: Fox News portrays poor people as ‘leeches’,” by Dylan Byers, *Politico*, May 12, 2015, [www.politico.com/blogs/media/2015/05/obama-accuses-fox-news-of-portraying-poor-people-as-206995.html](http://www.politico.com/blogs/media/2015/05/obama-accuses-fox-news-of-portraying-poor-people-as-206995.html).

<sup>46</sup> See Lee D. Ross and John T. Jost (1999); and for later work Melvin J. Lerner (2003).

<sup>47</sup> See, among others, Lee D. Ross and Andrew Ward (1996).

<sup>48</sup> Foucault, 1979.

<sup>49</sup> Easterly, 2013, recommended in “Communitarian Observations: The Moon, Facebook, and Iraq,” by Amitai Etzioni from the Institute for Communitarian Policy Studies, July 30, 2014.

<sup>50</sup> Moss, 2013, recommended in “Communitarian Observations: The Moon, Facebook, and Iraq,” by Amitai Etzioni, July 30, 2014, where he refers to his article “Facebook’s Experiment: Trivial Pursuit,” *Huffington Post*, July 8, 2014, [www.huffingtonpost.com/amitai-etzioni/facebook-experiment-triv\\_b\\_5567519.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/amitai-etzioni/facebook-experiment-triv_b_5567519.html):

If you need reminding about how this is done, regularly, while people fuss about the trivial experiment of Facebook, turn to the pages of a very carefully researched, richly documented study by Michael Moss called *Salt Sugar Fat: How the Food Giants Hooked Us*. The book reveals the ways in which various major corporations that market foods have spent scores of millions to study our urges and to design, package, and advertise foods that are bad for us but good for corporate profits. Sugar, salt, and fats are laced into products that seem to include none because they make them more addictive (e.g. salt in chocolate). Labels on products are carefully framed so that the information is read in ways that are misleading (e.g. instead of telling us the number of calories in the box, it tells us the number per serving). Small items are put into large boxes (e.g. toys) to make them seem more valuable. Boxes are given bright colors because studies show these colors illicit impulse buying. Lobbying is used to bend regulations in favor of the industries rather than customers (e.g. the definition of “lean” meat has been changed so meat that used to be considered fat is now characterized as lean).

<sup>51</sup> “Spirit and Place” is an essay by David Tacey based on chapter four (“Spirit and Place”) of Tacey, 2000. It is republished in *Food for the Journey*, E News # 84, April 30, 2015. We read there about contemplation:

Aboriginal spirituality, then, is a spirituality of deep seeing, deep listening, bush receptivity. Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr describes this, using a word from Ngangikurungkurr language, as *dadirri*, and says this “is something like what you [white people] call ‘contemplation’”. The celebrant has to conjure up the right mood, perform a kind of trick on the separate self, so that it will not create a

barrier between the celebrant and the spirit of the land. This kind of receptive spirituality is very hard for us Westerners to achieve, because we come from a “conquering” consciousness which forever strives to impose our own mental and psychological life upon the reality of the world. Aboriginal spirituality does not impose a metaphysical machinery upon the landscape; it sees through the landscape to the mythic forms and spirits behind it.

<sup>52</sup> Grossman, 2006..

<sup>53</sup> Becker and Wößmann, 2007. The centuries-old Judaic rule that male Jews had to read the Torah in the synagogue, and to teach it to their sons, may account for Jewish economic prosperity as merchants,<sup>53</sup> and, similarly, Protestant regions economic progressiveness relative to Catholic regions may stem from higher literacy in Protestant regions, encouraged by Martin Luther’s emphasis on everyone reading the Gospel.

<sup>54</sup> McCloskey, 2010.

<sup>55</sup> McCloskey, 2013.

<sup>56</sup> Frey, 2008, Frey and Stutzer, 2007.

<sup>57</sup> Scheler, 1923.

<sup>58</sup> Fiske, 2004.

<sup>59</sup> Szirtes, 2012, p. 139.

<sup>60</sup> Sundararajan, 2012.

<sup>61</sup> “Clinical Depression Costs Economy up to 22 Billion Euros Each Year,” New Report from Allianz Deutschland AG und RWI, [www.allianz.com/en/press/news/studies/news\\_2011-04-13.html](http://www.allianz.com/en/press/news/studies/news_2011-04-13.html).

Depression is not just a major cause of disability and early retirement – it costs some 9.3 billion euros because of lower productivity by depressed employees on the job. Researcher Florian Holsboer foresees individualized therapy for each case in the future. Allianz Deutschland AG: Munich, Apr 13, 2011 Four million Germans suffer from depression. Each year, depression drives some 7,000 people to suicide. And at the same time it costs the German economy as much as 22 billion euros. That’s the result of a current health report from Allianz Deutschland AG and the Rhineland-Westphalian Institute for Economic Research (RWI), entitled “Depression – How an Illness Weighs on our Souls.” Christian Molt: “Emotional stress, burnout and depression will thus become a cost factor that can no longer be ignored.” Depression as a cost factor: According to a WHO projection, by 2030 depression will be the most common illness in industrialized nations. “Emotional stress, burnout and depression will thus become a cost factor that can no longer be ignored,” says Christian Molt, member of the Board of Management of health insurer Allianz Private Krankenversicherungs-AG. Allianz too is seeing substantial cost increases for benefits for emotional illness, a significant portion of them for treating depression. It commissioned RWI to calculate how much the illness costs Germany as a whole. The direct and indirect costs of depression in Germany are between 15.5 and 22 billion euros each year. From 2002 to 2008 alone, direct costs of the illness increased one-third, to 5.2 billion euros. Indirect costs are incomparably higher, at 10.3 to 16.7 billion euros. Of that cost, 9.3 billion euros is because depressed people go to work instead of staying home and getting treatment. The cost of reduced productivity from depressed employees on the job (known as “presenteeism”) thus does by far the greatest economic damage.

<sup>62</sup> “Innere Kündigung: Statisten am Schreibtisch, 17. Mai 2010, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, [www.sueddeutsche.de/karriere/innere-kuendigung-statisten-am-schreibtisch-1.375928-2](http://www.sueddeutsche.de/karriere/innere-kuendigung-statisten-am-schreibtisch-1.375928-2):

Widerspruchslose Anpassung: Der Gallup-Engagement-Index: Waren im Jahr 2001 noch 16 Prozent der Arbeitnehmer hochmotiviert, sind es heute nur noch 13 Prozent. Weil innerlich Gekündigte viel daran setzen, nicht aufzufallen, bemerken Kollegen und Vorgesetzte häufig nicht, was sich abspielt. Betroffene Mitarbeiter werden zu Mitläufern, die sich widerspruchslos anpassen. “Sie kündigen den ‘psychologischen Arbeitsvertrag’, der die unausgesprochenen Erwartungen, Hoffnungen und Wünsche des Arbeitnehmers gegenüber dem Arbeitgeber beinhaltet”, sagt Ralf Brinkmann, der an der Fachhochschule Heidelberg Wirtschafts- und Arbeitspsychologie lehrt und das Phänomen der inneren Kündigung untersucht. “Sie sind sie nicht mehr bereit, sich gegen die Mehrheit mit der eigenen Meinung zu stellen und entwickeln sich zum Ja-Sager, der vieles abnickt

und keine neuen Ideen, Vorschläge und Kritik mehr einbringt.”

Glaubt man den Marktforschern von Gallup, kostet dieses Verhalten die Wirtschaft Milliarden: Allein durch höhere Fehlzeiten der innerlich Gekündigten entstehen Unternehmen Kosten in Höhe von 16,2 Milliarden Euro im Jahr. Hinzu kommen Einbußen durch unnötig hohe Fluktuation, schlechten Kundenservice, negative Mundpropaganda und Innovationsfeindlichkeit. Wer schlägt seinem Chef schon tolle Ideen vor, wenn er nur noch als Statist am Schreibtisch sitzt? Gallup schätzt, dass sich die Kosten durch solches Verhalten auf bis zu 109 Milliarden Euro pro Jahr summieren.

Laut Psychologe Brinkmann können als Ursachen für die innere Kündigung vier Faktoren für solches Verhalten in Frage kommen:

Die Gesellschaft: Vertritt das Unternehmen Werte, die gesellschaftlich nicht oder nicht mehr akzeptiert sind, fällt es Mitarbeitern schwer, sich dauerhaft mit der Firma zu identifizieren. Ebenso problematisch ist es, wenn der Beruf zwar extrem hohe Anforderungen an den Arbeitnehmer stellt, er dafür aber keinerlei Anerkennung erhält, sondern im Gegenteil mit einem schlechten Image zu kämpfen hat.

Die Organisation: Fehlt es einem Unternehmen an einer Vision, fühlen sich Mitarbeiter häufig alleingelassen und vermissen klare Leitlinien. Frustrierend wirken auch eine Kultur des Misstrauens, geringe Entscheidungskompetenzen, hohe Kontrolle, eine starre Organisationsstruktur und ausgeprägtes Hierarchie- und Statusdenken.

<sup>63</sup> Brinkmann and Stapf, 2005. See also “Innere Kündigung,” [www.innerekuendigung.de/](http://www.innerekuendigung.de/).

<sup>64</sup> Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009, p. 5–6.

<sup>65</sup> Hicks and Desmond Tutu (Foreword), 2011. Donna Hicks is an esteemed member in the global advisory board of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies, [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/board.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/board.php).

<sup>66</sup> R. Buckminster Fuller in “The New York Magazine Environmental Teach-In,” by Elizabeth Barlow, *New York Magazine*, 30 March 1970, p. 30.

<sup>67</sup> Archer, 2011. See also Rosen, 2012.

<sup>68</sup> “The Mission Creep of Dignity: Dignity Has Less to Do with Autonomy or Independence Than with Intrinsic Worth and the Ability to Flourish,” by Mark Regnerus, *MercatorNet*, January 20, 2015, [www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/the\\_mission\\_creep\\_of\\_dignity](http://www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/the_mission_creep_of_dignity). I thank Hilarie Roseman for making me aware of this article.

<sup>69</sup> Smith, 2010.

<sup>70</sup> See also Duffy and Gambatese, 1999.

<sup>71</sup> Smith, 1991.

<sup>72</sup> Ray and Anderson, 2000. Sociologist Paul H. Ray and psychologist Sherry Ruth Anderson identify three main cultural tendencies: firstly *moderns* (endorsing the “realist” worldview of *Time Magazine*, the *Wall Street Journal*, big government, big business, big media, or past socialist, communist, and fascist movements); second, the first countermovement against moderns, the *traditionals* (the religious right and rural populations); and third, the most recent countermovement, the *cultural creatives* (valuing strong ecological sustainability for the planet, liberal on women’s issues, personal growth, authenticity, and anti-big business). In the United States, traditionals comprise about 24–26 percent of the adult population (approximately 48 million people), moderns about 47–49 percent (approximately 95 million) and cultural creatives are about 26–28 percent (approximately 50 million). In the European Union, the cultural creatives are about 30–35 percent of the adult population.

<sup>73</sup> McCloskey, 2013.

<sup>74</sup> “How the Internet Is Transforming from a Tool of Liberation to One of Oppression,” by Astra Taylor, *Huffington Post*, June 5, 2014, [www.huffingtonpost.com/astra-taylor/internet-oppression-liberation\\_b\\_5449838.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/astra-taylor/internet-oppression-liberation_b_5449838.html).

<sup>75</sup> See John H. Herz (1950). Under the conditions of the security dilemma, the Hobbesian fear of surprise attacks from outside one’s nation’s borders reigns. Barry Posen and Russell Hardin discuss

these emotional aspects of the security dilemma and how they play out between ethnic groups as much as between states, see Posen, 1993, and Hardin, 1995.

<sup>76</sup> Metz, 2010, 2011, 2012. Metz summarizes anthropological and sociological findings from a variety sources, including, Fortes and Evans-Pritchard (1940), Forde (1954), Abraham (1962), Carlston (1968), Mbiti (1990), Gyekye (1996) and Wiredu (2008). We thank Francisco Gomes de Matos for making us aware of Metz' work.

<sup>77</sup> Botman, 2000; see also Bujo, 2001, p. 88. Quoted in Metz, 2012.

<sup>78</sup> Metz, 2012.

<sup>79</sup> Metz, 2007.

<sup>80</sup> Metz, 2012.

<sup>81</sup> Gbadegesin, 1991, p. 65.

<sup>82</sup> Mokgoro, 1998, p. 3.

<sup>83</sup> Gyekye, 2004, p 16.

<sup>84</sup> Iroegbu, 2005, p. 442.

<sup>85</sup> Kostera, 2014.

<sup>86</sup> Margalit, 1996.

<sup>87</sup> See [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelinpics11.php#OWS](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelinpics11.php#OWS). See for Janet Gerson's work, for instance, Gerson, 2013. Janet Gerson was the Co-Director of the Peace Education Center at Teachers College, Columbia University 2001–2011, and is now the Education Director of the International Institute on Peace Education (IIPE), [www.nationalpeaceacademy.us/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=229&Itemid=1](http://www.nationalpeaceacademy.us/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=229&Itemid=1). She is also a member in the global advisory board of the Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies network, see [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/board.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/board.php). She wrote her doctoral dissertation on *Public deliberation on global justice: The World Tribunal on Iraq (WTI)*, where she draws on Jürgen Habermas' theory of communicative action, in particular, "ideal speech situation." See also Susan Opatow, Janet Gerson, and Sarah Woodside (2005), and "OWS Reclaiming Our Collective Dignity," by Janet Gerson, November 18, 2011, unpublished manuscript conceived in *conversation with Evelin Lindner on the Dignity Economy*, available from the author at [gerson@\[i-i-p-e.org](mailto:gerson@[i-i-p-e.org).

<sup>88</sup> Nussbaum, 1998, Sen, 2001.