



## **CONFERENCE REPORT**

Convener Hayal Köksal, Ph.D.

### **SUMMARY**

15th Annual Conference of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies, *Peace at Home, Peace in the World*, was held on 28th - 30th April 2010, at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul, Türkiye.

Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (HumanDHS, [www.humiliationstudies.org](http://www.humiliationstudies.org)) is a global transdisciplinary fellowship of concerned academics and practitioners who wish to promote dignity and transcend humiliation. HumanDHS wishes 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 breaking cycles of humiliation throughout the world. We are currently around 1,000 personally invited members, and our website is being accessed by up to 40,000 people from 160 to 180 countries per year.

During the closed part of the event, which was on 28 and 29<sup>th</sup> April, the "frame of appreciative enquiry" was used as the main vehicle for beginning the conference dialogue. Guests coming from different countries shared their views and created some solutions for the issues reviewed. The conference's Public Event was on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2010, in the Albert Long Hall/BTS & BTS Fuaye. This event was free and open to everyone. The Public Event featured speakers from Türkiye who spoke on topics related to dignity and humiliation, as did the President and the Director of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies.

### **These were the speakers:**

- ***From Humiliation to Human Dignity: Toward a Science of Right Relationships***, by Linda Hartling, Director, HumanDHS; Former Associate Director, Jean Baker Miller Training Institute, Wellesley College, Boston, USA.
- Introduction of international participants of the conference, by Evelin Lindner, Founding Director and President of HumanDHS.
- ***Education as a Vehicle for Social Transformation: How to Promote Dignity, Unity and Transcend Humiliation***, by Vineeta Kamran, Principal of the City Montessori School, Kanpur Road Branch, Lucknow, India.
- ***The Role of Dignity and Humiliation for Refugee Law***, by Paresh Kathrani, Director, Centre for Global Morality, is currently undertaking his PhD in Refugee Law and Philosophy at the School of Law, Kings College, London.
- ***Disability, Dignity, and Humiliation***, by Ramazan Baş, President of the Spinal Cord Paralytics Society of Türkiye (SCPST), an NGO whose work is related to the wellness and empowerment of the disabled.
- ***Human Rights of Women***, by Nazan Moroğlu, author of Human Rights Treaty of Women. She is the general coordinator of the Istanbul Women Associations Unity. She teaches the course: *Women Law* at Yeditepe University Law School.

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- *The Meaning of "Peace at Home, Peace in the World"* by Hayal Köksal, Ph.D., Member of the HumanDHS Global Advisory Board, and the HumanDHS Education Team.
- *From Shock to Awe: From Humiliation to Dignity*, by Evelin Lindner, Founding Director and President of HumanDHS.
- *A Peace Exhibition* painted by world children and designed by the famous Turkish Sculpture Füge Demirok was also opened during the event in the lobby.  
<http://www.hayalkoksal.com/V1/index.php>

### **28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> APRIL: THE CLOSED PART OF THE CONFERENCE**

Linda Hartling began the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual HumanDHS Conference by presenting the primary aim of all HumanDHS conferences, which is to create a humiliation-free, collaborative learning environment characterized by mutual respect, mutual empathy, and openness to difference. She presented the perspective of "appreciative enquiry" as a useful frame for approaching HumanDHS work. Over the years, the network has found that the work is not only informed by the work we do together, but also by HOW WE WORK TOGETHER. At appropriate points during the meeting, for example at the end of each day, the group would take a moment to reflect on the practices observed that contributed to an appreciative/humiliation-free learning experience.

It is important to emphasize that an appreciative approach is not about expecting people to agree. In fact, differences of opinion enrich the conversation and deepen people's understanding of ideas. Perhaps, this could be conceptualized as "waging good conflict" (Jean Baker Miller, MD), which means practicing profound respect for differences and being open to a variety of perspectives and engaging others without contempt or rankism. As we have seen in many fields, contempt and rankism drain energy away from the important work that needs to be done. Most people only know "conflict" as a form of war within a win/lose frame. "Waging good conflict," on the other side, is about being empathic and respectful, making room for authenticity, creating clarity, and growth.

It should be noted that participation in the program is by personal invitation only, except for our public events, in which everybody who is interested is welcome. The closed parts of our programs have limited enrollment. We like to get to know our participants prior to issuing an invitation to our workshops and conferences.

### **Day 1, 28<sup>th</sup> April**

The number of participants was around 40. Kadri Özçaldıran, Rector of Boğaziçi University welcomed everybody. Then, Hayal Köksal and Linda Hartling welcomed everybody to the closed part of our conference and explained our appreciative frame.

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Linda keeps our workshops together with her continuous caring interventions and her wisdom carries our conferences through crucial moments. Linda selected the following Turkish proverbs for our conference:

1. This proverb recognizes the importance of collaboration: “*Baş başa vermeyince taş yerinden kalkmaz.*” Literal translation: “The stone will not move from its place, unless you cooperate,” meaning “Hard tasks can be accomplished by collaboration.” See also “*Bir elin nesi var, iki elin sesi var.*”
2. This proverb is about understanding when we make mistakes: “*Hatasız Kul Olmaz.*” Literal translation: “Flawless human is impossible,” meaning: “Nobody is perfect.”

After the participants presented themselves, a musical contribution by Gülcan Yeten and her friends brought Turkish culture to the conference. She played Bağlama (a Turkish musical instrument with three double strings played with a plectrum) and presented some ethnical music from the Northern Anatolia region.

The Open Space sessions of the HumanDHS conference were launched by Linda M. Hartling. This approach emerged from the observation that the coffee breaks are often the most productive parts of conferences. The HumanDHS team draws on the Open Space idea and adapts it to dignify its conferences. Open Space means collaboratively developing the schedule of the sessions on the first day of the conference. In order to make this process smooth, the HumanDHS network depends on the kind understanding, support, and flexibility of all conference participants to co-creatively collect the topics for each session and make the schedule for the rest of our conference.

On the first day, two topics were presented in the Open Space Session:

- *How Can We Realize "Peace at Home, Peace in the World?"* by Hayal Köksal
- *Advancing Dignity in Schools* by Yoav Peck and Avi Shahaf

After the closing comments at the end of the day, guests moved to Gala Dinner at Vakıftepe, İTÜ, which was supported by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Association, Türkiye Office. HumanDHS extended its warm appreciation for this lovely dinner!

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## Day Two, 29th April 2010

The second day started with the talk by Kailash Tuli, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology and Gestalt therapist, New Delhi, India, entitled: *Humiliation in the Indian Context: Effectiveness of Zeitgeist to Inculcate Human Dignity*.

This was followed by two Open Space discussions:

- *Crafting Gentleness: Dynamics of Enclosure and the Transformation of Humiliation*, by Anthony McCann, Ireland.
- *Advancing Dignity via the OLPC Project*, by Ulrich Spalthoff, Germany.



The musical contribution of the day belonged to the masters students Özge Solar, Nil Koroglu, and Aslihan And of the "Flute" section of the "Conservatory of Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University". The entire HumanDHS network thanked the students and their instructor, Assistant Professor Ayla Uludere, for such a wonderful musical contribution!

The final Open Space offered these two discussions:

- *Transgenerational Legacies of Collective Violence*, observations from Germany by Uta Ottmüller, Germany.
- *Social Displacement* by Maggie O'Neill, UK, with Moira Rogers.

We had time for additional contributions on the following topics;

- *Human Dignity and Humiliation in Post-conflict Transitional Societies: The Case of Bosnia and Herzegovina* by Ardian Adžanela.
- *Ideology as Common Sense and Humiliation in Intergroup Relations* by Salman Türken:
- *Knocking the Buzzard off the Manure Spreader* by Merle Lefkoff.

Conference participants closed the day with a spectacular Bosphorus Boat trip that included a fresh fish and bread dinner, supported by the Sariyer City Council. HumanDHS extended its warmest thanks for this special evening activity!

## **30th APRIL: THE PUBLIC EVENT OF THE CONFERENCE**

The final day of the Conference was open to the public. Turkish interpretation was available and the participation was free. Nearly 100 people participated in the event. After the opening talks, given by Hayal Köksal, Linda Hartling, Evelin Lindner and Füge Demirok the first session included four foreign speakers:

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**1. *From Humiliation to Human Dignity: Toward a Science of Right Relationships*** was presented by Linda M. Hartling, Ph.D., Director, Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies; Former Associate Director, Jean Baker Miller Training Institute, Wellesley Centers for Women, Wellesley College.

Linda used Relational-Cultural Theory as a foundation for describing a relational analysis of the experience of humiliation. The latest research in neuroscience suggests that relationships are central to human development. Humiliation can have a profoundly destructive impact on the relationships we need to survive and thrive. Referencing studies on social exclusion, Linda proposed that humiliation leads to social pain, which leads to decreased self-awareness, which leads to decreased self-regulation and increased self-defeating behavior, all of which increases the risk that a person will engage in violence. The work of HumanDHS is largely about healing and transforming relationships, especially when relationships lead to violence. The HumanDHS network is dedicated to building “right relationships,” relationships that support the dignity and development of all people involved.



**2. *Education as a Vehicle for Social Transformation: How to Promote Dignity, Unity and Transcend Humiliation*** was presented by Vineeta Kamran, the Principle of the City Montessori School, Kanpur Road Branch, Lucknow, India.

**3. *Inside or Outside - Asylum Seekers on the Periphery of Borders*** was presented by Paresh Kathrani, Director, Centre for Global Morality. Paresh is currently completing his PhD in Refugee Law and Philosophy at the School of Law, Kings College, London. His work points out the importance of “The Role of Dignity and Humiliation for Refugee Law”.



4. Evelin G. Lindner, Founding Director and President of HumanDHS, started by presenting the participants of our 15th HumanDHS Conference to our Turkish audience. She invited all the guests to respond to this question: “When do they feel like somebody”.

During the tea break the group enjoyed the opening of a Peace Exhibition in the lobby painted by the world children during the “11<sup>th</sup> ICSQCC” in Istanbul in 2008 and the “12<sup>th</sup> ICSQCC” in Lucknow in 2009. World famous Turkish sculptor, Füge Demirok, placed five of her works of art to the Exhibition. She also created the design of the exhibit.

After the tea break guests enjoyed the wonderful contribution by opera singers from the Cultural and Collaborative Society of Artists and Art-Lovers (SANSEV). The director was:

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Nursel Öncül, Soprano: Nalan Bilen, Piano: Burcu Savaşman and Mahmut Kelpetin. This was followed by a very warm thank you from HumanDHS!

The second session of the Public Event featured Turkish speakers:

**1.** The first speaker was Ramazan Baş, President of the Spinal Cord Paralytics Society of Türkiye (TOFD/SCPST). He talked about: *Disability, Dignity, and Humiliation*. He reported on the activities of his NGO. Later he was interviewed by the media along with Evelin Lindner, Hayal Köksal and Brigitte Volz, a therapist from Germany who works with children who have developmental delays.

**2.** Nazan Moroğlu spoke about “*Women’s Human Rights in Türkiye*”. She is the author of *Human Rights Treaty of Women* and is the general coordinator of the Istanbul Women Associations Unity. She also teaches a course, “Women Law,” at Yeditepe University Law School.

**3.** Hayal Köksal presented *Human dignity through “Peace at Home, Peace in the World*. She was the convener and the Turkish Founder of the “WCTQEE-CMS-QOMER Initiative for Peace Education.” She is the advisor and ex-coordinator of the Innovative Teachers Program of Microsoft Türkiye, and consultant of Educational Quality, Leadership and Project Management. In her talk, she described the importance of building bridges between courses, between groups of people, between countries, and also between continents, emphasize this as a way to realize peace in the world.

**4.** Evelin G. Lindner, Founding Director and President of HumanDHS, gave the last speech entitled, *From Shock to Awe: From Humiliation to Dignity*. In her talk, she briefly explained the overall aim of the HumanDHS work. She highlighted how globalization is interlinked with new and unprecedented psychological dynamics that call for novel solutions at all levels—macro, meso and micro levels—and in all fields of public policy.

After the closing of the event guests took a tour of the Covered Bazaar and visited Galata Tower for dinner. The Istanbul HumanDHS Conference concluded with a wonderful City Tour on 1<sup>st</sup> May.

### **SOME FINAL REMARKS FROM THE CONVENER...**

I had accepted to be the convener of such a challenging event four years ago. During those years, I tried hard to pave the way of organizing it. I had gotten the responsibility of such a challenging event with such an unusual topic not only for my country but also for many other countries. I chose the motto: “Peace at Home, Peace in the World” deliberately. For among the many conflicting issues Türkiye has been preserving its place as a bridge between the east and the west, between the oriental world and the western world. The feedback coming from our dearest guests proved that we realized the expected outcomes.

How happy we are! I am grateful to all İmece partners (Bogazici University and Peace Education Center /BUPERC, Sü Ge Der, Kalbe-Mer and the Turkish Center for Schools of Quality) and main supporter (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Association, Türkiye Office). With their great support we realized our dream. I am also thankful to my dearest students from

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SCED who hosted our guests well and thus they have learned a lot. I thank to Sariyer City Council\_ especially Adnan Ayber for the Boat Tour. The bağlama player one of my innovative teachers\_ Gülcan Yeten and her team, San-Sev and the Flute Masters of the Conservatory of Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University' added wonderful music notes into our event. Kuru Kahveci Mehmet Effendi and Boğaziçi Catering added taste of the Turkish cuisine. Posters to inform the participants were prepared by Doğan Advertising. Klas Tour realized safe and qualified transportation, and Fora Tourism, with Murat shared the spectacular sights of Istanbul with our guests. Without the great support of Evelin and Linda and also all our guests and speakers, that Conference would not leave such incredible memories in our hearts and brains. We know and believe: TOGETHER WE STAND!

Please also visit the webpage: [www.humiliationstudies.org](http://www.humiliationstudies.org) and <http://www.hayalkoksal.com/V1/index.php> .

