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### Self-introduction to Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies

I am a psychologist, an independent researcher who lives in Israel and specializes in political behavior. My book in Hebrew, titled "THE VIRUS OF DEHUMANIZATION: DECIPHERING THE POLITICAL CODE ON THE BACKGROUND OF ISRAEL 1979-1999" was published in January 2001.

My work contains three main bodies of contents that rely to the major problem-areas I see as responsible for most of the tragedy in my own life as well as in the lives of humans in general (I happen to be a survivor of the Holocaust, then of strict Marxist education, then of combat in some wars and of over a half century of no-peace). Those problem-areas are **Dehumanization, Political Organization, and Psychological Exploitation**. Humiliation in social and inter-group relations is present in all three of them. In addition, my writings contain a section on the practice of **Nonviolence** as the humanistic alternative to political strategy in free countries. Follows a short synopsis:

The **Dehumanization** part is about the inner mechanism of prejudice, racism, ethnocentrism, xenophobia, fanaticism, etc. The approach to those social epidemics is person-centered and focused on the Direct causes of the condition, that is the self-justification system of the perpetrators. The research-question leading to the Theory of Dehumanization was: "*How can people, who all share the same basic human values of morality, decency, justice, and the value of acting in line with their conscience, justify in their own minds politically motivated inhuman behavior toward other people*". The answer turned to be: by two mental mechanisms. The most important one is having areas of blindness on their conceptual maps, not seeing the things in reality that could disrupt their basic (inhuman) conceptual Map of Orientation which spells, "*We always good and right – Them always bad and wrong\guilty*". In war and conflict, Blind Areas were found to cover obvious human realities, and so protect the dehumanized from running into an intolerable Cognitive Dissonance with their own highest human values. I believe now that Blind Areas are a psychological discovery with the potential of a becoming a breakthrough in efforts to prevent and heal the condition.

The Dehumanization Theory organizes the universally discovered Blind Areas and the corresponding Patterned Beliefs into the Dehumanization Syndrome, a list of symptoms that make the condition operationally definable. The Syndrome is the tool for analysis of expression relating to conflict and for diagnosis of Dehumanization in a personality. In application in education and cultural discourse, bringing Blind Areas systematically to awareness is offered as a radically different and effective way toward humanization of political conflicts.

The **Political Organization** model follows the insights and methods developed in interpersonal communication training, Organizational Development (OD) and Group Dynamics. The enduring problem of power-corruption and inequality, generated by the differences between leadership and members, is avoided by having a network of small groups which regularly make all the decisions for the organization; decision-making is direct rather than through representatives. The suggested process of group decision-making includes the strongest possible safeguards against both degeneration into power-relations and inefficiency; it even includes time set for personal feedback at the end of each session.

The **Psychological Exploitation** part is about liberation of the mind, without which liberation from other forms of exploitation is assumed to be largely meaningless. It takes care of problems of commercial and political propaganda, influence, dynamics of manipulation and forms of external and own suppression of free and rational thinking. It introduces the basic operations of thinking that participate in Orientation and develops practical skills of analyzing those operations in texts, by telling apart statements of information, generalization, inference, judgment, and verbal violence. The practical skill of separating out the grains of relevant factual substance from the chaff of spoken or filmed\animated communicated messages is suggested as the basis for liberating one's mind.

I shall happily answer all inquires by anyone who'd contact me about the issues raised above. I invite advice and collaboration in publishing, applying in education, political science, and social change.

With affinity --- Olek Netzer