

# South America 2012: Reflections on a *Digniventure*

By Evelin Lindner, written in Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, and Ecuador, from the end of March to the end of July 2012

- Please see the pictures on [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelinpics12.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelinpics12.php)
- See the videos created for the World Dignity University initiative on [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/videos.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/videos.php)

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**Dignity in Tourism: A plea for *Digniventures***

by Francisco Gomes de Matos, a peace linguist from Recife, Brazil, 19th July 2012,  
dedicated to Evelin G. Lindner after her 2012 *DIGNIventures* in South America:

Tourists:

To your travels by bus, by car, by train, by ship, by plane, more dignity you can bring  
when you wisely decide to go well beyond a relaxing, fun-filled, informative adventure  
and songs of serious socioeconomic empathy and environmental responsibility you sing  
and by interacting constructively with local citizens, you share something new:  
a *DIGNIventure*

**On pessimism and optimism**

There is a time for pessimism, that is, for considering worst-case scenarios in order to  
appropriately prepare for them. This does not mean one should not be hopeful, but only that one  
should be prepared for adverse outcomes rather than blithely assume that all will turn out well.

Rather than being naively (indiscriminately) optimistic or pessimistic, it is better to be  
strategically optimistic and pessimistic.

—Seymour Epstein, 2005

Pessimism is a luxury we can afford only in good times, in difficult times it easily represents a  
self-inflicted, self-fulfilling death sentence.

—Evelin Lindner & Jo L., Auschwitz survivor, 2004

***DIGNIVENTURE: AN INTRODUCTION***

In the early twenty-first century the world finds itself in transition from a traditional  
culture of coercion to a culture of collaborative creativity. Evidently, this transition is still  
very incomplete and a culture of power-over and might-is-right coercion is still prevalent,  
not only in traditional honour cultures but also in cultures of ruthless individualism and  
profit maximisation. It is not just ugly, it is also profoundly unsustainable; this becomes  
ever more visible to those who are not co-opted. Its starkest most recent global outfall  
was the economic crisis that broke in 2008, while the insidious disintegration of  
ecological and social interconnectivity is slower and often more covert.

As it seems, we, the human family, have a responsibility to think deeper than we are  
used to so far. Change will not be easy. In this situation, neither pessimism nor optimism  
is what is needed. The two quotes at the beginning of this text may serve as motivational  
guides to make the best out of a difficult situation, independent of any ‘success’ or  
‘failure’.

Creativity will be central to building a sustainable future for the bio- and sociosphere  
of our human family. Art is a field that fosters creativity and can help shift paradigms.  
My life could be labelled ‘a piece of social art’, an artistic experiment in serving  
humankind as a paradigm shifting agent.

The ways I shift paradigms with my personal life are in line with the Transformation Theory of Adult Learning (Mezirow, 1991), which explains how *disorienting dilemmas* unsettle our fundamental beliefs and values and bring about transformation. I myself learn a lot from disorienting dilemmas, wherever in the world they present themselves to me. I also introduce disorienting dilemmas from my side, intentionally. I do that, for example, when I reply to the question ‘Where are you from?’ by saying ‘I am a member of our human family, like you—I am from planet Earth, with all its diversity, which I cherish’ (or something in this line). I introduce a disorienting dilemma between the culture of the past, and an envisioned culture of the future. In my vision of a future world culture, we all define ourselves primarily as part of the entire human family, with a shared responsibility for our home planet and its diversity, rather than lending primacy to what divides us, on one side, or what forces us into global uniformity, on the other side.

My life design represents an experiment for a future world culture of true humanity and equality in dignity, not least through its distance to outdated unsustainable definitions of what is reality and what we should strive for. William Ury explains how knowledge as a resource for livelihood can bring back the win-win framing of pre-agricultural hunting-gathering prior to ten thousand years ago (see, for example, *Getting to Peace*, Ury, 1999). In some ways my personal life-design draws on the wisdom of early migratory cultures that pre-dated the emergence of complex agriculture.

The disruption and uneasiness that I cause by not catering to contemporary mainstream expectations, highlights the degree to which we, as humankind, are anchored in past definitions, many of which may be dysfunctional for long-term future sustainability. I invite everybody to join me and muster the courage to face up to the disruption that is entailed in shifting paradigms. I would like to encourage everybody to try saying ‘I am a member of our human family, like you, cherishing our rich cultural diversity’ (or something similar), when asked ‘Where are you from?’ The effect will be a deep transformation, for you and your social environment, even if it may initially cause some offense (remember that disorienting dilemmas may produce initial irritation).

The new paradigm that I wish to bring into the world is thus an identity of ‘one human family with shared and celebrated diversity’ or a ‘global unity in diversity’ identity—with all its consequences. This identity transcends local ‘we against them’ orientations and includes all humanity into ‘we’, and it is different from any uniform globalisation of Western consumerism.

What would be a suitable paradigm for the human family, a paradigm for all walks of life, from economy to academia? I explore this question in all of my work, among others in ‘The Need for a New World’ (Lindner, 2008<sup>1</sup>). ‘Communal sharing’ presents itself as such a paradigm. Anthropologist Alan Page Fiske describes communal sharing or CS (Fiske, 1991) as one model of three or four possible models of social interaction. Communal sharing may be a suitable script for a larger frame, a larger logic, within which other ways of cooperation can thrive without destroying humankind’s common goods and prospects for a sustainable future. I consider myself to be one of the first professors of our World Dignity University initiative, and this is a university where the common good of all humankind guides academic inquiry, rather than national or corporate interest.

Howard Richards, philosopher of social science, calls for a new *logic* of cooperation

and solidarity to become strong enough to limit the current *systemic imperative* (Ellen Meiksins Wood, 2003) running amok. The current systemic imperative is that investor confidence must be served at whatever cost, even if at the cost of sacrificing ecological and social sustainability.

In my life, I try to embody communal sharing in a number of ways. The problem with any new paradigm (see Kuhn, 1962) is that they should not be anchored in old paradigms, or, to be more precise, anchoring new paradigms in old ones must be avoided as much as possible if the new paradigm is to have a chance to be seen.

However, evidently, it is difficult to manifest a new paradigm while the surrounding culture and its institutions counteract it. And this is also the dilemma I face. Since I take the new paradigm seriously, this means, for example, that I should do my utmost to emphasise communal sharing in my life over any self-serving money orientation. I should invest as much as possible into promoting the new paradigm by working for our Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (HumanDHS) network, and as little as possible into self-orientation, be it with respect to earning money or evading monetary contributions (I do wish to pay taxes, for example). Since I lack any safety net for this pioneering work, I continuously run into difficulties. Well-meaning friends often advise me to turn to the old paradigm (I am encouraged to ‘settle down’ and be a professor at a particular university, for example), overlooking that somebody like me, who dedicates her life to making a new paradigm visible, should avoid this strategy as much as possible.

More so, why should I ‘throw away’ my hard-earned ‘comparative advantage’ with respect to paradigm shifting agency? My hard-earned globally inclusive identity makes me uniquely suitable to be the nurturer of a global fellowship such as our HumanDHS network. Even though there is a growing number of people nowadays, who, like me, are developing a global or at least multi-local identity and become ‘citizens of the world’, I do not personally know any other person with similar global experience. Most frequent travellers stay within a ‘Western bubble’ (‘international’ hotels, for instance, maintain a Western bubble) and never really learn to know the diversity of this world. According to what I have seen, the greatest diversity is often to be found among the poor, while the educated are more homogeneous wherever one goes in this world. My unique set of experiences is a fact that presents itself to me as a duty, the duty to put these skills at maximum use and not waste them. Being a professor at a local university, for example, is a role that can be filled by many people; however, I do not see other people being able to fill my global role, at least not for the time being. I hope this will change in the future. In the future, I wish to be able to retreat and gain some personal breathing space from this duty, which I carry proudly and with deep sincerity, but which also weighs heavily on my shoulders.

It is important for me to make clear that my global life is not a homeless or restless life. I am not a ‘nomad’ or ‘gypsy’. I do not even use the term ‘travel’, since I live in the global village and in a village one does not travel, one lives there, even if one moves around in it. As I mentioned earlier, when I look for cultural templates that treat our planet as one undivided locality, I can think of the way of life prior to ca. 10,000 years ago, when *Homo sapiens*, by migrating as gatherers and hunters, populated the entire planet Earth.

I do resonate with what indigenous Native American leader Sitting Bull (1831-1890)

said: ‘White men like to dig in the ground for their food. My people prefer to hunt the buffalo... White men like to stay in one place. My people want to move their tepees here and there to different hunting grounds. The life of white men is slavery. They are prisoners in their towns or farms. The life my people want is freedom’. Clearly, I do not hunt buffalo, and I do not have a tepee. Yet, what I do is refraining from defining a small geographical locality as ‘my home’ and the rest as ‘not my home’. My home is the entire global village. I do not see my life as nomadic, or me as a traveller, because, to my view, I ‘stay in love’. In other words, I see myself being much more ‘still’ and true to ‘my place’, which is the place of love, than those who sell out their soul for a rat race that is defined by large-scale societal frames that, during the past decades, have increasingly become toxic. I see many people travel extensively, yet, usually, they tacitly accept this ‘caged rat race’ frame within which they travel. I prefer to ‘stay still’ in the realm of love. I am closer to a person who chooses to opt out of the rat race to live a simpler life closer to nature, for example, than to a frequent business flyer who travels in circles in the isolated elite bubble of international hotels. I never search for a ‘place to stay’. I move between different relational contexts of love and ‘a place to stay’ is secondary to being embedded into relationships of mutual care. I do not aim at getting from A to B in the smoothest way, but foreground the experiences of solidarity and cooperation that might emerge even in the midst of great difficulties.

Many people feel that my rank (two professional educations, two academic titles, in medicine and psychology, author of books, versed in many languages, etc.) forbids it to expose myself to situations that make me share the lives and the difficulties of ‘normal’ people. For example, they expect me to take the airplane rather than the bus, in case the bus would present a more tiring alternative, particularly in so-called ‘underdeveloped’ world regions. Yet, as mentioned above, I do not wish to be part of the ‘beaten’ global tourist or business path that would keep me apart from people’s normal lives. A bus trip often does precisely that, particularly in world regions that are further removed from Western lifestyle: it catapults me into the middle of the ‘normal’ lives of ‘normal’ people, and I cherish the privilege of getting to know how they live.

During my global life, I try to observe where and under which circumstances *true solidarity* emerges. True solidarity, as I define it, is based, first, on the notion of equal dignity, and, second, on a willingness to maintain a generous and loving attitude vis-à-vis other living beings, always giving them the benefit of the doubt rather than looking for opportunities for confrontation. There are many ways to describe this orientation: Buberian *I-Thou* orientation (Buber, 1923), *connected knowing* rather than *separate knowing* (Belenky, 1986), *let-it-flow* thinking rather than *verdict* thinking (S. M. Miller), *listening into voice* (Linda Hartling), *flourishing* (Martha Nussbaum, Amartya Sen), or *dialogue* (Paulo Freire).

As an example, in Norway, the notion of equality in dignity (*likeverd*) is a deeply anchored cultural tradition. Many Norwegians combine a sense of equality in dignity with an open and inclusive let-it-flow approach. This does not mean idealising Norway. A few Norwegians do see the ideal of *likeverd* as an entitlement to ‘defend’ their personal ‘territory’ at any moment, continuously ‘ready to shoot’ so to speak. The massacre of the 22nd July 2011 brought this side into stark visibility. Norway is also a country of significant neighbour quarrels.

Where does this strong Norwegian spirit come from? Norwegian writer and poet Henrik Wergeland (1808–1845) makes the point that Norway’s disadvantaged geopolitical setting may have played out as an advantage.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps Norway was too marginal, too poor (oil was found only as recently as 1962), and its Nordic nature too scarce to be interesting enough to be attacked, or to be subjugated in any thorough way into the deeper hierarchies of larger neighbouring empires.<sup>3</sup> In other words, Norwegian pride has never been broken, their heads not forced to bow, at least not significantly.

It is fascinating, what Indian poet, philosopher, and professor Sri Ananda Acharya said about the Scandinavian people (*Uttara-Kurus*) in the lectures he gave in 1917 in Sweden, where he speaks about their sense of equality in dignity (*likeverd*), as well as their strong women. Here are five quotes (see the entire passages of two pages in the endnote following the quotes):

- There are no such inequalities as are conveyed by the words 'higher', 'lower' and 'middling' among the people of the *Uttara-Kurus*.
- The Rāmāyana speaks about the *Uttara-Kurus* as of very happy disposition and fond of giving gifts. The independence of their women is particularly noticed by Vyāsa.
- Arjuna, Prince of India, when on a conquering expedition was warned by the Uttar-Kurus not to invade their country. 'Thou canst not, O son of Prthā, conquer our town. Retire, O fortunate man, for our land is invincible. He must be an immortal who aspires to violate our town. There is nothing here which you would wish to take away. Here dwell the Uttara-Kurus, whom no one cares to conquer, and even if you succeed in penetrating our country you will see nothing.
- It is remarkable that the names 'Mleccha' (barbarian) and 'Dasyu' (robber) which were contemptuously applied to other races conquered by Arjuna were never given to the *Uttara-Kurus*.
- There was communication between the Hindus and the *Uttara-Kurus* even during the Buddhist period, for the Mahāyāna alchemist, Nāgārjuna, who lived either in the first century of the Christian era or the preceding century, visited their land. The civilisation of the *Uttara-Kurus* referred to in ancient Sanskrit works must have existed at least many thousand years ago – but of course such dates are purely hypothetical.<sup>4</sup>

Few cultural realms share the strong sense that Norwegians have of the right of every human to be respected as equal in worthiness. Normally, as I observe it, *unequal worthiness* is the norm, even where human rights ideals are subscribed to in theory. Wherever I move on our globe, most people combine a sense of unequal worthiness with either fluid or rigid ways of protecting their interests. The most toxic version is when people are 'ready to shoot' as soon as their personal boundaries are touched upon either by equals, or by superiors or inferiors. People with that proclivity usually start out by 'taxing' everybody they meet, gauging whether the other is their equal, superior, or inferior, and then they obsessively throw themselves 'into battle', defending their territory against infringements (real or imagined) in all three dimensions, up, down, and sideways, without factoring in that misunderstandings or their own imagination may play

tricks on them. When *rankism* (Fuller, 2003) is combined with *profitism* (the maximisation of profit), this is when true solidarity is lacking most.

In other words, while Norwegians only have equals to tend to (simplified said), most people also defend their borders downwards and upwards, in an intricate ranking system. My aim is to find and create contexts, where equal dignity flourishes with generosity, fluidity, and loving inclusivity and I wish to describe and highlight such contexts to the world. I myself attempt to contribute by always emphasising that I do not think that my life achievements (doctorates, etc.) give me a higher rank whatsoever, nor the right to be 'ready to shoot' at every turn I take.

I see true solidarity also lacking when I observe the camaraderie of inferiors against their superiors, or the solidarity of superiors in their struggle to keep inferiors down. In general, when people use enemy out-groups to create in-group cohesion, to my view, true solidarity is wanting. When I find myself in situations where I am invited into soothing in-group solidarity that is built on out-group enmity, I try to warn that this is seldom fruitful in the long run. As soon as cooperation at higher levels is needed, such in-group solidarity maintains and creates deep wounds of hurt and humiliation in the hated out-group, making future solidarity between out-groups more difficult. The currently most pressing overall aim, namely that the human family has to learn to act together to protect social and ecological sustainability, will be inhibited if rifts of humiliation keep people apart.

The pragmatics of promoting new paradigms resemble efforts such as, for example, expeditions to as of yet unconquered mountain peaks. I compare our HumanDHS work with an expedition to a not yet reached plateau that is located at a much higher altitude than humankind has reached so far. Expeditions are structured very differently to 'normal life'. Expeditions require a certain timing, a particular build-up of strength, and a very special level of dedication. Certain expeditions should not be envisioned altogether if the leaders are not willing to invest their utmost into that effort. As explained elsewhere, we, as HumanDHS, have now about 1,000 personally invited members globally in our network, and our website has been read by more than 40,000 people from 183 countries per year. In other words, together with our core leadership team, I lead an expedition with a large number of people following us. If I take this expedition seriously, I cannot switch to 'normal life mode' in the middle of it. I cannot say, 'Oh, today is Sunday', while we are hanging on a cliff. I first have to bring the expedition to a certain level, a level of self-driven momentum, where it can continue by itself. Otherwise, the expedition will fall back, and every so-far invested effort will be wasted. I have to keep up maximum concentration and maximum dedication until the expedition has at least reached the edge of the plateau and there is a chance that the majority of the participants can proceed further without me, or at least without me investing all my energy and time.

Developing our HumanDHS fellowship as a global alternative community has been profoundly enriching for me. My global lifestyle gives me ever more energy and is extremely gratifying. Yet, since our work is very successful, we constantly face the need to adapt our work to growth. I continuously reach the limits of what I can shoulder. I therefore beg everybody for support and patience. Often I am more than one year delayed in replying to emails, just to give you one example.

Our HumanDHS work is extremely innovative; it is not comparable with traditional

organisations. We do not operate as a traditional NGO or academic institution. I therefore invite everybody to familiarise themselves with the novelty of our work: ‘In times of change, the learners inherit the world, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists’ (Eric Hoffer).

I like the term *digniventure* that our dear peace linguist Francisco Cardoso Gomes de Matos has coined for my kind of travels (dignity + adventure). When I had arrived in La Paz, Bolivia, in 2012, he wrote (11th May 2012): ‘Dear Evelin, after your bus travel experiences, I’m sure you’ll have enough to write a book on A Bus Traveler’s Dialogue: Experiencing DIGNITY and reflecting on HUMILIATION. Now that you have made it to LA PAZ, que A PAZ acompanhe você até sua chegada a São Paulo e permaneça em sua companhia, Evelin. Imagine that all our friends are sharing the joy of learning that you have completed the first long stretch of your bus travel DIGNIventures (adventures in DIGNITY), Sunniest abraço, Francisco’.

On 10th July 2012, Francisco sent me another rhymed reflection ‘On DIGNIVENTURE’:

Having been inspired by Evelin’s ‘dignifying travels in South America’, I coined the term DIGNIventure. A brief explanation is given below in rhymed reflection format, so friends can know more about that coinage:

Why DIGNIventure?

A rhymed reflection

Because of the dignifying, daring travel risks Evelin likes to take

Also because of the crossculturally relevant visual recordings she likes to make

A DIGNIventure is a humanizing, illuminating undertaking  
which is inspiring for initiatives dignifyingly in the making.

My digniventures always begin when I write to all our network members, asking them whether they know somebody in the region I envision to go to who would be sympathetic to our concept of Dialogue Homes. We encourage all our network members with a large enough home to open it for other members, for those who would like to share their lives with them for a certain period, engage in dialogue, and in this way manifest our global human family in practice and not just in theory.

My aim is always to find people who would understand that I do not ‘travel’ in the way other people travel. Even people, who travel a lot, usually have a ‘base’. They start from their home, where they have their things and their ‘normal life’, and then they do some fast ‘travels’, only to return ‘home’ to their base. Since I do not have a base and since my home is the house where I am staying in at any given point in time, I need to be in one place for longer periods, preferably several weeks in a row rather than only a few days. I cannot fill my days with lectures or other similar activities too much, not to speak of ‘normal’ tourist activities such as visiting museums or cultural events. The reason is that I carry my ‘normal life’ with me in form of my laptop, which is the mobile headquarters of our network. I need to work ca. ten hours per day, normally, only to fulfil my role as webmaster of our website, co-organiser of our two annual conferences, nurturer of our network (as I mentioned earlier, up to 250 important emails are coming in



per day, I have a backlog of 1,000 to 2,000 emails to reply to at any given time), not to speak of writing my books.

Another point I have to be conscious of is to plan for taking the bus, train, or ship, rather than airplanes, not just due to the carbon footprint and my wish to be near ‘normal’ people (as explained earlier), but also due to my very specific health situation (my global life has had its price), which makes me suffer from the *Aerotoxic Syndrome* in planes more than other people. If a plane is an old one with less than efficient air filters, I might arrive at my destination and be unable to wake up for days or even weeks.

It is important for me to make clear that I consider practical problems occurring on my path to be opportunities for learning and that I am immensely grateful to everybody who kindly gives their time and energy to be of help. In situations of difficulty and emergency, often the most touching experiences arise, experiences of mutual support and help. Please know that the problems I describe further down do not give me any reason to judge or engage in *verdict-thinking* (S. M. Miller’s coinage, in contrast to *let-it-flow thinking*). I do not feel and think in terms of rigid dichotomies of wrong versus right, or truth versus lies, since I am only too aware that there is a wide field of nuances.

Misunderstandings are often the most significant reasons for disconnections. The very last aim I have in life is to assign blame or make people feel guilty, or attract pity for me. I am simply extremely thankful for all the wonderful help I usually receive. When I report on problems, I do that only in order to increase understanding of the socio-psychological dynamics around me, and to express gratitude to those who helped overcome those problems.

As I said earlier, I like the term *digniventure* that our dear peace linguist Francisco Gomes de Matos has coined for my kind of travels. Indeed, even in the most difficult situation my reflex is to refrain from any aggressive, indignant, accusatory behaviour, as I often see it in tourists from certain cultural backgrounds that call for throwing one’s weight around. I never allow any frustration I might feel to translate into any form of aggressive behaviour. By simply staying present and calm, unexpected friendliness and helpfulness may emerge in the people who are around me. With accusatory behaviour, I would create enemies, who might help me only as far as they are being pressured. By calmness, I create friends, who help also where I do not have enough oversight over the situation to know what kind of help I might actually need. In other words, this is not only a dignified approach, but also much more pragmatically successful.

Early tourists used the rest of the world as hunting ground. *Safari* often meant killing. The skin of a tiger was a trophy. Today, luckily, the world is no longer being used as a hunting ground for a few elites in the same way. Yet, to my view, the humiliation emanating from tourism is still with us—as obscene, albeit less glaring. In all cases, this obscenity is not being perceived. Early trophy hunters were thoroughly well-intentioned and proud of their prowess, as are today’s tourists of their conquests. I often ask tourists to show me the pictures they have taken. What I see are either photos of the type ‘look what I did’ in terms of adventurous or leisure activities, or pictures that show ‘how exotic they are’, in other words, photos of rare animals or plants and of ‘strange looking’ people. The world is being treated like a screen, a backdrop, something to watch, to then return home, where one edits the photos during the weekends, while one earns the money for the next trip during the weekdays. In other words, the population of the visited country is

expected to offer opportunities for adventure or relaxation in exchange for payment (which is often channelled back to transnational corporations rather than to the people who provide the service on the ground). In short, many of those who can pay for travel and who have a passport that facilitates global mobility unwittingly use the rest of the world's living creatures as servants and 'zoo'.

I do not wish to participate in such undignified ways of living on our planet. I refrain from using words such as 'exotic' or 'mysterious' for other people, animals, or plants. I wish to refrain from using others to show off my own courage or pick others' curiosity. I wish to manifest, not just in theory, but in the reality of my life, that we are *one* family of human beings, with none of us being 'outlandish', and that we need to be the stewards of our home planet, together.

In former times, the world was comprised of 'friends', 'enemies', and 'strange exotic people'. Today, we, the human family, need to be, if not friends, then at least good enough neighbours, if we want to stand up to the global challenges we face. Today, we need to draw the circle so large that there is no 'thing to flout' left on our planet, no thing 'alien' or 'outlandish':

Outwitted:

He drew a circle that shut me out --

Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.

But Love and I had the wit to win:

We drew a circle that took him in!

- Edwin Markham, Oregon poet laureate (1923-1940)

In my *Emotion and Conflict* book (Lindner, 2009a), starting on page 150, I have included a section, titled 'We Must Transcend Optimism and Pessimism!' And in my book *Gender, Humiliation, and Global Security* (Lindner, 2010) on page 12, I included the second saying that opens this text as follows:

Great movements for social change always begin with statements of great optimism.<sup>5</sup> If you know doubters, those who fancy themselves as pessimists, or those who define laziness as 'realism', ask them to put this book aside and go occupy themselves otherwise. Let them know, whatever they do, they should not hinder the rescuers in their work. Let them know that this is not a joke; it is firm love. Otherwise our children will not have a future. Pessimism is a luxury we can afford only in good times; in difficult times it represents a self-inflicted, self-fulfilling death sentence.<sup>6</sup> At present, there is too much cynicism in the world and too little tough-loving skepticism'.<sup>7</sup> Too much support for the cowardice of cynicism is perhaps the greatest metaemotional problem of present times.<sup>8</sup>

#### FOUR MONTHS IN SOUTH AMERICA: AN OVERVIEW

Since many years, I have had plans to spend time in South America. Our Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies network was 'weakest' there, not least because, in my

capacity as the ‘global ambassador’ of our network, I had never been there. 2012 finally was the year to realise this plan, from the end of March to the end of July. The additional reason was that I had to write my book on *Humiliation and Terrorism*. I felt that I could not write this book without having an insight into the perspective on terrorism from South America.

I will now give a short overview over the four months I spent in South America, and, further down, I will share some general observations and the chronological path.

This is the overview: Since Howard Richards, renowned philosopher of social science, had kindly declared his home in Chile to be one of our Dialogue Homes already in 2009, I began my journey in Chile.<sup>9</sup> Howard kindly welcomed me at the end of March 2012 in his home in Limache, and I had the great privilege of being part of his wonderful network of colleagues, friends, and family. Then I proceeded to Bolivia (see more about how I arrived there further down). In La Paz I was welcomed and cared for in wonderful ways by Daniela and Johann for a week in their home in La Paz. My next delightful home was with Gabriela Saab and her family and friends in São Paulo at the end of May and beginning of June. It was here that the loving hand of peace linguist Francisco Cardoso Gomes de Matos began to make itself felt, since I had met Gaby through him. The care and support of Francisco Gomes de Matos and Gabriela Saab guided me further to Brasilia and Recife in the first part of June. In Recife I had the most wonderful week with Francisco and his family, friends, and networks. After more than a decade of email friendship, we finally met in person! His care accompanied me to dear Giselda and Fatima in Teresina in Piauí in Brazil, until I arrived in Marabá, Pará, the Brazilian ‘door’ to Amazonia, where Dan Baron and Manoela Souza were my wonderful hosts for the second part of June. Ecuador was my last destination, where Mariana Vergara kindly awaited me in Quito and brought me to the Ecuadorian Amazonia and her wonderful extended family in Quito. I left South America at the end of July from Quito.

Please see the pictures on [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelinpics12.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelinpics12.php). And see the video dialogues made for our World Dignity University initiative on [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/videos.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/videos.php).

The following is a list of some of my talks, lectures, seminars, workshops, or interviews (this list does not include the video interviews that we created for the World Dignity University initiative, which you find on [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/videos.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/videos.php)):

- 4th April 2012: Interview with Ignacia Imbodén for the radio program La Fibra / Radio Amor 99.3 FM in Viña del Mar, Chile
- 5th April 2012: Seminar *Encuentra Cordinatoria de la Universidad Mundial de la Dignidad* at the Dialogue Home of Howard Richards and the ‘Centro para el desarrollo alternativo’ in Limache, Chile
- 10th April 2012, Presentation *Charla harla para Universidad de Valparaíso*, by Howard Richards, and *¿Se puede manifestar más dignidad? En lugar de más humillación?* by Evelin Lindner, Universidad de Valparaíso, Chile
- 19th April 2012: Charla (Lecture, talk, presentation) titled *Dignidad humana en el quehacer político (Human Dignity in Political Work)* at the Colegio Mar Abierto in Valparaíso, Chile

- 19th April 2012, 79 años del Partido Socialista de Chile, Charla (Lecture, talk, presentation) titled *Dignidad humana en el quehacer político (Human Dignity in Political Work)*, invited by the Juventud Socialista de Chile (Socialist Youth of Chile), the Partido Socialista de Valparaíso (Socialist Party of Valparaíso), and the Biblioteca Popular (Library of the People) in Valparaíso.
- 20th April 2012, chiral (lecture, talk, presentation) titled *La Ética de la Dignidad y la Humildad, Presentación de la iniciativa Universidad Mundial de la Dignidad*, El Departamento de extensión del Instituto de Ciencias Religiosas Ad Instar Facultatis de la Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Chile.
- 22nd May 2012: *Reflexões Democráticas: Direitos Humanos, Tolerância e Humilhação (Democratic Reflections: Human Rights, Tolerance and Humiliation)*, Conversa no Instituto Norberto Bobbio, São Paulo, Brazil, com Evelin Lindner, com a apresentação de David Calderoni, psicanalista do Núcleo de Psicopatologia, Políticas Públicas de Saúde Mental e Ações Comunicativas em Saúde Pública (NUPSI).
- 24th May 2012, *A Letter to My Father - Memories of Humiliation in International Conflicts*, lecture in the course of literature by Dr. Laura P. Zuntini of Izarra, the Faculty of Philosophy and Humanities, Department of Modern Languages, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil.
- 24th May, 2012, *International Law in Relation to Humiliation and Armed Conflict*, lecture at the Faculty of Law in the International Criminal Law course taught by Professor Cláudia Perrone-Moisés at the University of São Paulo, Brazil, Thursday.
- 26th May 2012, *Dignidade Humana e o Desemprego*, com Gabriela Saab, palestra no Grupo de Apoio Psicoprofissional (GAP) que atende desempregados na cidade de Guarulhos, Rua Harry Simonsen, 202, Guarulhos, Brazil.
- 29th May, 2012, *Educação, Conflitos e Democracia*, mesa-redonda, participação de Evelin Lindner e Annie Dymetman, mediação Helena Singer, Memorial da América Latina, Sala dos Espelhos, São Paulo, Brasil.
- 1st June 2012, *Humiliation, Dignity and Reconciliation / Humilhação, Dignidade e Reconciliação*, lecture in English with consecutive translation together with Professor Sergio Adorno, Professor of Sociology, University of São Paulo. Mediation Guilherme Assisi de Almeida, Law School, University of São Paulo. Supported by the UNESCO Chair Education for Peace, Democracy, Human Rights and Tolerance, and the Centro Maria Antônia at the University of São Paulo, Brazil.
- 5th June 2012, *Humilhação, Dignidade e Direitos Humanos*, palestra na Comissão de Direitos Humanos e Minorias (Committee for Human Rights and Minorities), Câmara dos Deputados (Chamber of Deputies), Brasilia, Brasil
- 12th June 2012, *O papel da Dignidade e da Humilhação no que Concerne à Paz, à Humanização e à Conciliação em Contextos Familiar e Universitário / The Role of Dignity and Humiliation in Regard to Peace, Harmony, Reconciliation and Forgiveness* (English, with simultaneous translation into Portuguese), Lecture at the Center for Philosophy and Humanities of the University of Pernambuco in

Recife.

- 15th June 2012: *Education, Dignity, and Crosscultural Communication*, workshop in English at the Associação Brasil-América (ABA), Recife, Brazil.
- 18th June–2nd July 2012, Rios + 20 Amazon Dialogues in Marabá, Pará, Brazil.
- Ruku Kausay: World Dignity University Amazonian Branch in the Rainforest of Ecuador.

### **SOUTH AMERICA: WHICH LESSONS DID IT TEACH ME?**

I have lived globally for almost 40 years, on all continents of this globe, however, so far, I had never been in South America.

What did I learn? What came to my mind on my path through this continent? Please allow me to share some impressions and thoughts with you.

#### **Gifts to the World: Solidarity Economics and the Advantages of *Miscegenation***

In the Introduction of this text, I wrote that, to my view, concepts such as communal sharing (CS) may be suitable frames for a sustainable future for our human family on our planet. Philosopher of social science Howard Richards would call it a suitable logic. I wrote a book, *A Dignity Economy* (Lindner, 2012), to spell out why I think that we, the human family on planet Earth, need to reflect deeper than ever, that we have to go back in our human history to times prior to the Neolithic Revolution and rethink our adaptations to the finiteness of our planet throughout the past ten thousand years, if we want to make our life on Earth sustainable. Since cycles of humiliation tend to impede clear thinking, I suggest to exit from them, as there are, for instance, the cycles of humiliation that are connected with terms such as *socialism* and *capitalism*. I propose that we take the best of everything we, as a human family, have ever done on this planet, and with this knowledge, and with these skills, we then create a world of dignity. I coined the word *dignism*. Why not *dignism* rather than communism or capitalism?

Anthropologist Alan Page Fiske describes communal sharing (CS) as one model of three or four possible models of social interaction (Fiske, 1991). Communal sharing can provide a scaffold within which other ways of cooperating can thrive without destroying humankind's prospects for a sustainable future.

It was therefore a great privilege and revelation for me to meet the founder of *solidarity economics*, Luis Razeto, in April in Chile. I met him through Howard Richards, who advocates a *plural economy*. I very much recommend his book *Rethinking Thinking*, co-authored with Catherine Hoppers, of which I read a first draft (Hoppers & Richards, 2012). Learning about the work of Iván Labra with the *Organization Workshop*, based on Clodomir Santos de Moraes' concepts, was another great inspiration. Then, when I was in Brazil, it was Paul Singer, Eduardo Suplicy, and David Calderoni, in connection with Guy Standing, who equally impressed me. David Calderoni, for instance, aims at connecting a solidarity economy with the basic income concept. In Brazil, I also learned that the *Pastorals* of the Catholic Church and its liberation theology branch were the

origin of most of the social movements in Brazil—there is the Pastoral da Crianças, the Pastoral da Saúde, and the Pastoral da Terra, among others (even though the Catholic Church, at present, is being weakened by evangelical movements).

Apart from solidarity economics, another phenomenon impressed me, namely, the effects of *miscegenation* (from the Latin *miscere* ‘to mix’ + *genus* ‘kind’), or the mixing of different racial groups through marriage, cohabitation, sexual relations, and procreation in South America. Further down in this text, I will expand more on what I learned in this respect.

To my view, the world can benefit from looking at the South American concepts of solidarity economics, and at the ways identities are being constructed particularly in the Portuguese-speaking parts of South America.

### **Traumatic Wounds of the Past and the Present**

Yet, I also met the traumata of this continent. The Cold War produced ‘side-effects’ of unimaginable suffering in South America, carried out by brutal dictatorships that were propped up to strengthen one side in the Cold War stand-off. I do not expand on this tragic part of South American history here since it is widely known. I was lucky enough to be given the book *Human Rights in Latin America: A Politics of Terror and Hope*, by Sonia Cardenas, before I set out for South America by Ulrich Spalthoff.<sup>10</sup> And when I arrived in Chile, I had the privilege of being introduced to the days when Salvador Allende was overthrown through the masterful novel of a person who had experienced this significant period of Chilean history at first hand. The novel is titled *Sweet Country* and was written by Caroline Richards, the wife of Howard Richards, my extraordinary host in Chile.<sup>11</sup>

What I want to emphasise here are those wounds that are lesser known. For example, wherever I turned in South America, I was confronted with ‘social wounds’ that had a name that people uttered while looking at me, almost whispering, with pain in their faces, as if they were conveying the following message to me: ‘You know about this, don’t you? I do not have to explain this to you, don’t I? I do not have to say it loud!? I hope the entire world is seeing this? I hope we are not alone with this?’

In Chile, violent protests in the city of Aysén,<sup>12</sup> and a popular student rebellion were on their way.<sup>13</sup> Solidarity with Aysén had been felt throughout Chile.<sup>14</sup>

In Bolivia, it was, among others, the conflict over the road through the TIPNIS National Park.<sup>15</sup>

In Brazil it was, first and foremost, the very controversial building of the Belo Monte Dam.<sup>16</sup> In the region of São Paulo it was also the Pinheirinho eviction,<sup>17</sup> or the closing down of the Sarau do Binho.<sup>18</sup>

All these cases represented wounds that were at the forefront of collective consciousness, albeit painfully, with the awe of fear and terror that a cancer patient feels when she does not know how to share her predicament with others.

### **Subaltern Self-Humiliation: The Selling Out of Cultural Diversity for Rankism and**

### Profitism

In the course of my journey around the world, wherever I am, my attention often goes to other wounds, wounds that are not at the forefront of collective consciousness in the same way, wounds that are part of the *horizon*, as philosopher Edmund Husserl calls it. The horizon is what we expect to encounter without even thinking of it when we walk through life. For instance, when we enter a house, we expect that we will find a floor on which we can step. I dedicated large parts of chapter eight in my *Emotion and Conflict* book to that topic.<sup>19</sup>

Examples abound all around the world. People preserve a 'horizon' they should leave behind, precisely because the horizon is something that escapes being noticed. These phenomena are much less visible than the wounds referred to earlier, however, to my view, they are more damaging than people typically are aware of, precisely because as part of the horizon they are so insidiously invisible. I often observe, for instance, that protest movements against violence preserve the old horizon in the ways they shape their protest; protest movements against violence, for instance, frequently use a language of war, such as 'fighting', or 'winning' against 'the enemy'.

Allow me to share with you my observations of various manifestations of this dynamic.

The following examples address the loss of cultural diversity. The choice of clothes I observed in South America, for instance, profoundly saddened me. Many tourists take pictures of indigenous women in Peru or Bolivia wearing a voluminous 'pollera' (a pleated skirt) and a large hat. However, typical Bolivian dress did not look anything like this when the Spanish arrived to colonize South America.

The Catholic Church insisted upon deciding what was right or wrong to wear among the indigenous population and many of their customs and traditions were disallowed, including their typical clothing. Thus, as of the 16th Century, the Spanish imposed a new style of dress upon the indigenous and mestizo (mixed race) population forcing them to wear the typical European clothing of the era, permitting just a few adaptations to local customs and climate. This is the Bolivian clothing you see 'cholas' wearing in the Bolivian Andean highland region today.<sup>20</sup>

While indigenous people in the Andes still bow to the dictate of early colonisers, in urban neighbourhoods, it is the uniformity of contemporary Western clothes that is obeyed to. The clothes offered in markets of less wealthy neighbourhoods seem to be cheap and low quality imitations of Western clothes, or perhaps even part of the global trade with second hand clothes which pushes aside local production and style in even more hideous ways (see, for example, the documentary 'Geld verdienen mit Kleiderspenden?'<sup>21</sup>). In wealthier neighbourhoods, only the choice of brands is different, the uniformity is similar. In all cases, the worst of Western culture is being venerated. I have written about the damaging effects flowing from subaltern elite imitation in my books. In my work, I would like to encourage, instead, a sense of unity in diversity, or, more precisely, a sense of unity in equality in dignity, rather than subaltern uniformity. What makes me sad is to observe a lacking sense of dignity that could be manifested

through pride for diversity.

In similar ways, the globally imitated architecture of constructing houses, unfortunately, has pushed aside any available local building style in the parts of South America I saw. Not only the material (concrete), but also the Western ‘prison camp’ approach to placing houses is being copied, everything being arranged in a uniform rectangular style. In urban areas this is so ubiquitous that its insidiousness, through having acquired the status of ‘normality’, tends to numb one’s senses. In Bolivia, however, on my way from Santa Cruz to the frontier with Brazil, I saw a tiny ‘urbanización’ project, in the middle of untouched nature, a sight that made particularly visible how misguided the ‘prison camp’ approach is. Also in Marabá, Pará, at the end of June, I was confronted with the absurdity of badly built ‘housing projects’ that nobody can live in.

The ‘prison camp’ approach usually starts with a prototype that an architect has designed far from the locality, then this prototype is being multiplied and those copies are set up in a rectangular grid-like manner. As mentioned above, in big cities this approach is so ubiquitous that its insidiousness has become normality to a degree that few people react to it. To see this approach in the midst of almost untouched nature, as part of so-called ‘development’, makes the inappropriateness of this strategy more visible.

I would recommend offering people local material, allowing them to use their own creativity to design their dwellings. In my *Making Enemies* book, I discuss how damaging obsessive machine-like rectangularity is to living beings, since humans are not machines (Lindner, 2006). I would be happy to see the Organization Workshop approach by Iván Labra being applied instead.<sup>22</sup>

On 11th to 13th June 2012, I was kindly given the honourable gift of staying in a hotel, a hotel at the Boa Viagem beach in Recife. I was very grateful for that gift. However, I dreamt of a radically more humanised future when I saw the lovely beach, with its curves and undulations, every centimetre being different from the next, showing off the wonderful diversity that nature provides as a free gift. The beach faced facades of uniformity built for profit maximisation, buildings that, per design, are difficult to maintain and therefore always prone to dilapidate in ugly ways. In contrast, neighbouring Olinda, a historical city protected by UNESCO as world heritage, kept its charm even through some degree of dilapidation. Uniform buildings erected for profit maximisation, I suspect, will hardly ever be honoured as world cultural heritage. I personally feel horrified in such impersonal and uniform buildings, I feel my humanity being violated and humiliated in the cruellest ways. I am not a machine, I am a living being, and I do not wish to live in machines. I am personally extremely unhappy about famous architect Le Corbusier’s thoughts that buildings should be fashioned as ‘machines for living in’, analogous to cars, which he saw as machines for travelling in. I am horrified when I see that currently this philosophy, not least because it serves the profit maximisation motive so well, is polluting and dehumanising every urban area I visit all over the globe. This trend is one reason for my global life: I cannot stomach the ugliness of our modern architecture, and the only solution for me is to always leave, since change makes the ugliness slightly more bearable. Japanese architect Kisho Kurokawa speaks from the depth of my soul and heart, when he calls for a shift from a ‘machine principle’ to a ‘life principle’ (not just in architectural designs).<sup>23</sup>



When I flew from Recife to Teresina in Brazil (16th June 2012), I wrote down the following reflections, after seeing the military-camp style of new settlements from the plane:

Air views often make particularly visible how nature is undulated rather than rectangular, and how 'modern' human settlements are arranged in a seeming obsession with military-camp style rectangularity. To me, seeing this approach to human settlement all over the world (not just in Brazil, of course), is profoundly hurtful, it deeply humiliates my humanity. It is brought about by starting with a prototype, which then is multiplied, either horizontally, as to be seen when approaching Teresina, or vertically, as in most high-rise buildings that pollute modern-day urban areas. This expresses the profit maximisation motive insofar as multiplying a prototype renders more profit than building a settlement of only prototypes, where each unit is different from the next. The 'luxury' of being able to see human diversity, creativity, and individual expression in built environments, ironically, can be found most in the poorer areas of cities as long as they are created by their inhabitants themselves and not by any agency. Clearly, slum areas are poor in sanitary standards, in their level of security, and so forth, but they are rich in the diversity of their physical expressions: arrangements of cardboard, wood, plastic, and metal resemble sculptures that illustrate the high level of creativity human beings are capable of.

What always astonishes me is the willingness with which we human beings accept pain in exchange for status. The case of Chinese foot binding is a good illustration (not least because this practice is forbidden now). For an entire millennium, Chinese women accepted that the bones of the feet of their daughters had to be broken and bound tight to bring the feet into the coveted shape of a Lotus flower. And all this was done only because one emperor found this shape to be appealing. The mothers thought the gain was worth the pain. Crying was a sign of weakness. We, the human family, today, worldwide, seem to accept obsessive rectangularity as a symbol of high status and the pain it may cause to some weak 'artistic' souls like me is deemed to be worth it in exchange for the gain.

Similarly, we accept that our bodies are straightjacketed into furniture that is almost as damaging as foot binding. Why do so many people suffer from back pain, but insist on continuing sitting on chairs in front of desks? Chairs were invented to elevate one person above others. Thrones put rulers above their inferiors, literally. A chairperson leads a meeting, precisely because a chair positions them higher than the rest of the participants in a meeting. A professor holds a chair, because professors talk to students who sit at their feet. What we forget, when we suffer from back pain, is, that nowadays the function of elevating one person above others by way of chairs is lost as everybody sits on chairs, and that we are left only with the damaging side-effects. The human body is not made to sit on chairs, at least not for long periods of time. It has oppressive, constraining effects. It causes pain. Why are we filling our homes with furniture that straightjackets our bodies?

It is not without reason that children were beaten when they did not sit still in school: the pain flowing from having to sit still in a chair for hours was being used as an instrument to discipline bodies and souls into subordination. Why do we replicate this torture in today's schools around the world? Why do so many people think that it is a

constructive idea to help ‘build schools’ for poor people with chairs and desks? Why are so many schools in Africa empty and dilapidated? Because a building with chairs and desks has nothing to do with a school. Learning is not facilitated by sitting still on chairs in a house. A Bedouin child learns walking far and identifying useful plants in the desert not by sitting still on a chair in a building.

Now to other, related observations that I find being replicated all over the world. Throughout South America, I noted that petrol stations are among the most well-kept buildings. And then there are the ubiquitous shopping malls. The MegaCenter en Irpavi in the wealthy southern part of La Paz, Bolivia is only one among many examples. Sadly, it does not offer any native Bolivian food, except for one Bolivian-style fast food, ‘Pollos Copacabana’. Downtown, I was informed, there are now some gourmet restaurants where such food is on offer at high prices (and, as I learned, their food is practically identical with what restaurants for poor people have on their menu). However, in a shopping mall in a wealthy segment of town, mostly international junk food will sell, so I was told.

The ‘temples’ of modern American culture were prominently visible everywhere, from Kentucky Fried Chicken to McDonalds. New huge shopping malls are under construction at all corners.

As to the many Western influences, Coca Cola advertisement seemed to be ubiquitous even in the poorest rural areas, particularly in the parts of Chile, Argentina, and Bolivia that I saw. As far as I could observe, the company Coca Cola has amply succeeded in making almost everybody in the South America, at least the South America I experienced, believe that drinking Coca Cola means ‘being one of the rich people of this world’. Everybody with respect for themselves seemed to consume it in vast quantities. An attitude of subaltern imitation of imagined Western elites seemed to prevail among local elites.

One of Coca Cola’s strategies appears to be to provide large amounts of red paint so that large facades can be painted red (interestingly, Pacena beer from La Paz seems to have learned from Coca Cola in Bolivia). Entire houses thus appeared in red, often rendering them the only colourful spots in the whole village. It is legal to transport coca leaves in Bolivia, where the milder ones are being chewed as stimulant. In other words, here we have a mild indigenous stimulant in a non-Western world region, Western culture added sugar, something rather unhealthy, and sold it back to the region of origin at a much higher price. How was this ‘success’ possible?

I must admit, I felt it as deep personal humiliation of my humanity to observe how the unhealthiest parts of Western culture are almost venerated in South America, in the presence of indigenous food of highest value. How is it possible that people prefer Coca Cola and North American fast food, while they are surrounded by the best of what our planet can offer?

The story of Coca Cola reminded me of the story of Champagne. The court of Versailles is the historically most recent peak expression of elite culture. All trappings of the Versailles culture are being copied all around the world until the day today (identical copies of French castles are currently being built for wealthy Chinese; all so-called high-standard international hotels draw on the style of Versailles; potentates in Africa sit in copies of golden Louis Seize chairs; Japanese women of standing would never buy anything but Parisian brands—I expand on this topic in my book *Making Enemies*

Lindner, 2006). As to Champagne, due to lack of sunshine, a rather low-quality wine is growing in the region of Champagne near Paris (I lived there for three years). How could it be sold at a high price? A rather inexpensive addition (adding carbon dioxide) was mystified by clever advertisement and thus turned it into a symbol of upper-class celebration: when you drink it, you feel you are part of the rich and beautiful. Coca Cola is as unspectacular with respect to its quality as Champagne, but through clever advertisement it has succeeded to represent the Champagne of the masses—while Champagne promises participation in aristocratic supremacy, Coca Cola promises the American Dream.

Not only the drinking habits I found in South America, also the eating habits saddened me. How come that unhealthy white bread, white sugar, and white rice are being routinely added to unhealthy soft drinks? Why so much processed food, in the presence of the availability of wonderful fresh indigenous vegetables and fruits? Why meat or beans as almost sole protein providers? Unsurprisingly, the health of many South Americans is visibly impaired, both in wealthy and less wealthy areas; it is enough to walk in the streets to observe this sad state of affairs.

### **Solidarity, Poverty, and the Profit Motive**

With great sadness, I observe what Alfred Adler calls ‘inferiority complex’ wherever I go in the world: the worst of Western culture is being proudly imitated by those who have accumulated wealth, and the best of native culture is rejected in shame. I ask: Who else but the wealthy, those who have resources, education, and time, may have the responsibility to manifest their dignity through offering diversity to the world? Rather than submissively and meekly bowing to Western uniformity? Uniformity creates poverty, poverty of creativity, which, to me, cannot be offset by the satisfaction that may flow from a sense of belonging to a particular stratum in a hierarchically ranked society. I would feel as impoverished when forced to wear expensive brands as a marker of wealth as I would feel diminished when forced to wear inexpensive clothes as a marker of ‘workers’ pride’.

In other words, solidarity, poverty, and the profit motive, to me, are expressed in often unexpectedly toxic ways. ‘Class’ solidarity is often paid for by the poverty of selling out creativity and diversity, not to speak of the earlier discussed case of solidarity, which, when constructed on out-group enmity, has toxic effects when out-groups coalesce; poverty, if only defined as lack of money, may miss other significant manifestations of poverty, such as the reduction of diversity and creativity; and the profit motive may devastate our planet to the extent that our children will all be poor per default, including the children from those families who used the profit motive to become wealthy.

With respect to solidarity, poverty, and the profit motive, I made many more observations. Poverty in the sense of lack of resources was clearly leaving its mark in all South American frontier regions that I saw. For example, the taxi drivers in Pocitos, at the border between Argentina and Bolivia were rather rude and trusted that a tired foreigner would not count her money. Their way of tricking me, due to poverty, however, was much more tolerable than the way I was manipulated in wealthy Mendoza,

Argentina. Bus company Andesmar's employees in Mendoza clearly engaged in 'tricking' their clients into paying exorbitant fees (see more further down)—yet, their behaviour, evidently, was not driven by their personal poverty but by the profit motive of the company, perhaps combined with a general, rather confrontational and hierarchical power-over culture in Argentina. In places such as Pocitos it may have been personal poverty that pushed some people to act rudely. Yet, since Pocitos is also a village where everybody knows everybody, others, such as Señora Elida and her daughter, helped me to get through the pass and customs controls at the border between Argentina and Bolivia, with an attitude of family-like solidarity. In the wealthy city of Mendoza, in contrast, the damaging cruelty of the 'naked' profit maximisation motive became much more palpable.

To me, these observations illustrate the misguidedness of advocating profit maximisation to alleviate poverty. Profit maximisation, particularly as it has unfolded since the so-called Washington consensus,<sup>24</sup> tends to serve a few wealthy elites rather than the masses of the poor. Since social unrest that emanates from vast inequalities cannot be in the interest of anybody, including the wealthy elites, the world would be much better served by the wealthy rethinking and reshaping their ideology, and the poor practicing their local solidarity economy with pride rather than with shame. The communal sharing that anthropologist Fiske describes is what traditionally is being done in families, and rather than devaluing it, we might need to revalue it.

As to the quality and strength of family ties, the children who travelled with their parents in the buses I took in South America (up to 33 hours in one stretch) were almost as quiet as I observed in Asia on long bus journeys. Parents in Europe would expect considerable problems, had they to travel under similar conditions. In South America, each parent had one seat, while the children had to make do with the space on their parents' laps. They all relaxed and slept, 'stacked' on top of each other, for hours on stretch.

I was especially impressed by the two fathers I had a chance to particularly observe throughout the many hours of my bus trips from Chile to Bolivia and later from Bolivia to Brazil. I also observed the two mothers. One mother was very young and clearly much less educated than her husband. She looked at me with the shocked curiosity with which hundreds of Chinese people would gather around me in remote regions of China in 1983, where they would stare at me for hours, breathless, in a mixture of horror and fascination, since to them, I was an alien from another galaxy. This mother, more than being a mother to her child, acted as her husband's first child. I have observed similar settings all over the world. Many societies match an older husband with a younger wife to guarantee her dependence and loyalty. This can play well, if he is a benevolent man, as in the cases I observed in the buses I took, or badly, if he abuses his power.

The other mother, clearly, was bored by her children, ready for different kinds of fun. I do observe this phenomenon wherever women have gained more space for themselves. So far, I got the impression that in South America some women, even politically aware and active women, seem to see it as a symbol of emancipation when they imitate traditional male drinking and smoking or other self- and other-destructive fun rituals and posturing.

As to relationships with animals, I was struck by the ubiquity of dogs being kept in houses and on properties (some wild dogs in cities are being killed by the municipalities

in regular intervals). I have never been surrounded by as much barking as during my time in Chile and Bolivia. It seems that prior to 1492, dogs were prevalent as domesticated animals. Perhaps the ubiquity of dogs is thus simply a tradition? When I asked around in Chile, whether the larger dogs were needed for protection, most of the time I got the answer that they are kept to provide company, not protection. In Bolivia, for the first time, I encountered that dogs were felt to be needed for security. The smaller dogs, I observed, served as replacement for the warmth and love that children may provide. Cats filled a similar role, only less prevalent. Altogether, I observed a culture of sometimes even aggressive power-over relationships with fellow human beings, with a considerable degree of mutual mistrust, and animals filling the role of fellow creatures one can turn to for warmth and loyalty without hesitation because they are dependent. Could this situation also be an after-effect of colonisation? See more about *lusotropicalism* further down.

As to respect for the environment, I noted the plastic litter alongside the roads. In the bus to Santa Cruz, Bolivia, I observed a woman in front of me opening the window of the bus and throwing out plastic waste. The same happened in the bus from Santa Cruz to La Paz. There, the woman beside me slowly went through every paper in her purse she no longer needed and then threw it out of the window. I finally turned to her, inviting her with a big smile, offering her to collect all her trash in my hands and dispose of it myself.

All around the world, there often seems to be little sense of responsibility ranging further than the immediate personal space even among people of otherwise revolutionary intentions. I observe a widespread lack of consciousness of the fact that modern waste, such as plastic waste, will not decay in the same way as organic waste will. Even the most Che Guevara-inspired person, intent on liberating abused people, might not be aware that he or she is abusing the Earth. Social and ecological sustainability, though intimately connected, still seem to live separate lives in the minds even of otherwise very conscious people.

With respect to the ‘glue’ that holds a society together, after having spent a few days in São Paulo, Brazil, I was struck by the different atmosphere I encountered there, as compared to Chile, Argentina, and Bolivia. I observed and experienced much more warmth; I saw many more smiles, wherever I went. I observed how people reached out to each other, how they actively connected. I was very much reminded of the atmosphere I so much enjoy in New York City (particularly in Manhattan), as well as in the Nile Delta of Egypt, or in Norway. I was told that Brazilians identify with Brazil as a whole, rather than with any particular identity: a second-generation migrant from Japan, for example, would proudly emphasise that he is Brazilian, rather than Japanese-Brazilian. In other words, differences would be regarded as diversity, a diversity that does not fracture the unity of being Brazilian—in short, the principle of unity in diversity at its best!

In Chile, Argentina, and Bolivia, I sensed much more apprehension, sometimes even fear or mistrust separating people from each other. Interestingly, however, Valparaíso, with its mixed population, felt different to the rest of Chile, and I had Claudia Arcos Duarte as avid interpreter of culture to explain these differences to me in more depth. In total, I felt that dualist dichotomy, rather than nondualist connection, was being accepted, nurtured, and valued more in the Spanish-speaking regions I encountered than in Brazil, at least these were the impressions I collected in Brazil.

From a Brazilian point of view, I was told, there is a Brazilian way of doing things in a rather ‘fluid’ than ‘strict’ way. Spanish culture, to many, felt to be more firm, sometimes even ‘pushy’. Perhaps this might have been the origin of the differences I perceived? And perhaps it plays out in more or less constructive or destructive ways? Since happy conviviality seems to be enjoy priority in Brazil—‘let us forget about our dark past’—truth commissions were beginning in Brazil only when I was there, while Argentina had opened up their files years ago and had worked through their dark past much earlier. My dear host in São Paulo, Gabriela Saab, and her friends, were giving me a lot to think about when I asked them many related questions!

Interestingly, the coming together of different cultural influences into a unity-in-diversity frame seems to be very fruitful for the flourishing of contexts that excel in nourishing cultural, social, and psychological richness. History teaches us this lesson: Before the 1492 surrender of the Islamic Emirate of Granada to the Catholic Monarchs in Spain, for example, a very interesting high culture flourished in Southern Spain. A similarly rich context brought the world poets such as 13th-century Persian poet, jurist, theologian, and Sufi mystic Rūmī, or 14th-century Persian Sufi poet Hafiz, whose insight I so much resonate with: ‘I have learned so much from God that I can no longer call myself a Christian, a Hindu, a Muslim, a Buddhist, a Jew. The truth has shed so much of itself in me that I can no longer call myself a man, a woman..’.

Somehow related was the impression I got with respect to the relationships between men and women in Brazil. In São Paulo, I observed that men and women communicated as human beings more than as men and women; in other words, the gender aspect seemed to be tuned down. In Chile, particularly, I felt much more caught in an identity I personally feel uneasy giving primacy to, at least in public life, namely that I am born into a female body. I wish to be respected as a human being, and I wish to communicate with others as human beings, rather than as women and men. I have often felt profoundly disrespected when being reduced to only one half of humanity, be it intentionally or unintentionally. I feel very uneasy when language separates men and women through linguistic rules, for example, I usually refrain from using Madam, Mister, Señor, Señora, and so forth—I prefer to be addressed as Evelin Lindner, or Evelin, as a human being rather than a ‘Madam’ (or a ‘Dr’). I feel even more invaded when manipulated into flirty conversations through jokes, and I have experienced this not just in South America, but also in Europe (particularly in Germany). And I am very doubtful that it should signify ‘progress’ when women start smoking, drinking, and laughing at gender jokes only to ‘prove’ that they are ‘as good as men’. I would rather invite men and women to transcend traditional ‘male’ and ‘female’ cultural rituals and co-create a more dignified humane culture of mutual respect for equality in dignity that unites us all. In this unity, gender diversity can then be cherished in a more humane and comprehensive way. I expand on this topic in my book *Gender, Humiliation, and Global Security: Dignifying Relationships from Love, Sex, and Parenthood to World Affairs* (Lindner, 2010).

I learned that Columbian women are known to be the ‘sexiest’ women in South America. I was amazed to arrive in Chile and see clothing shops filled with jeans that were presented not with their front, but with their back to the window, not just with any back, but with a large ‘sexy’ bottom that filled the jeans so that they bulged. I learned that the most popular prostitutes in Chile would be those from Columbia, not least because

they were the ones to fill such jeans with the ‘right kind’ of bottom. When I learned all these stories, I remembered Oslo, Norway, where a man who had travelled all of South America for many years as part of an ice show, had told me that, to his view, indeed, people in Columbia were the most beautiful...

In Brasilia, I was made aware of *Lusotropicalism* (*Lusitania* was a Roman name for Portugal, while Spain was *Hispania*). I was made aware that in Brazil, as in other world regions, a racial ideology underpinned slavery of African negro origin, saying that people of negro origin were inherently inferior and could ‘only’ be used for labour in tropical environments (the aboriginals in the Americas were decimated by diseases brought by the Europeans). When slavery was abolished, industrialisation was the next phase of development. Yet, the population, according to this ideology, was incapable of becoming industrial workers. Lusotropicalism was the new ideology that turned shame into pride, and formerly incapable people into superiorly capable people. (This ‘social engineering’ of ideology is interesting, I think. I see here a link to the advocacy of a culture of individualism in the service of free market ideology. While individualism, to my view, has gone too far, Lusotropicalism has more merit, I believe, insofar as it places high value on unity in diversity, rather than division without unity, which is the malign outfall of overdone individualism.)

Gilberto Freyre (1900–1987) was the ‘father’ of lusotropicalism. Gilberto de Mello Freyre was a Brazilian sociologist, anthropologist, historian, writer, painter and congressman. His best-known work is *Casa-Grande e Senzala* (literally, *The Plantation Big House and the Slave Quarters* but translated into English as *Masters and the Slaves*).<sup>25</sup> The book is considered a classic of modern cultural anthropology. It depicts life on traditional plantations and the *miscegenation* (racial mixing crossbreeding, interbreeding) that emerged in this context. Freyre’s argument is that miscegenation had a positive influence in Brazil rather than representing a weakness. This was a new point of view, paving the way for Afro-Brazilian art and literature to be highly regarded rather than denigrated, and to Brazil becoming proud of their very unique Brazilian culture. According to Freyre’s analysis, the Portuguese tendency to miscegenation among colonised peoples was the backdrop for this development. Even though Freyre never used the phrase ‘racial democracy’ in his published works, his argument was that Brazil, even though far from being a paradise of racial harmony, still was a place of much greater social cohesion than other, comparable world regions.

Is what Freyre praises, the merit of unity in diversity, in its many manifestations? How are Freyre’s views seen in today’s Brazil?

When Freyre wrote *The Masters and the Slaves* Brazil was in the Estado Novo period, an authoritarian regime that promoted a national identity discourse based on the notion that Brazil was a racial democracy, a country where different racial and cultural contributions had met and generated a specific ethos and culture, one of harmony, cordial social relations, joy, music, and hedonism. Freyre said that the type of social and psychological relations that were at play in the plantation society created the contradictory but dynamic system of social intimacy and violence, of negotiation and authority, of sexuality and reproduction between white masters and black slaves and that that system had carried on to become the true dynamic of Brazilian society and its

character. One of the reasons for this (and the instances of comparison were, of course, the Hispanic experience in the Americas, one the one hand, and the Anglo-Saxon one in the US, on the other) supposedly was the fact that the Portuguese were already, before arriving in Brazil, the product of a similar process of cultural and racial miscegenation, particularly with the Arabs, the Jews, and so on. That and Portugal's structural and demographic weakness supposedly contributed to a type of social intimacy with Indians and slaves in Brazil.

Brazilian discussions around Freyre's work followed their own course. Still today Freyre is a symbol that is used differently by different camps. Some will chastise his influence in the ideology of racial democracy that is now seriously challenged by the Black movement and affirmative action policies. Some still look at his contribution as a definer of a Brazilian specificity, in a culturalist sense at least.<sup>26</sup>

*Raízes do Brasil (Roots of Brazil)* is a book by historian Sergio Buarque de Holanda, considered one of the most important classics of Brazilian historiography and sociology.

Published in 1936, it emphasises the importance of the cultural legacy of Portuguese colonisation of Brazil. *Raízes do Brasil*, together with *Casa-Grande e Senzala* by Gilberto Freire and *Formação do Brasil Contemporâneo* by Caio Prado Jr., is a book that despite more than 70 years since its first publication is still considered a masterpiece for understanding Brazilian culture today.

I recommend reading Pedro Meira Monteiro's paper titled 'The Other Roots: Sérgio Buarque de Holanda and the Portuguese', where he writes:

As with all metaphors, the 'roots' of the title transport us to a particular imaginary country. When reading *Raízes do Brasil*, we realize that this country, or this territory, is above all transcontinental and transcultural. It is part America, part Europe, and part Africa. However, what is interesting is that Sérgio Buarque de Holanda does not restrict his investigation purely to the concepts of miscegenation and the mythical fusion of the so-called 'three races' on the American continent. From the beginning, he is more concerned with a hybrid space which is the real starting point to the Luso-Brazilian or Luso-Afro-Brazilian civilizational adventure.<sup>27</sup>

Darcy Ribeiro (1922–1997) was a Brazilian anthropologist, author and politician, whose ideas influenced several scholars of Latin American studies. He was a Minister of Education of Brazil and carried out reforms that were important also for Chile, Peru, Venezuela, Mexico, and Uruguay. He left Brazil after the 1964 coup d'état.

Ribeiro proposed also a classification scheme for Latin American countries where he identified 'New Peoples' (Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, Venezuela etc.), that merged from the mix of several cultures; 'Testimony Peoples' (Peru, Mexico, Ecuador, Guatemala and Bolivia), remnants of ancient civilisations; and Argentina and Uruguay, former 'New Peoples' that became 'Transplanted Peoples', essentially European, after massive immigration.

Since Gilberto Freyre's statue can be admired in the airport of Recife, it is perhaps fitting to conclude this section with a very specific request from Francisco Cardoso Gomes de Matos, who wrote from Recife on 11th May 2012: 'Dear Evelin... Oh, before I



forget: what were sanitary conditions like in public places, such as airports, bus stops, and in hostels and the like? Toilets, women's, men's, sadly reflect the sanitary indignity—humiliation—which human beings are subjected, in many (?) countries. Imagine you'll record your observations on that, too'.

My reply went as follows: Dear Francisco, you are so right! These conditions merit our attention! The by far most advanced country in this respect is, of course, Japan. Heading for a public toilet will most often than not provide an experience of luxury (intricate cleansing jets of water, plus paper, plus warm air, plus artificial noise, and so forth<sup>28</sup>). Already during my seven years in Egypt, I had gotten used to the cleansing jet of water, and learned the Egyptian sneer at the barbaric 'smearing' abuse of paper in countries that call themselves 'developed'. In Chile, Argentina, and Bolivia, at least in those parts I passed through, I learned to bring my own paper, and to throw all used paper into the nearby bin rather than into the toilet so as to avoid clogging the pipes. When I approached the Brazilian highway restaurants, however, I was very surprised: unexpected luxury! There was paper in the toilets, and marble and flower decoration at the entrance!

From the 11th to the 13th June 2012, as reported earlier, I was kindly given the gift of a stay in a hotel in Recife. I am always intrigued by the fact that the idea of cleaning oneself with water after using the toilet, rather than using paper, is being realised in so many various forms around the world. In France a separate piece of bathroom furniture, the bidet, has a long tradition. As mentioned above, based on a long tradition of personal hygiene, the highest form of sanitary hygiene is to be found in Japan, where in many cases the bidet is integrated into the toilet so to speak, albeit in a highly luxurious form. In Egypt, there would be a little shower installed near the toilet. This was precisely what I saw in Recife, too. In the Saharan desert, Bedouins would not waste water for sanitary purposes, and would not litter the desert with paper either, as tourists do in their ignorance and negligence (in the desert, rotting is a very slow process, and the paper stays visible for many years).

Another interesting feature that struck me was that the toilet paper was hidden in a kind of little drawer in many places in Brazil, see the pictures of my hotel stay. Interestingly, as mentioned earlier, I observed that paper was being provided all over Brazil in public toilets, at least in those parts of Brazil I visited, while I learned in Chile, Argentina and Bolivia that one was advised to bring one's own paper. This added to the important fact that paper was not to be thrown into the toilet but into a bucket nearby, so as not to clog the pipes. In Europe and the United States people would only be advised to avoid throwing larger objects into the toilet, but would place the paper they used during their toilet visit into the toilet itself.

### **Rios + 20 Amazon Dialogues**

*When plunder becomes a way of life for a group of men living together in society, they create for themselves, in the course of time, a legal system that authorizes it and a moral code that glorifies it.*  
—French economist Frédéric Bastiat (1801-1850)

As fascinating as it was, I am glad that I did not limit my time in Brazil to São Paulo, Brasília, and Recife. The various parts of Brazil are so different and people in one part seem to be so unaware of what is going on in the other parts (altogether, I was astonished at how little South Americans know about the rest of South America). In the case of the Amazon in particular, it is such a significant part of our planet that it should be of global interest. It is one of the frontlines of the exploitation of our planet's resources—from logging to mining to creating electricity through dams for huge industrial projects. Instead, the Amazon is an almost forgotten corner. It is forgotten even by all those who wish to work for a better world; many happily enjoy their cell phones while overlooking the cruelty and devastation with which the rare earths that are needed to make it work are being obtained.

I had been invited to Rio + 20 in Rio de Janeiro, but chose to go to Marabá in Pará instead, frontline of the industrialisation of the Amazon. My extraordinary hosts were Daniel Baron Cohen, known in Brazil as Dan Baron, or Dan, and Manoela Paula Latronica de Souza, known as Mano Souza, or Mano, and their *Rivers of Meeting* community project (*Rios de Encontro*) in Cabelo Seco ('dry hair'), which is the founding community of Marabá at the confluence of two rivers, Rio Tocantins and Rio Itacaiúnas (the name 'dry hair' comes from the observation that the hair of Africans is so tightly coiled that it does not get wet when bathing in the river).

See the article 'Norueguesa Troca Rio+20 por temporada em Marabá' ('A Norwegian exchanges Rio +20 for a season in Marabá) in *Correio do Tocantins* (translated by Google Translator and summarised):<sup>29</sup>

Dr. Evelin Lindner, Norway, has disembarked in Marabá, instead of staying in Rio de Janeiro, where she should have participated in the discussions of the world meeting Rio +20. She is an expert in the field of human rights in conflict transformation and social justice and collaborates with the Rivers of Meeting community project (*Rios de Encontro*) in the Cabelo Seco community of Marabá. The guest will attend a week of conversations with young people, mothers, teachers, artists and educators from social movements and schools, as a community contribution to Rio +20, in search of a sustainable world.

Presidents and representatives of the peoples of this world are gathered in Rio in parallel meetings to set goals urgent to save the planet. Lindner's decision to spend two weeks in Marabá rather than participate in the great meeting of the 'Peoples Summit' (to which she was invited) is inspired by Rivers of Meeting project, which affirms the power of the living culture to transform communities at risk and unsustainable cities.

With two doctorates in medicine and psychology, Evelin Lindner decided to stay in the little Cabelo Seco community of Afro-Indigenous descent to learn from their culture. 'I think the humiliation of honour and dignity caused by the exclusion and injustice may be among the strongest barriers on the way to an ethical and responsible world community', said Evelin to Dan Baron, who has promised to live with the

families of Cabelo Seco.

Since the preparation of the celebration of Mother's Day, the young leaders of the group *As Latinhas de Quintal* sensitize the community during these weeks of cultural and educational actions devoted to understanding the relationship between choices of life and sustainability of Tocantins and Itacaiúnas, Amazon and the world.

They distributed seedlings of medicinal plants among 150 families in the neighbourhood, affirming the wisdom of the community, threatened by the pharmaceutical industry and the accelerated development of the region. 'When I gave a change of *boldo* to young mothers, this was much more; it was a celebration of our culture and knowledge of our great-grandparents. I felt happy to be part of this action of simple care and affection!' said Matheus Sá, a member of the core young manager of the project.

Matheus and other young leaders of the Rivers of Meeting project invited Kiwi Theatre Company, St. Paul, to present his work *Carne* in early June to highlight the relationship between gender, social justice and a humane world. The Kiwi filled the Cine Morocco and held two workshops to raise awareness of teachers and school leaders of the groups Judith Gomes Leitão, partner in the project. One morning, the Theatre Kiwi spoke with over 400 young people, turning the schoolyard into an experience of a new school that can be based on respect for theatre and music. 'But the workshop for mothers and daughters and the debate that followed the documentary 'Women Speak' in our Barração de Cultura sensitized the group of St. Paul as to the richness and humanity of our community. They did not want to leave', says Elizangela Neves, a member of the core adult project manager.

Evelin Lindner works worldwide to advocate the relationship between care, kindness, generosity and sustainable society. In dialogues in the coming days, she will discuss the concerns of teachers, artists and urban and rural families with whom she will meet this week. She will aim to understand the pain of the community who erected the monument in Eldorado dos Carajás and the sisters of Maria do Espírito Santo da Silva and José Claudio Ribeiro, killed a year ago in rural New Ipixuna. 'Any massacre, military, economic or domestic causes humiliation, low self-esteem and conflict and hinders the perception of the cause of all violence in the world. A society based on competition and profit', says Evelin.

Living in the Cabelo Seco neighbourhood will broaden the understanding of the global thinker and writer who speaks English, French, German, Norwegian and Egyptian Arabic fluently and has a solid knowledge of Portuguese, Swedish, Danish, Dutch, Russian, Indonesian, Chinese, Japanese and Modern Hebrew.

'She will find artists and young mothers who are rebuilding their personal and collective dignity through the redemption of their cultural roots and the recognition of their streets and houses. They are 'wells' of care and solidarity', said Dan Baron, one of the artistic-pedagogic coordinators of the project. Dan hopes that the exchange

between Evelin and Cabelo Seco this week points at alternatives to so-called ‘green development’ that threatens to consume the Amazon.

Dan and Mano are people of a humanity and depth of care that I have rarely ever seen. Their sophistication in nurturing dignity was unparalleled. They would deserve the Nobel Peace Prize, together with their community in Cabelo Seco, more than anybody else. Their courage and their love are exemplary. They hosted and guided me in the most sensitive and loving ways. I told them in the beginning that I was aware that everybody, per definition, is blind to one’s own blindness, and that I would want them to step in when they saw that I was blind to certain conditions in their extremely fragile community. For example, abuse has been rampant, as Dan told me. People have come from outside, taken pictures, with the aim to traffic children. No wonder that newcomers with a camera created suspicion. Upon Dan’s advice on the first day, I did not take pictures with my still picture camera. Dan took pictures for me. However, we did use my video camera for interviews to give people a voice. Unsurprisingly, even that caused suspicion. Dan most caringly explained to me how important it was that video-taped interviews should be edited with the greatest care before posting them on YouTube, so as to protect the dignity of the community, and that this concern would have to take priority over all other considerations.

The fragility of the Cabelo Seco community was illustrated by the case of the killing of a young man in a wheel chair, Alexandre, a few houses away from where I stayed with Dan and his wife. Dan described this tragic incident as follows:

### **Alexandre**

Last night, as we were returning from the June fest on the riverfront of the Tocantins, enjoying a Tacacá stew, we learned that Alexandre had been executed in his rusty old wheelchair. We were devastated. He was one of fifteen special needs young people from our community who had received a gift of 100 Brazilian Dollars from the artists of our youth-band during the final cultural fest of 2011, after they and their mothers decided to recycle a performance fee of \$1500 from the global Brazilian mining company Vale do Rio Doce into a currency of solidarity.

The next morning, the streets revealed more detail. Alexandre had been playing with his one-year old son on his lap. As a car drove at him to tip him into the street, Alexandre had thrown his child onto the sidewalk. He was shot in the head and died instantly.

Alexandre had been paralyzed from the waist a year earlier in a drug-trafficking feud, but had continued to command the circulation of oxy (a lethally addictive, cheap derivative of crack-cocaine), and even executions, from his wheelchair. Alexandre simply met our ‘Rivers of Meeting’ project a little too late, our emerging artist-leaders said, at the crossroads between two worlds: a midnight project of death and a dawn project of life. Was he crossing their threshold? He knew he would end up on the front-page of the local newspapers, but was not yet aware his death would be used to promote the industrialization of the Amazon, to fuel ‘electricity for all’.

His days were numbered, the street whispered, and it’s good that he died. Now we will

all sleep easier. If Alexandre had known how his death would be used to justify the accelerated development of the riverside and dispersal of its Afro-Indigenous community to make way for a luxurious international resort – financed and powered by Vale do Rio Doce, would he have made other choices? What was he singing to his son as they played at midnight? Will he grow up gasping for refuge from putrid river highways in evergreen shopping-centres, consuming his own ancestral memory as ‘Amazon cool’?

Alexandre’s rusty wheelchair offers insight into all that we face in the Amazonian State of Pará today.

Dan Baron

25 June 2012

Transformance Institute

Tocantins and Itacaiúnas Rivers

To learn more about the important work done by Dan and Mano, please see the bilingual masterpiece *Harvest in Times of Drought - Colheita em Tempo de Seca*, by the pedagogic collective Voices of the Country with Dan Baron, published by Transformance Institute in 2011.<sup>30</sup>

While in Chile, I had read the fascinating book *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus* by Charles C. Mann, 2011. When in Pará, I was constantly reminded of the following paragraphs in this book:

European and U.S. environmentalists insist that the forest should never be cut down or used—it should remain, as far as possible, a land without people... Brazilians I have encountered are usually less than enthusiastic about this proposal. Yes, yes, we are in favour of the environment, they say. But we also have many millions of desperately poor people here. To develop your economy, you levelled your forests and carpeted the land with strip malls. Why can’t we do the same? If you now want more forest, why don’t you tear down some of your strip malls and plant trees? Yes, yes, we are in favour of helping the poor, environmentalists respond. But if you cut down the tropical forest, you won’t be creating wealth. Instead you will only destroy the soil. Turning Amazonia into a wasteland will help nobody.

These dialogues of the deaf have occurred so often that the participants can almost recite their lines by rote. In a way, the words are curiously weightless, for the environmentalists tend to live in, or at least reflect views from, rich places like London, Berlin, or San Francisco. And the advocates of development are often from São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, or Brasilia, cities that are thousands of miles away from the Amazon and culturally almost as remote as environmentalists’ cities. ‘You should see people’s faces here [in Amazonia] when we tell them we’re from São Paulo’, Eduardo Neves told me. ‘It’s like New Yorkers coming to southern Illinois, only worse. ‘My God, aliens have invaded! Kill them before they infect us all!’’ (Mann, 2011, p. 373).

I arrived in Marabá, Pará, on Monday, 18th June 2012, after a 16 hours bus trip from Teresina, Piauí in Brazil. I was most kindly guided to the home of my hosts by José

Junior, who teaches in Marabá. He had been contacted by faithful Giselda and Fatima throughout the entire trip via cell phone to make sure that everything went well: Thank you to you all for your amazing care!

When I looked out of the window of the bus during the journey, I saw a lot of heavy machinery and oversize trucks on the road, and also on sales. Companies such as Mercedes, Volkswagen, etc., were present on a large scale. See an advertising board on one of the pictures I took. A sense of ‘wild-west type golden times’ was keenly to be felt throughout the entire journey. I later learned that Pará is double the size of Western Europe and that it is normal for a land owner to own half a million cattle!<sup>31</sup> It has a sad reputation for its hired gunmen. If you wish to learn more about the significance of Marabá, please read, for example: ‘Brazil: Homage to the Victims of the Amazon in Washington, D.C’. , in *Global Voices*, by Georgi McCarthy 16th April 2012.<sup>32</sup>

See also ‘Amazon Rainforest Activist Shot Dead’, by Tom Phillips in Rio de Janeiro, 24th May 2011, describing how environmentalist José Cláudio Ribeiro da Silva fought against illegal loggers and had received death threats but was refused police protection, before finally being shot dead. He was killed together with his partner Maria do Espírito Santo, eco-pedagogue, rural educator and co-author, together with Claudenir, of the above-mentioned book *Harvest in Times of Drought - Colheita em Tempo de Seca*.<sup>33</sup> ‘Environmental activists ‘being killed at rate of one a week’’, is the telling title of an article by Jonathan Watts in Rio de Janeiro, 19th June 2012, explaining that the death toll of campaigners involved in protection of forests, rivers and land has almost doubled in three years.<sup>34</sup>

Pará is a lesson in predator capitalism. It is a frontier of raiding. The natural resources are being raided and whoever stands in the way has to fear for his/her life. The brutality of this state of our world is of course omnipresent on our planet, however, more sharply visible at such front lines as the Amazon than elsewhere. As mentioned above, a consumer who revels in buying several cell phones, for example, usually spares herself the awareness that she uses up rare minerals that must be mined somewhere. The Amazon is one of the place where the mining is being done, and its ugliness and unsustainability is glaringly visible for those who are not co-opted.

And, clearly, the raiding is happening everywhere, only less overt. I just got aware, for example, of the article ‘The Scam Wall Street Learned from the Mafia’, by Matt Taibbi in *Rolling Stone Politics*, on how America’s biggest banks took part in a nationwide bid-rigging conspiracy and systematically stole from schools, hospitals, libraries and nursing homes.<sup>35</sup> And with respect to South America as a whole, the Paraguayan coup was significant: “How agribusiness, landowning and media elite, and the U.S. are paving a way for regional destabilization,” writes Francesca Fiorentini, on 4th July, 2012, in Buenos Aires.<sup>36</sup>

And raiding is being ‘facilitated’ not only through hired gunmen, also drugs are being used to weaken communities who stand in the way of ‘progress’, crack is given out for free until people are addicted, creating a toxic mixture of hopelessness and violence. Just when I was there, two people were killed in execution style a few houses away from where I stayed with Dan and his wife. One of them was Alexandre, who was executed in his rusty old wheelchair. Linda Hartling commented on 11th August 2012: ‘In some ways, I think predatory capitalism offers a form of psychological “crack” until

individuals and corporations become addicted to predatory capitalism, which is insatiable and unsustainable.’

And I see raiding being facilitated by public policy wherever I go. For instance, the same day (22nd June 2012) I learned that the Brazilian Ministry of Culture no longer funds ‘Living Culture’ projects as the project by Dan and Mano, projects committed to harnessing popular culture for the development of sustainable communities, but only ‘creative industry spectacles’, I also heard that in Norway long-term services for drug addicts will receive less funding and that short-term interventions will be given priority.<sup>37</sup> These are only two of innumerable examples. I see social cohesion being weakened qua policy wherever I go. Solidarity is made ever more difficult, solidarity that could be a force for a more caring way of relating to our planet’s resources and to each other. Charles Eisenstein expresses the paradigm shift that is needed in ‘Looking Beyond Rio, Towards Degrowth’, on 1st July 2012.<sup>38</sup>

When the bus approached Marabá, early in the morning with the first daylight, the bus was crossing a river as wide like the sea: my first impression of Amazonia was how huge its rivers can be! If my first impression was a huge river, my second impression was richness in food. Upon arrival in dear Dan’s and Mano’s home, for the first time, I tasted *açaí*!<sup>39</sup> What a revelation! Later I would taste amazing local fruit juices, such as *cupuaçu* or *murici* or *cacão* juice (not made from the *cacão* bean but from its surrounding flesh).

Another richness is *terra preta*. I had learned about it for the first time through the book *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus* by Charles C. Mann, 2011. In Portuguese the full name is *terra preta do índio* or *terra preta de índio* (‘black earth of the Indian’, ‘Indians’ black earth’). It is also known as ‘Amazonian dark earth’ or ‘Indian black earth’. *Terra mulata* (‘mulatto earth’) is lighter or brownish in colour. *Terra preta* is a type of very dark, fertile anthropogenic soil found in the Amazon Basin. *Terra preta* owes its name to its very high charcoal content, and was made by adding a mixture of charcoal, bone, and manure to the otherwise relatively infertile Amazonian soil, and stays there for thousands of years.

In his book, Charles Mann agrees with pedologist William I. Woods’s very interesting idea that *terra preta* could help Africa. In other words, African slaves, who were forced to the Amazon, could now bring something very valuable back to Africa...

In his book, Mann reports that throughout Amazonia, farmer’s prize *terra preta*. He describes the work of pedologist William I. Woods from the University of Kansas, and the struggle of ideologies of how best to protect the Amazon, as follows:

Woods was part of an international consortium of scientists studying *terra preta*. If its secrets could be unravelled, he said, it might improve the expanses of bad soil that cripple agriculture in Africa—a final gift from the peoples who brought us tomatoes, maize, manioc, and a thousand different ways of being human.

‘Betty Muggers would just die if she heard me saying this’, Woods told me. ‘Deep down her fear is that this data will be misused’. In 2001, Muggers charged in an article in *Latin America Antiquity* that archaeologists’ claims that the Amazon could support intensive agriculture were effectively telling ‘developers [that they] are entitled to operate without restraint’. These researchers had thus become unwitting ‘accomplices

in the accelerating pace of environmental degradation'. Centuries after the conquistadors, she lamented, 'the myth of El Dorado is being revived by archaeologists'.

Doubtless her political anxieties are not without justification, although—as some of her sparring partners observed—it is difficult to imagine greedy plutocrats 'perusing the pages of *Latin American Antiquity* before deciding to rev up the chainsaws'. But the new picture doesn't automatically legitimate burning down the forest. Instead it suggests that for a long time clever people who knew tricks that we have yet to learn used big chunks of Amazonia non-destructively. Faced with an ecological problem, the Indians fixed it. Rather than adapt to Nature, they created it. They were in the midst of terraforming the Amazon when Columbus showed up and ruined everything (p. 359).

As mentioned earlier, I chose Marabá instead of Rio + 20 because, as I learned, the voices of the people in the Amazon are not heard, and I wanted to hear them and bring their voices to larger audiences. As you might be aware, many people working in the field are very sad that Rio + 20 provided much too little space for real transformation.

Nnimmo Bassey, chairman of Friends of the Earth International, summarised the Rio + 20 event as follows: 'Governmental positions have been hijacked by corporate interests linked to polluting industries'.

Indeed, the river that is 10 meters away from the house where I wrote these lines is polluted with mercury; it is a dying river. Children in this community are blind because of the toxic particles in the water... And this is supposedly acceptable as 'price for development'...

As it turned out, it was extremely meaningful that I was in the Amazon with my video camera, rather than in Rio de Janeiro, much more meaningful than I would have thought. In the Amazon my presence made a difference that it could not have made in Rio + 20. Twice, the television came to interview us, my dear host Dan Baron and his community, the media being alerted by my presence.

To understand more about Mano's and Dan's work, please see here the message that Dan Baron wrote on 22nd August, 2011, about 'Music for a Sustainable and Vital Amazon', before speaking to our 17th Annual Conference in Dunedin, New Zealand via internet connection<sup>40</sup>:

Good morning from the Amazon! On this world day of action against the building of the hydro-electric plant, Belo Monte, on the Xingu River in the Brazilian Amazon (to be the third largest plant in the world), with unpredictable, irreversible sociocultural and environmental damage in the region which will impact on all of our lives, we present two songs...

- Alerta Amazonia (Zequinha de Cabelo Seco)<sup>41</sup>

- Clamor popular (Zequinha de Cabelo Seco)<sup>42</sup>

- See the booklet of songs<sup>43</sup> from the Brazilian Amazon which includes the translation of Alerta Amazônia (from the Transformance Archive)

Both songs have emerged in Cabelo Seco, an afro-indigenous community on the



periphery of Marabá, Pará, where we live and work. The riverside community is already suffering serious consequences of the large dams completed in the past two years. The songs have been developed by our friend, project collaborator and art-educator Zequinha de Cabelo Seco, inside our project Backyards of Cultural Solidarity. We hope they contribute to the broadening of the international quest for a living, sustainable Pan-Amazônia.

Even if you don't understand the poetic lyrics, we believe you'll understand their emotions. Please write to us if you would like a translation, and feel free to use the songs in your own projects and community. Here are some links if you'd like more information:

- [www.avaaz.org/en/amazon\\_under\\_threat/](http://www.avaaz.org/en/amazon_under_threat/)
- [www.avaaz.org/en/save\\_the\\_amazon\\_a/?fp](http://www.avaaz.org/en/save_the_amazon_a/?fp)

Many thanks. An Amazonian hug!

Dan Baron e Mano Souza

Cabelo Seco, Marabá

Institute Transformance/ABRA

Please allow me at this point to share a message that Francisco Cardosos Gomes de Matos wrote on 20th June 2012:

Evelin,

Thanks for your message and the accompanying, realistic journalistic pieces on the suffering which persons living in the Amazon region go through. The pictures you sent speak for themselves.... Yes, now you're in Brazilian lands where DIGNITY is vitality needed. In such spirit, there is SO MUCH you can do, Evelin, by telling the World Dignity University initiative family about what you have seen/are seeing in Marabá and about ways in which DIGNIFIERS in the HDHS community can become conscientized of what is going on in that region. May your DIGNIFYING mission go on, Evelin. You are commended for having chosen to spend some time in Marabá. Your local hosts should be embraced (that's my Brazilian way of putting it) for enabling you to see the local realities, and, more importantly, to interact with local citizens, the press, etc.

Speaking of DIGNITY, in my book *Pedagogia da Positividade: Comunicação construtiva* em Português (published 1996 by Editora da UFPE, Recife), there is the embryo of my interest in DIGNITY and HUMILIATION Studies. On page 83 I stress the need for us to 'construir relações humanas dignificantes' (the building of dignifying human relations).

Since you were touched by my father's last words, you might want to look at my essay 'A gente está aqui para server' (117-119). *A gente* is the informal equivalent of *Nós*, in Spoken Portuguese. More frequently used than *Nós* in everyday interaction.

My essay 'Uma atitude positiva em face do mundo' is devoted to planetary citizens like you. I sum up my reflections by saying (in Portuguese):

'Cumpra bem sua missão neste planeta, empnhando-se em interpretar o FAZER BEM AS COISAS, como significando FAZER AS COISAS PARA O BEM DO PRÓXIMO (principalmente os pobres, os esquecidos, os marginalizados, os discriminados)

(115). Here's my translation: 'Carry out your mission on this Planet, by committing to change DOING THINGS WELL into DOING THINGS FOR THE GOOD OF YOUR NEIGHBOR, especially for the good of the poor, those who are socially forgotten, the marginalized, the discrimination upon.

On page 116 I remind readers of their need to share the responsibility for world problems: '...compartilhe a responsabilidade pelos problemas do mundo'.

Could go on, but your time in Marabá is too precious and should be devoted To your mission as a HUMANIZER-DIGNIFIER. Carry on!

ABrAço brasileiríssimo,  
Francisco

On Saturday, 23rd June 2012, after listening to Dan Baron's wonderful presentation at the opening of a new course in an Escola Nacional de Formação (ENFOC) in Marabá, Pará, I realised that he, like me, works to bring the two branches of what Paul H. Ray and Sherry Ruth Anderson call the *cultural creative* together. Ray and Anderson describe, on one side, those who turn their attention *inward* to gain new levels of consciousness, and, second, those who turn it *outward* as activists.<sup>44</sup> When they first formed, these two branches were often hostile to each other; however, Ray and Anderson observe that they are coming together now. As it seems, Dan, Mano, and I, we are part of this process.

I realised that I usually meet four audiences: I meet the two branches described by Ray and Anderson, and, third, I meet people from the academic world. Many academics might fit into what Ray and Anderson call the category of *moderns*, only in a slightly different way as compared to business people. Business people would perhaps represent the fourth audience, a group that is on the increase also in the academic system since education becomes ever more commoditised. Many academics think they need to do neither, not look inwards and not become socially active outside; that they must stay 'neutral' to be 'scientific' and get tenure. Many overlook that they need to contextualise their work, and that this includes their own motivation, which, in turn requires looking inward. Furthermore, as in quantum physics, there is no place from where social reality can be observed without the observer impacting it in some way. Believing that valid observations can be obtained simply by avoiding these questions is an unscientific ideological error. Confounding 'objective' neutrality with avoidance is a profound scientific error and illusion.

In short, many of those who look inward are afraid of public action, many of those who act publicly are afraid of their inner world, while many academics are afraid of both, and many in the business sector look inward, yet, to feed their modernist outward orientation, rather than questioning it.

People who fight in the streets might benefit from reflecting on their inner motives: What if following Che Guevara is interesting for secondary gains? What if it gives a kick, a kick of being important, of being a true male warrior in a world where warriorhood is no longer as much in demand as before? Or, for a female, it makes her feel she is equal to males? What is it that makes a *companheira* drink and smoke hard, posturing like a warrior? What is it that makes would-be revolutionaries who otherwise sit in chairs stand in the sun unnecessarily during manifestations, as if wanting to obtain revolutionary sunburns as a badge of honour?

On the other side, how come that other people hope that meditation and inner balance alone will change the institutions of our world?

Then, how is it possible that some academics believe they can document the world's demise while sitting on an imaginary fence that will stay afloat, while the rest goes down?

At last, how is it that some business people are all fired up by faith in short-term actionism for profit, like gamblers who take every a stroke of luck as a sign from God that they are doing the right thing?

On Tuesday, 26th June 2012, Dan Baron found a title for our alternative project to Rio 20, namely, *Rios + 20 Amazon Dialogues* (Rios, because two rivers meet in here, the Tocantins and Itacaiúnas rivers). It means that we are making videos with the aim to give people in the Amazon a voice, people who otherwise are not heard, not even in their own country.

I was deeply impressed by the sensitivity that Dan and Mano showed in their quest to nurture and protect the dignity of the community of Cabelo Seco, in which they live and have their *Rivers of Meeting* community project (*Rios de Encontro*).

As explained earlier, I did not take pictures in Cabelo Seco, so as to preserve the integrity of the *Rivers of Meeting* project and the Cabelo Seco community. Dan took pictures for me to upload them as soon as they were available.

As reported earlier, people have come from outside and taken pictures with the aim to traffic children. No wonder that newcomers with a camera create suspicion, and I therefore did not take pictures with my still picture camera. However, we did use my video camera for interviews to give people a voice. Unsurprisingly, even that causes suspicion.

I was reminded of my experiences in Africa. When I came to Africa for my doctoral research in 1998, my motivation was to 'do good' with my research. Yet, at first, I met polite silence, clever manipulation, or openly bitter distrust. See here the text that I distilled from the voices I heard after a lot of deep listening, a quote I later also included in my doctoral thesis:

You Westerners get a kick out of our problems. You have everything back home, you live in luxury, and you are blind to that. You think you're suffering when you can't take a shower or have to wait for the bus for more than two hours! Your four-wheel drive cars cover our people with dust! You enjoy being a king in our country, but you're just average at home! All you want is to have fun, get a good salary, write empty reports to your organization back home or publish some articles, so you can continue this fraud. You are a hypocrite! You know that we need help-how glad we'd be not to need it! It would be great if you'd really listen to us, not just to the greedy ones among us who exploit your arrogant stupidity for their own good! We feel deeply humiliated by your arrogant and self-congratulating help!

I was also reminded of one of my first experiences with the complexity of dynamics of humiliation between the so-called developed and the developing world. I worked and lived in Egypt from 1984–1991. I remember the case of a factory that was to be built. If I remember correctly, it was a steel producing factory. Egyptians were aware that they

would often been given technological ‘leftovers’ from the West, while the West would reserve cutting-edge technology for themselves. Therefore, proud Egyptians insisted on getting the best. It was a question of honour. The German engineer I met was well-intentioned, willing to avoid any post-colonial arrogance. Yet, precisely therefore, he was torn: If he sold cutting-edge technology, his company would make a greater profit, yet the technology would not work in the Egyptian desert sand. If he refused, he would be suspected of wanting to humiliate his counter-parts with second-class quality. He tried to explain to his Egyptian counter-parts that dignity means buying technology according to its suitability to a particular context, rather than to ideological evaluations of honour. His efforts did not bring fruit. What was first-class quality in Germany created a very expensive industrial ruin in Egypt.

In many ways, a similar complexity is at the core of the ugliness and dysfunctionality of much of so-called modern architecture. Also in Egypt, I observed how local architecture, such as the one developed by Hassan Fathy, would be disparaged even though it is both aesthetically and functionally preferable. High-rise buildings of concrete may give the illusion of being part of the first world, yet, they cost their inhabitants a fortune for air-conditioning—since otherwise living in these buildings is intolerable—not to mention their abject ugliness. Or, as discussed earlier, unhealthy Western food is preferred over healthy local food. The list is long.

For the illusion of honour, dignity is sold out. Clearly, people need to rise from subaltern self-humiliation, yet, when they do, this can end in new cycles of humiliation. The way out of humiliation may lead into new humiliation. I call it self-humiliation.<sup>45</sup> It is the identification with the oppressor that Ranajit Guha calls *subaltern*.<sup>46</sup> Ashis Nandy speaks of ‘hidden or disowned selves’, or ‘subjugated selves’, selves that represent both the non-West and the West and their encounters.<sup>47</sup>

I observed this complexity at the core of genocides such as the one in Rwanda. The former Tutsi elite were murdered, perhaps not so much because they were hated, but because they had once also been admired. And this admiration, at some point, became the source of shame that was ‘cleansed’ together with its objects.<sup>48</sup>

In Pará, and in Brazil, the Companhia Vale do Rio Doce (CVRD) is the biggest sponsor of the country. Vale is a Brazilian multinational diversified metals and mining corporation and one of the largest logistics operators in Brazil. Vale is emblematic for the economic frames that define not only Brazil, but what Immanuel Wallerstein calls the *world-system*.<sup>49</sup> People throughout the world, today, have the ‘free’ choice between being part in this system or not having a livelihood. ‘Having a job’ means being part in a system that is driven by investor confidence and profit maximisation, which, in turn, creates long-term unsustainability.

Clearly, the limits of this choice make it unfree. If you face the alternative of ‘if you want to be free you will not live’, you are in a prison. I often use the metaphor of the sinking Titanic when I speak about the human family and their current moment in history. The image of the prison could be merged with the image of the Titanic, and the Titanic could be called a prison ship. Currently, the prison guards not only keep the prison inmates down, by covert and overt means (from pushing consumerism to the more drastic means used in regions such as Pará), something that is painful and violates the human right to be treated as equal in dignity. They do more, they also steer the ship onto

an iceberg. While doing so, they either do not see the danger or they refuse to see it. And they do not allow the few people who might be able to change the course to come to the bridge of the ship. Only very few people see the danger anyway, because the people who live on the top luxury floors of the ship either are the prison guards, or their co-opted helpers. Those at the bottom of the ship struggle to get to the top floors. Saving the entire ship is nobody's priority.

Dan Baron posed the crucial question in the interview with Razia Friedler: How can one develop a vision and reality of freedom while in prison?

### **Companhia Vale do Rio Doce (CVRD)**

I was made aware of the article titled 'Vale destruirá milhares de cavernas na Amazônia' from 28th June 2012, explaining the consequences of a large iron mining project, the largest iron mining project underway in the world.<sup>50</sup> I used Google Translator to get an impression of its message. 'Vale Will Destroy Thousands of Caves in the Amazon' would be the English title:

Historical records of 10,000 years of human occupation in the Amazon will be destroyed indiscriminately. The caves will be demolished without having even been surveyed. Archaeologists employed by Vale qualified the worth of the caves as of 'maximum importance' and disavowed the entry of the bulldozers.

...

Contrary to the opinions of the archaeologists, of cave experts, and of the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMBio), the federal government granted the license for an investment of 20 billion dollars for mining iron in the South slope of the Serra de Carajás, in the heart of the Amazon. Thousands of caves will be destroyed. There is no way to preserve them, because the extraction of the ore is achieved through the demolition of the ground. Nothing will stand, including the caves that hold relics dating from 10,000 years ago.

...

The technical opinion of ICMBio recommending the preservation of the site was not even considered by the federal government, which gave preliminary environmental license through the IBAMA. Negotiations with the highest levels of government were conducted by the president of the Vale, Murilo Ferreira. After issuance of the preliminary environmental license, Ferreira visited President Rousseff and gave a presentation of the plans for the mining region. The meeting took place on Wednesday 27, at the Presidential Palace.

...

In its official documents that became public, Vale omitted the existence of the caves. It claimed that the environmental impacts will be minimal.

...

Less than 24 hours after reporting that its opinion was contrary to previous environmental license, ICMBio backtracked. On the afternoon of Thursday 28, IBAMA issued a statement in which it said that ICMBio issued a favourable opinion.

Everything was thus resolved. Vale is now working to get the final environmental permit and put the mine into operation in 2016.

### **The Belém Letter: Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon, November 23, 2009**

The so-called *Belém Letter* documents the rejection of carbon trading by the Brazilian social and environmental movements.<sup>51</sup>

We are socio-environmental organizations and movements, male and female workers in family and peasant agriculture, agroextractivists, members of Quilombola (descendants of runaway slaves) communities, women's organizations, urban grassroots organizations, fishermen and women, students, traditional peoples and communities, and native peoples sharing the struggle against deforestation and for environmental justice in the Amazon and in Brazil at large. We gathered at the seminar 'Climate and Forest - REDD and market-based mechanisms as a solution for the Amazon?' held in Belém, state of Pará, Brazil, on October 2-3, 2009, to analyse proposals for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) for the region in the light of our experiences with policies and programs implemented in the region in recent decades. In this letter, we are publicly calling on the Brazilian Government to reject the idea of using REDD as a carbon market-based mechanism and of accepting it as a means to compensate the emissions from Northern countries.

We reject the use of market-based mechanisms as tools to reduce carbon emissions based on the firm conviction that the market cannot be expected to take responsibility for life on the planet. The Conference of the Parties (COP) and its ensuing results showed that governments are not willing to take on consistent public commitments and that they tend to transfer the practical responsibility for achieving (notoriously insufficient) targets to the private initiative. As a result, public investments in and control of compliance with targets falter, while the expansion of a global CO<sub>2</sub> market is legitimized as a new form of financial capital investment and a means to ensure the survival of a failed production and consumption model.

The REDD proposals under discussion do not make any distinction between native forests and large-scale tree monoculture, and they allow economic actors – which have historically destroyed ecosystems and expelled populations from them – to resort to standing forest appreciation mechanisms to preserve and strengthen their economic and political power to the detriment of those populations. In addition, we run the risk of allowing industrialized countries not to reduce their fossil-fuel emissions drastically and to maintain an unsustainable production and consumption model. We need agreements to force Northern countries to recognize their climate debt and to assume the commitment to pay it off.

For Brazil, international climate negotiations should not be focused on discussing REDD and other market-based mechanisms, but rather on the transition to a new

production, distribution and consumption model based on agroecology, on a solidarity-based economic approach, and on a diversified and decentralized energy matrix capable of ensuring food security and sovereignty.

The main challenge for addressing deforestation in the Amazon and in other biomes in Brazil lies in solving the serious land ownership problems facing the country, which are at the roots of its socio-environmental conflicts. Deforestation - resulting from the advance of monoculture and of policies that favour agribusiness and a development model based on the predatory exploitation and export of natural resources - can only be avoided if the land issue is appropriately addressed through a Land Reform and sustainable territorial reorganization measures, and if territories occupied by traditional peoples and communities and by native peoples are legally recognized.

We have a different vision on what territory, development and economics are all about, which we are building over time, based on the sustainable use of forests and free use of biodiversity. A set of public policies is necessary for ensuring recognition of and appreciation for traditional practices, on the basis of a balanced relationship between production and environmental preservation.

We are committed to keep on fighting for what we believe in the light of this vision and to make sure that any mechanism for reducing deforestation is based on a comprehensive set of public policies and public and voluntary funds that can ensure our rights and life in the Amazon and on the planet.

From Saturday, 30th June 2012, onwards, Mano Souza and I were along in the house. Mano explained to me the medicinal plants of the Amazon and the social movements' origin in Brazil, while we had *açaí*, *tapioca* rolls, rice cake and cheese bread in the morning. For lunch we had sauce made with *tucupí*, and we had *jambú* leaves both cooked and in the salad. Later Mano gave me *Arrabidaea chica pariri* leaves as a medicine for my sarcoidosis (that I have since 1981); we cooked it in water. Earlier, in Bolivia, I had already learned about *tomate de árbol*, and later, in Ecuador, I re-encountered *tomate de árbol*, but also learned about *guanábana*, *naranjilla*, and *taxo*! It was surprising to me that so many wonderful fruits and vegetables are confined to South America and that I had not encountered them before!

In Mendoza, Argentina, a total surprise had been to taste *patay*! All the gourmet restaurants of this world ought to have it on their menu! It is a kind of cake made with the white flour of the *prosopis alba* tree, typical for central, northwestern and northern Argentina. *Prosopis alba* is a South American tree species that inhabits the centre part of Argentina, the Gran Chaco ecoregion and part of the Argentine Mesopotamia. It is known as *algarrobo blanco* in Spanish, which means 'white carob tree' (the Spanish settlers gave it that name because of its similarity to the European carob tree). It tastes like honey, a very special treat!

There are, of course, some South American exports to the rest of the world, such as the potatoes or maize/corn. I saw the first maize fields on my way to Santa Cruz in Bolivia, coming from the south. I was amazed to learn through Charles C. Mann's book *1491*

(Mann, 2011), why maize is such a unique agricultural plant!

I learned a lot more from Mano. For example, I learned about the Pastoral da Crianças, the Pastoral da Saúde, and the Pastoral da Terra, all organizations of the Catholic Church and its liberation theology branch. Mano explained that the Catholic Church (which is being weakened by the evangelical movement) is the origin of most of the social movements in Brazil.

When I tried to look them up on the internet I failed to find English explanations. I therefore translated from the Portuguese Wikipedia site on ‘Comissão Episcopal para o Serviço da Caridade, da Justiça e da Paz’, using Google Translator as follows:

The Episcopal Commission for the Service of Charity, Justice and Peace is a committee that is part of the organization of the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil whose mission is to foster social and political action in support and defence of the poor, excluded and needy, creating a ministry that unites faith and life, prayer and action. To ensure its effectiveness, analyses socio-economic and political culture are used as a tool to diagnose challenges and seek solutions that contribute to building a more just and caring society.

Mano also gave me more background information about the trade unions in Brazil, and how and why they have been weakened by privatisation throughout the past decades, except for the rural movements. The rural movements are gathered in the Brazil-wide National Confederacy of Agrarian Workers’ (CONTAG), with FETAGRI being the local Federação dos Trabalhadores da Agricultura do Estado do Pará e Amapá (Federation of Rural Agricultural Workers of Pará and Amapá).

I found the article ‘The Political Economy of Land Conflict in the Eastern Brazilian Amazon’, by Cynthia S. Simmons, 2004:<sup>52</sup>

As the case of land conflict illustrates, landless farmers do not always passively accept their loss of access to land, and they often react to these circumstances. The actual outbreak of conflict, however, is influenced by the presence and activism of social movements organized around the issue of land reform. In Pará, influential organizations involved in these efforts include the Comissão Pastoral da Terra (Pastoral Land Commission [CPT]), the Sindicato dos Trabalhadores Rurais (Rural Workers Syndicate [STR]), the Federação dos Trabalhadores da Agricultura do Estado do Pará e Amapá (Federation of Rural Agricultural Workers of Pará and Amapá [FETAGRI]), and the Movimento de Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (Movement of the Landless Rural Workers [MST]).

First, I thought that the landless movement is a story of pure success, ‘In Brazil, Peasants Claim Farmland’, by Kevin Karner, *Commons Magazine*, written in 2011, gives hope:<sup>53</sup>

Like in so many other Latin American countries, Brazil’s national history is rooted in colonialism, exploitation and class warfare. After emerging in 1985 from a 20-year dictatorship, the newly democratic Brazil was faced with the social upheaval caused



by structural adjustment policies attached to loans made from the World Bank. Because of land acquisition by foreign companies and industrial agriculture production associated with the ‘green revolution’ much of the agricultural working class was driven into the cities seeking work, where they found low wages and high unemployment. The effects of this situation still lingers today in Brazil’s many favelas, or urban slums. Accordingly, Brazil suffers from some of the most egregious wealth and land ownership disparity in the western hemisphere; three percent of the population owns two-thirds of Brazil’s farmable land.

The Brazilian constitution, drafted in 1988, stipulates that ‘property shall fulfil a social function’ and that the government can ‘expropriate for the purpose of agrarian reform, rural property that is not performing its social function’. This is one of the strongest official policies in the world stating that land is a commons that should benefit everyone. Historically, this mandate of ‘expropriation’ has been carried out by the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra, or the Landless Workers’ Movement (MST), an organization that has come to represent one of the most successful social movements in Latin American history.

The methods of land redistribution are disarmingly simple: MST identifies a plot of unproductive land, then organizes a makeshift camp on the land with groups sometimes numbering in the thousands, living there until the legal owner of the land makes the first move. If this sounds risky, it is—thousands of squatters have been brutalized or killed at the hands of state or private military forces. If the camp is broken up MST comes back in larger numbers, often drawing upon a reserve of members from coalition organizations such as the Pastoral Land Commission or the Movement of Small Farmers.

MST’s victories ultimately stem from the rule of law, not physical confrontation. It was a victory in Brazil’s Supreme Court which set the precedent for this kind of direct action in the first place back with an occupation in the state of Rio Grande do Sul in 1985. Part of the legal strategy adopted by MST is the art of making appeals. The local or state courts tend to rule in the favour of the original land owner. Rulings at the higher courts, however, have often backed MST’s efforts to apply the principles of the constitution.

Victories in the court room are possible due to the National Network of People’s Lawyers (RENAP), a coalition of legal practitioners organized in 1995 to provide legal help to urban and social movements, including MST. RENAP has served as a crucial liaison between peasants and the academic community; the movement often enlists the help of university legal scholars and opens their doors for active student participation.

Today, the Landless Workers’ Movement can lay claim to finding land for more than 350,000 families in over 2000 settlements. MST is recognized by UNESCO, UNICEF and the Catholic Church for the community development initiatives that have sprung

up in these communities—some 1,500 grade schools, medical clinics, credit unions and partnerships with Brazil’s technical colleges and universities. Good relations with Amnesty International and the administration of Brazilian President Lula da Silva have broadened the scope of MST’s goals, broadening them beyond land reform to challenge the practices of agribusiness giants like Monsanto and Syngenta whose commercialized GM crops and monocropping practices undermine the security of small farmers all over the world.

See also the article ‘Socio-economic Change in the Transition from Patron-Client to Social Movement Networks in Brazilian Amazonia’, by Mason Mathews, about Lábrea, the southernmost municipality in the Brazilian state of Amazonas, 2009:<sup>54</sup>

Abstract: This paper will describe the preliminary results of a doctoral study that combines social network analysis and ethnography to understand how the networks of inhabitants of the interior of the municipality of Lábrea have transitioned from patron-dominated social systems to systems in which social movements and government agencies predominate.

Yet, I got increasingly doubtful, the more I learned. When I read about patron-dominated social systems, I remembered Mano’s explanations adding to my personal impression that the deep structure and culture of feudalism, or what Riane Eisler calls the *dominator model* of society,<sup>55</sup> is very much present in the North of Brazil. It is not a matter of the past, it is not even on the decrease, on the contrary, it is on the rise. The *ruralistas*, among them land owners who own farms as large as countries, with half a million cattle, are allying themselves with industrial, financial, and trade capital investments, which both seem to be the modern equivalents to traditional feudal lords. I read on ‘Brazil’s Landless Mobilize Protest’, in *Rio Times*:

The MST officially began in 1984, but the organization can be viewed as part of a continuing struggle that dates back to Brazil’s independence. Since the end of the 19th century, one group or another has sought to address the imbalances of concentrated land ownership in the hands of the few such as is rooted in Portuguese feudal law. This concentration persists today, and in fact the MST would say that the advent of modern agro-industrial farming has only compounded the hopelessness faced by the Brazilian peasant farmer. The figures support the MST assertion that Brazil still faces some of the worst land distribution inequality in the world. While some estimates suggest that ten percent of farm operators own more than 85 percent of arable land, the MST claims just three percent of the population in fact own all the fertile land. The advent of the MST predictably sparked counter measures from threatened large land owners. The Rural Democratic Union or UDR say they are defending their inalienable right to private ownership against the un-democratic invasions perpetrated by the MST, but have long been implicated in the suspicious deaths of campesinos.

...

Land distribution in Brazil is without doubt one of the most divisive issues facing the nation. President Lula rode to power on a social reform ticket, but the pressures of

international diplomacy seem to have put distance between his government and the Landless Movement.

...

While U.S. nervousness at leftist Lula's election has been soothed, the MST remains an influential organization that still uses words like 'collective' and 'cooperative'. There are also commentators who surmise that the Landless Movement has spread itself too thin, and that Brazil's improving fortunes are diluting the relevance of the MST.

'They are fighting for a social transformation, they are fighting against globalization, they are fighting against the multinationals, and they are fighting against the Doha agreement on trade' says Professor Antoni Marcio Buainain of Antonio. 'They lost focus and the movement lost strength, and that is visible'.<sup>56</sup>

'Outrage Grows Over New Brazilian Rain Forest Law' is an article by Michael Ricciardi, decrying how an unsustainable situation is being maintained by those who have vested interests with myriad tactics.<sup>57</sup> Clearly, this is not a Brazilian predicament alone. The entire world-system (Wallerstein) increasingly finds itself in a client-patron relationship with respect to global industrial, financial, and trade capital investments. Unsurprisingly, since the world community accepts giving priority to investor confidence, it is profit maximisation and the agglomeration of global patrons that are the result. Yet, the helplessness of the client is much more overtly palpable in the North of Brazil than in the so-called developed world. People in those parts of the world are more successfully placated by consumer goods and more removed from the brutality with which natural resources are being extracted.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, FAO, writes:

Few countries of the world have such a skewed land distribution pattern as in Brazil. The agricultural development favours the latifundium (large private agricultural estate operating with commercially exploited labour force). Only a small minority from the members of the land oligarchy who allied themselves to the industrial, financial and trade capital investments, have profited from this, while the majority of the population were driven out and excluded. During the last 25 years more than 30 million agricultural workers, men and women, have had to quit their land and a further 4.8 million farming families can only dream of having their own piece of land. One of the most shocking consequences of this injustice is hunger: of the 31.5 million people suffering from hunger in Brazil, half of them live in the countryside.<sup>58</sup>

The more I read, the more I felt at a loss to grasp the absurdity of the interplay of power games in Brazil, one of the frontlines of the rush to extract the resources of our planet, at any cost, even at the cost of the destruction of humankind's very chance of sustainable survival on our home planet.

I found the very interesting MIT Project Amazonia, which describes their mission as follows:<sup>59</sup>

Develop a way to characterize and monitor the well-being of one of the last true frontiers on Earth—the Amazon Basin rainforest—and devise a set of practical strategies to ensure its preservation.

The Amazon Rainforest is the single largest tropical rainforest in the world, containing more unique flora and fauna than any other ecosystem on Earth. However, this system is in danger. Due to human encroachment the rainforest is being decimated at prodigious rates. If trends remain unchecked, the Amazon may be reduced to text in future generations' history books.

Project Amazonia is an effort to develop a solution for the preservation of this natural resource. By researching the natural state of the Amazon as, the activities threatening its survival and Brazilian dependency on its resources we hope to develop strategies that will allow Brazilians and the Amazon to develop a more symbiotic relationship.

The web site is organized according to the four major divisions of our research. By clicking on the links at the top of the page you will find our research into the characterization of Amazonian and Brazilian resources, the analysis of activities threatening the rainforest and its inhabitants, the possibility of more practical terrestrial and industrial methods, and the development of monitoring equipment.

We hope that this web site is informative and provides you with a new perspective on the status of the Amazon Rainforest.

I read in an entry from 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2002 on the MIT Project Amazonia website that 0.8% of landlords possess 43% of the land while 53% of landowners (small peasants) own 2.7% of the land, and that Multinationals own 36 million hectares of Brazilian territory.<sup>60</sup> I read further on the same site:

Also, many of the biggest landowners are the senators, ministers and army chiefs. They exert their power in their landholdings (locally) using legal and illegal (murder) means to keep the small farmers from striving to get a more just distribution of land. In some regions, government favouring certain cash crops make small farming systems economically unviable. The majority of the territory owned by these people is unfarmed. Used as speculative asset whose market value has nothing to do with its productivity. Only about 7% of the Amazon's soils are capable of sustaining annual crops. An industry called *industria de posse* has developed around clearing land for pasture: people sell the land cleared for pasture (whose value is one-third greater than that of forest) as quickly as possible and then move on to another part of the forest.

...

There has already been an agrarian reform in 1985 which aimed to redistribute unproductive farmland but there was a lot of opposition (formation of the Rancher's Union, amongst which a lot of government members to combat the reform) and only 10% of the amount of land proposed for reallocation had been expropriated and about 18000 rural families (out of about 5 million with no land) had been settled.

...

There has been another major problem in the land policy of the government in the 90s: credit is mainly given to big farmers who produce very little and since the real rates of interest were negative, these subsidies were like free gifts. An agrarian reform should take this into account: land receiving subsidies should prove its productivity in the year following the credit. Small farmers, especially if farming with agroforestry process (which is what we want to achieve in our plan), might prove to deserve subsidies much more than landlords and be more productive. Right now credits cannot be granted without title to the land which small illiterate farmers do not have.

...

The peasant problem is in a large amount caused by the First World which has promoted production of cash crops (dumping of surplus food at subsidized prices and pressure exerted by World Bank and IMF) and this causes staple food producers to go out of business and the increase of staple food imports! This process has been forced by the international agencies by structural adjustment programs and selective investments. This has been done to force the government to be less protectionist and to convert the domestic economy to foreign exchange. This may have had very beneficial effects on the economy of Brazil but maybe a balance can be found so that domestic markets are not fragilized so much.

The economic strength of some markets is reduced because of tariff barriers set by First World countries: no tax for raw product and high taxes for processed products. This means Brazil has to produce a lot and that uses more land than necessary.

...

The small farmers produce a large amount of the staple food Brazil needs (manioc, beans, rice, and maize) but not enough though because the country still needs to import some.

...

There are many land conflicts arising from these problems and murders of peasants by landlords are not rare. They are even sponsored by the Rancher's Union of which many people of the government are part.

...

Since 1970, to avoid land redistribution in the South, the government has encouraged colonization. They encouraged the peasants to farm as they did in the south and constructed the Trans-Amazon Highway to settle them along there without taking into consideration that only 3% of the land is fertile in that region.

...

Another main cause of deforestation is that deforestation is a mean of establishing control over the land. Under the laws of INCRA (Institute of Agrarian Reform), an area six times the size of the actual land cleared can be claimed. So clearing is a good way to secure land bearing interesting resources (valuable timber and minerals). It should be known that a recognized land claim permits the holder to have royalty rights on minerals which are technically owned by the Brazilian state. Deforestation should not be legitimized as a proof that the land is exploited so should be owned. Indians exploit land without deforestation and they don't even have the right to own it! This process has led to numerous ruthless expropriations of small peasants. With this going

on they can't be expected to take on sustainable farming practices. Since they're always threatened, they don't invest in the land but raise fast-growing crops. It also causes the peasants to convert to mining which is a major threat to indigenous people. The peasants invade the reserves and there is a lot of murderous conflict (invasion of the Yanomami territory in Northern Brazil).

Another common way to claim land is to use cattle ranching. Low in labour cost, easy to spread, this is an easy way to claim occupation rights for both large and small-scale producers. In cattle ranching, the production itself is not the major interest. This explains why cattle ranching still takes place even though it has proven to be so little productive in the Amazon.<sup>61</sup>

Another subpage on the same website provides concise background information, explaining how the Brazilian government has encouraged Amazonian colonization to reduce urbanwards migration flows and instead settling large numbers of agricultural workers in frontier areas:<sup>62</sup>

In addition, this colonization policy has been strengthened after the great drought which devastated the Northeastern region in 1970 and it is then that the government decided to construct the Transamazon highway with the idea of settling massive numbers of small farmers along its margin. The number of occupations has progressively been increasing: they involved 14, 720 families in 1991, 30, 476 families in 1995. In the face of the worsening of the agrarian question, the government set up the Ministry for Land Policy and has settled large numbers of landless persons. But most of them are still landless or their rights are not respected. In general colonization plans have been a failure because the number of landless rural families is too large for the carrying capacity of the Amazon and because the different colonization programs have poorly been organized. The majority of the people settling themselves in the forest do so without official assistance. Only a minority of settlers coming to the region establish themselves in permanent fashion on a given piece of land. The absence of policies control migration flows coupled with the apparently unlimited availability of unoccupied land encouraged the adoption of traditional slash-and-burn practices. While this traditional practice is well mastered by small indigenous populations who respect long fallow periods, it causes major depletion of the soil and important deforestation when practiced by the neo-Brazilians. The absence of government support and the lawless nature of the occupation process coupled with rising land values, quickly caused the forest to become the scene of a real struggle for land, especially when companies started to buy land along the road. The lack of a clear demarcation of properties and the presence of *grileiros* (land-grabbers who take illegal and often violent possession of the land to sell it to landlords or businessmen) has caused serious speculation in the region and violent conflicts rarely in the favour of the small farmers.

A *posseiros* is defined as a peasant working on the land without any legal document defining him as the owner of the land. This poor peasant subsists from the production

of the land and sells on the market the agricultural surplus to buy the home necessities. He cannot increase the productivity of his labour for, without a title, he cannot access bank loans, agronomic assistance or any other kind of support. The greatest concentrations of posseiros are in the North and Centre-West (region defined as Legal Amazonia). In several states of the Amazon, the posseiros' settlements constitute the majority of agricultural establishments. But he is always considered to be in a provisional situation, somebody out of place: nobody recognizes him or represents him. The struggles in which the posseiros is involved are numerous (one of Brazil's major newspapers opened a special section to deal with this problem because the instances are so numerous). Very often, they lead to burning down the farmer's house and violent eviction by grileiros or landowners and the big companies. Some of them die, others are arrested and others migrate further. If lucky enough to find undisputed land and to not succumb to malaria or other diseases, they fell a new area and plant a few fast-growing crops in the hope of subsistence until the next eviction or until the soil is depleted. These new migration flows also create pressure on indigenous land because when a posseiros has nowhere to go he invades indigenous territory. Actually, large estates and companies use him to gain new space: he advances into tribal land, clears it for companies to move in later on. He is the ultimate loser. The government agencies don't make much effort to prevent these invasions so their number continues to grow. These disputes often end tragically with dead and wounded on both sides.

We think that the only way to slow down deforestation is to preserve the rainforest as a whole and create sustainable 'islands' of cultivated land. This is why we are experimenting with a model of an agroforestry subsistence farm. But to do that we must improve the living conditions of local people. Without proper distribution of land, evictions will continue; never will the posseiros be able to invest on their land and adopt long-term sustainable practices.

Pará should be the site of the experiment. The reason is mainly that this is where the sustainable farm experiment will be run. Also, this state is typical of the Amazon rainforest both in socio-economic terms and ecological and topographical terms.

The situation is rather bleak, as it seems. In human history good intentions were often undermined and derailed by counter-productive consequences. Is this the case in Brazil, too? Or are the consequences in fact productive, only for another clientele than officially stated? 'Agrarian Structure and Land-cover Change Along the Lifespan of Three Colonization Areas in the Brazilian Amazon', is an article by Thomas Ludewigs et al., written in 2009.<sup>63</sup> The article starts with the following introduction:

From 1970 to 1999, almost 700,000 families were settled through land reform programs in Brazil (INCRA, 2000, using both redistributive and colonization data 1), with 370,000 settling from 1995 to 1999 (Sparovek, 2003). However, and despite social movements' pressure and government efforts to decrease the huge gap in land distribution existent in the country, Gini index of actual land ownership concentration was estimated at 0.84 2 (Hoffman, 2002), remaining among the highest in the world.

What is the fate of public land in Brazil, and in particular in Amazônia? How much of it is being devoted to land reform under the premise of “fighting inequality” of access to land, but is actually working as a frontier expansion mechanism that re-enforces the land distribution gap?

### **The New Forest Code**

The article ‘Environmental Law in Brazil: Compromise or Deadlock?’, published in *The Economist*, in São Paulo, on 2nd June 2012, states that an opportunity to promote sustainable farming may have been missed.<sup>64</sup> The article reflects on the Brazilian president Dilma Rousseff’s effort to balance the claims of forests and farms, and how this has largely failed. This is what the article says:

Brazil’s gridlocked Congress often ends up passing contentious laws only after the combatants collapse in exhaustion. So it is with the revision of the Forest Code, a set of rules that, despite the name, apply to all privately owned rural land, not just plots in wooded areas. The code, originally approved in 1965, requires owners to keep native vegetation on parts of their land—80% in the Amazon, less elsewhere—and in erosion-prone and biodiverse areas such as riverbanks and mangrove swamps.

However, the article states, this was long ignored. In the late 1990s, harsher penalties and enforcement were introduced. Brazil’s powerful farming lobby, or the *ruralistas*, pushed for a revision of the code. It took 13 years of arguments, rewrites and stalling, including two government defeats in the lower house where ruralistas have the largest cross-party block—compared to the more green-friendly Senate. Then the final text landed on the desk of the president, Dilma Rousseff, on April 25th 2012. It was far from the version she wanted.

The president faced a difficult choice: to scrap the text and start again—which would probably be taken as a declaration of war by the ruralistas—or to make the best of a bad job. She chose the latter. On May 25th ministers went to Congress to say that the president would veto 12 of the new code’s 84 articles and make 32 smaller cuts. The resulting holes would be backfilled in a separate executive decree. Only on May 28th were the details published.

The result is legally complex, perhaps inevitably (see table for a summary). The code is trying to do too many different things: to regulate land use, and to halt deforestation in the Amazon while freeing farmers elsewhere to carry out their business. The original Forest Code was pioneering in some ways. Requiring farmers to set aside part of their land for natural vegetation looks odd to foreign eyes, used to governments holding pristine land as national parks and letting private owners do as they wish. But allowing settlers to open up some land in return for protecting more had its merits in a vast country with limited state resources. Sadly, the code was only enforced patchily on the Amazon frontier, while never making much sense for old-established farms in



southern and south-eastern Brazil.

The article argues that this flaw remains also in the new code, not least because it still treats long-cultivated and recently cleared land in the same way. Environmentalists In particular worry is that the Congress's version of the law amounted to 'carte blanche for the chainsaw'. Any landowner who was in violation of the code before July 2008 would now be in compliance.

Under Ms Rousseff's veto, the amnesty sought by ruralistas will apply only to smallholders, who will still have to replant 20% of their plots. Everyone else will have five years to right past wrongs and add their properties to a new Rural Environmental Register. Holdouts will be denied bank loans and face prosecution.

Rubens Ricupero, one of ten former environment ministers consulted by the president before the veto, praises her attempt to strike a balance. Treating small landowners more leniently was both practical, he thinks—they account for 90% of rural properties by number but just 24% by area—and socially just: few could afford much replanting. It also showed up the ruralistas' bad faith, he says, in claiming to be acting to protect small farmers when the president had long since promised to exempt them.

But, so the article reports, what frustrated greens, was the president's decision to shrink protected areas around rivers. Scientific assessments of riverbanks had spelled out what was needed to protect them from erosion and provide wildlife corridors, and the previous rules were based on these insights, explained Kenzo Jucá of WWF-Brasil. The new law may lead to some reforestation, yet, this is merely a one-off requirement (for signing up to the Rural Environmental Register).

The new code's tortuous evolution means it is poorly drafted and in places ambiguous, says Roberto Smeraldi of Amigos da Terra, a Brazilian NGO. He sees deadlock rather than compromise. Polls suggested voters favoured taking a hard line with the ruralistas. Pro-veto petitions attracted many signatures. But the ruralistas are the largest cross-party block in Congress, and that limited the president's room for manoeuvre.

Greens in the Senate had included tax rebates and cheap loans for farmers who reforested degraded areas faster than the law required, or who preserved more land than the bare minimum. They also wanted direct payments for those who conserved water or protected biodiversity. But these provisions to promote sustainable farming were stripped out by the lower house.

That was a pity: clever financial incentives can cut deforestation dramatically. A recent analysis by the Climate Policy Initiative (CPI), a green think-tank, concluded that only around half of the 75% drop in annual deforestation in Brazil since 2004 was caused by lower world prices for beef and soya and a stronger currency, both of which cut incentives to clear land. The rest it attributed to government action, including a

decision in 2008 to withhold farm loans in the municipalities where deforestation was highest. ‘Such policies clearly changed the way deforestation responds to price signals’, says Juliano Assunção, director of CPI’s Rio de Janeiro branch.

Senator Katia Abreu, the farmers’ leader, insists that her members oppose deforestation in the Amazon. Her members say that the new code will see farm output and profits fall elsewhere. Nevertheless, the ruralistas will probably not attempt to overturn the president’s veto in Congress (this would require an absolute majority of legislators in a joint session of both houses). But they may try to alter the text of the accompanying executive decree. Meanwhile, greens are threatening a constitutional challenge to the law.

The article concludes that new Forest Code is a missed opportunity. It will probably end up in its current form, or something very close to it. The article ends with quoting Roberto Smeraldi as saying ‘If we really want to manage our environmental capital, we need a new generation of laws’.

Gabriela Saab made me aware of Brazilian judge Antônio Augusto Cançado Trindade (born in 1947 in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil) and his work. Since 2009, he is a judge on the International Court of Justice based in The Hague (Den Haag), Netherlands. Cançado Trindade is also a professor at Utrecht University’s Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM). He works for establishing humankind as a whole as a subject of international law, namely, the perception and awareness of common and superior interests of humankind as such, not only states and international organisation. His chapter XI in his book *International Law for Humankind: Towards a New Jus Gentium* is entitled ‘Humankind as a Subject of International Law’ and begins with Section I: ‘The Perception and Awareness of Common and Superior Interests of Humankind as Such’.<sup>65</sup>

Note also the new Commons Law Project (CLP) at [www.commonslawproject.org](http://www.commonslawproject.org). Commons scholars Burns Weston and David Bollier have recently completed a new book titled *Green Governance: Ecological Survival, Human Rights, and the Law of the Commons*, which it has been accepted for publication by Cambridge University Press (CUP), and will be published in early (February) 2013.<sup>66</sup>

At the end of my time in South America, in Ecuador, I had the privilege of being with my dear host Mariana Ines Vergara and her extended family. We got acquainted with the work of François Houtart. We met with Gabriela Bernal, who collaborates with Houtart. The Universal Declaration for the Common Good of Humanity project by jurists and social leaders was presented by the World Forum for Alternatives to the social movements and organizations attending the peoples’ summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012.

Ecuador will be an important place in the future for our World Dignity University (WDU) work. Please read more about the Ruku Kausay branch of the World Dignity University initiative further down. Mariana and I also had the privilege of meeting with Carlos A. Izurieta C., who works with Gunter Pauli and his *blue economy* concept.<sup>67</sup> Izurieta’s support for our World Dignity University initiative will be invaluable.

**FROM CHILE TO ARGENTINA, BOLIVIA, BRAZIL, AND ECUADOR: A SELECTIVE  
CHRONOLOGY**

**May 2012: Bus Travel Chile–Bolivia–São Paulo: An Opportunity for Cultural  
Learning**

As mentioned earlier, it is important for me to make very clear that I consider problems to be opportunities for learning and that I am immensely grateful to everybody who kindly gives their time and energy to me to be of help. I am extremely thankful for all the wonderful help I received also in this case.

I write the report further down only in order to increase my understanding of the socio-psychological dynamics around me, and to express my gratitude to the altogether 11 people who helped me overcome the problems connected with my bus journey from Chile to Bolivia.

When I arrived in Chile on 29th March, Howard Richards kindly asked in Spanish, on my behalf, in the bus terminal in Santiago de Chile, whether there would be a bus connection to La Paz, Bolivia. He was informed that there wasn't any. I communicated this to Mariana Vergara, who was so kind as to ask her friend Rocio in La Paz to see whether she could be so generous and take it upon herself to help. (When I later had arrived in the bus terminal of La Paz, I saw many bus companies there that connected Chile and Bolivia. In other words, Howard did not receive all relevant information when he asked.)

The dear friend of Mariana Vergara in La Paz arranged for my Chile-Bolivia ticket. This was the ticket she had kindly purchased on my behalf and that I attempted to act upon:

- Mayo 3 2012: Salida de Santiago - Santa Cruz, Transportes: Yacireta, bus cama, Hora de salida: 10:00 am, Tiempo de viaje: 42 horas, Costo del pasaje: \$us. 220.-
- Mayo 5 2012: Llega a Santa Cruz, Hora de llegada: 10:00 pm, Dormir en Santa Cruz
- Mayo 6 2012: Salida Santa Cruz - La Paz, Hora de salida: 5:00 pm, Transportes: Trans Copacabana, bus cama, Tiempo de viaje: 16 a 18 horas, Costo del pasaje: \$us. 25.-
- Mayo 7 2012: Llegada a La Paz, Hora de llegada: 10:00 u 11:00 am

As it turned out, very interestingly, many elements of this ticket turned out to be either incomplete, incorrect, or misleading. It would almost have been easier not to have a ticket. A ticket that misleads requires that one first establishes the facts, before one can actually proceed with the journey. This ticket thus presented an opportunity for higher levels of cultural learning.

My ticket from Chile to La Paz in Bolivia had been issued in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia. I was to find the company Yacireta and take the bus from one of the six or seven of Santiago de Chile's bus terminals at 10.00 on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2012. On Sunday, 29th April, four days prior to departure, Gabriel and Luis Razeto had kindly established that a Yacireta company does not exist in Chile. Claudia Arcos Duarte later established that such a company is not present in Mendoza, Argentina, either (I later confirmed Gabriel Razeto's assumption that its headquarters are in Paraguay). Instead, as we were informed

a few hours before departure, I had to start the journey on my own, by going over the Andes, from Chile to Mendoza, in Argentina, with a ticket of my own. Claudia kindly offered to accompany me from Viña del Mar in Chile to Mendoza, with the company Andesmar.

Upon arrival in the bus terminal in Mendoza, we first looked for a Yacyreta office. We had been told that there would be a small Yacyreta window there. When we did not find it, we sent emails and made phone calls with Bolivia, both with the Yacyreta representative in Santa Cruz and with our dear friend in La Paz who had helped with purchasing this ticket, feeling quite guilty for burdening her ever more. We finally were informed to ask in the office of Andesmar for my ticket, yet, we also failed to do that. We were sent from Andesmar office to Andesmar office, with no success, in between making more international phone calls from a calling office to the issuer of the ticket in Bolivia, and sending more emails to our dear friend in Bolivia. Later I learned that during all this time the daughter of our friend in La Paz continued to phone Andesmar in Mendoza, and always were told that nobody whatsoever ever asked for my ticket there.

Claudia and I finally decided to stay on in Mendoza to gather more information.

Next day, Claudia succeeded in detecting that the ‘codigo’ number for the ticket that we had been given was incorrect. Claudia finally managed to find my ticket. Later, in Santa Cruz, I learned that this success was due to the fact that we had phoned the superior of the person who had sold the ticket when we so no solution: he had sent the information of this ticket for a second time to Andesmar.

We were finally able to make a reservation for me to continue northwards. First, we were given a trip that would arrive at the border to Bolivia at 23.00 at night. We later changed this unfavourable timing. Unfortunately, we were told only too late that the fee for changing a reservation was ca. \$US 50, double the price of the ticket we had paid for our Chile-Mendoza trip. Had we known this, we would have waited with making the reservation until we were sure of the most suitable timing.

Claudia and I spend a second night in the Youth Hostel Campo Base in Mendoza.

During all our endeavours, only two or three Andesmar employees tried to be helpful and treated us kindly. Most of the Andesmar personnel seemed to either have a general policy of ‘our clients are our enemies’, and ‘how can we withhold as much information as possible to show our clients who has the power’, and ‘how can we trap our clients into paying fees they do not expect’, or, there was a very specific grudge against Chileans, or against Germans (since I travel with a German passport).

Later, in La Paz, I learned from my friends there that the first information they had received was that this was a ticket for the same bus going from Santiago de Chile to Santa Cruz de la Sierra in Bolivia. As described above, in reality, I had to start the journey on my own, and then take a bus from Mendoza to Tucuman, and then to Pocitos. In Pocitos, I had to be helped over the Argentinian-Bolivian border, and be put into another bus to Santa Cruz. Later I suspected that perhaps the aim of this misinformation was to get the ticket paid twice, first prepaid, and, second, paid by me at the bus terminal directly, upon getting tired of not being able to establish the existence of the prepaid ticket. The prepaid ticket would then not be refunded, since allegedly ‘nobody looked for it’.

I cherished all these experiences as a wonderful opportunity for cultural learning.

After five days of travel, I finally arrived in La Paz, Bolivia, where I spent a wonderful week with my friends there.

Before getting to La Paz, my bus travel had brought me to Santa Cruz in Bolivia, where I met the issuer of the prepaid ticket, together with his superior and his colleagues. I was able to corroborate that Yacyreta is a Paraguayan company.

After my week in La Paz, I returned to Santa Cruz (18 hours bus trip), to catch my bus to São Paulo. Since this ticket had been issued by the same person, I expected new misinformation. Indeed, the paper ticket I was given was dated for 16<sup>th</sup> July, rather than 16<sup>th</sup> May. This was a mere writing error, I was told when I detected it... After this error had been corrected, I was told, 'Do not worry, you will have a ticket!' I had learned that such sentences might mean, 'Do worry, you will not have a ticket', an interpretation that turned out to be true when I arrived at the border between Bolivia and Brazil: I did not have a ticket! I did not have a ticket from the border to São Paulo, since the prepaid ticket would not be made available to the Brazilian bus company... See more further down.

What was the reason for this situation, which could have emerged from a novel by Franz Kafka? Was it simply human error? Or a general culture of mismanagement? Or was I intentionally misled? Or was it a mixture of many aspects?

Perhaps one reason is national historical humiliation? At least partly?

### **National Historical Humiliation**

Already in April, I had learned from Howard Richards that Bolivia refuses to sell its gas to Chile, and that Chile receives it indirectly, via Argentina.

While proceeding with my journey, I increasingly sensed that national historical humiliation might be one probable reason for my Kafkaesque bus travel experiences.

Just to name a few manifestations of an apparent antipathy against Chile, for example, I was asked at the border from Argentina to Bolivia: 'Oh, you come from Chile? Do you wish to go back there?' Unsuspectingly, I replied with 'no' (since I will leave South America from Ecuador), and to my surprise, I reaped a satisfied smile. Examples abounded. For instance, most money changers at the border between Brazil and Bolivia indicated that they would not change Chilean money...

And the antipathy seems to be mutual. Later, a Brazilian friend described to me how he would help an Argentinian co-traveller in Chile. In the hotel, she was usually unsuccessful in getting help and information. Since he, as a Brazilian, would be treated most cordially, he would ask questions in her place. He furthermore shared how Argentinians were perceived as the most arrogant South Americans. The joke would go: Who is that: looks Italian, speaks Spanish, and thinks they are English? (This joke surprised me, since in Chile I had learned that many Chileans pride themselves to be English, and that Argentina would identify rather proudly with Italy.)

Later I was also made aware that Chile is not a member in the South American trade association Mercosur or Mercosul (Spanish: Mercado Común del Sur, Portuguese: Mercado Comum do Sul, Guarani: Ñemby Ñemuha, English: Common Southern Market).

Mercosul is an economic and political agreement among Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay

and Uruguay, founded in 1991. The Andean Community (Spanish: Comunidad Andina, CAN) is a customs union comprising the South American countries of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Chile is a founding member of the United Nations, the Union of South American Nations and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. The Union of South American Nations is an intergovernmental union integrating two existing customs unions: Mercosur and the Andean Community of Nations (CAN), as part of a continuing process of South American integration. It is modelled on the European Union.

Here are the historical facts (compiled from different sources) of the national humiliation that Chile brought to its neighbours, particularly Bolivia:

The War of the Pacific (Spanish: *Guerra del Pacífico*) took place in western South America from 1879 - 1883. Chile fought Bolivia and Peru and won. During and after the war there was a rise of racial and national superiority ideas among the Chilean ruling class (Beckman, 2008). Chilean historian Gonzalo Bulnes (son of president Manuel Bulnes) once wrote, 'What defeated Peru was the superiority of a race and of a history' (Farcau, 2000, p. 169). During the occupation of Tacna and Arica (1884–1929) the Peruvian people and nation were treated in racist and denigrating terms by the Chilean press. In 2007 the Chilean government returned almost 4,000 books to Peru's national library, more than a century after they were taken by Chilean soldiers in hopes that the return of the books may go some way to improving the two nations' relations.

For Bolivians, the loss of the Litoral (the coast) remained a deeply emotional and practical issue, as was particularly evident during the 2003 natural gas riots. Popular belief attributed many of the country's problems to its landlocked condition; recovering the seacoast was seen as the solution to these difficulties. Numerous Bolivian Presidents pressured Chile for sovereign access to the sea. Diplomatic relations with Chile were severed on March 17, 1978, in spite of considerable commercial ties. The leading Bolivian newspaper *El Diario* featured at least a weekly editorial on the subject, and the Bolivian people annually celebrated a patriotic 'Day of the Sea' (*Día del Mar*) to remember the crippling loss.

### **Thursday, 3rd May 2012**

On Thursday, 3rd May 2012, I was kindly accompanied and guided by Claudia Arcos Duarte. We took the bus from Viñja del Mar, over the Andes, to Mendoza in Argentina (ca. 4 hours). On the day prior to departure, Claudia had established the fact that there was no bus ticket waiting for me from Santiago, but that I had to get to Mendoza, Argentina, on my own.

Upon leaving Chile, I felt to have become part of Chile, and Chile part of me, through the loving guidance and care from my friends in Chile. Leaving felt like leaving home. I am very glad that many of my new Chilean friends will stay close to me throughout my life. And I am very grateful for their support for our dignity work.

I saw my first gas pipelines in the Andes coming to Chile from Argentina, since Bolivia refuses to sell gas to Chile. I also noticed gas pipelines running southwards in Bolivia when I took the bus from Argentina to Santa Cruz. Later I noticed a pipeline along the road from Santa Cruz to La Paz.

### **Thursday and Friday, 3rd–4th May 2012**

I spent Thursday and Friday, 3rd–4th May 2012, in Mendoza, Argentina, together with Claudia Arcos Duarte. With tremendous dedication, she tried to establish whether my prepaid ticket existed or not.

### **Saturday, 5th May 2012**

On Saturday, 5th May 2012, at 8.00 in the morning, a wonderful comfortable 25 hours bus trip with ‘Flechabus’ began from Mendoza in Argentinian, going northwards on the east side of the Andes, to Tucumán (via San Juan, La Rioja, Catamarca), then further with the same bus overnight through Salta, San Salvador de Jujuy, to Salvador Mazza (also called Pocitos) at the border to Bolivia. Arrival the next day, Sunday, 6th May, at 9.00 in the morning.

It was an exceptional night: The night sky of the 5th of May was illuminated by the once-a-year cosmic event of the perigee moon (perigee means periapsis in Earth orbit, or the point in its orbit where the moon, or a satellite, is nearest to the Earth). The elliptical orbit brought the ‘Supermoon’ within 221,802 miles to Earth, the closest point. Thus it appeared much larger, an effect magnified by the full moon appearing roughly 20 percent brighter and 15 percent larger.

It was interesting to observe the presence of the horses that the Spanish had imported. In Limache, the neighbour used horses to draw carts. During my bus travels, repeatedly, I saw horses appear alongside the road, horses alone, horses with riders on their backs, and horses drawing carts.

Wherever I go in South America, I observe that the Virgin Mary is being venerated everywhere, more so, it seems, than male saints (see the large San Nicolas statue on my way to Pocitos).

### **Sunday, 6th May 2012**

Sunday, 6th May 2012, was filled with an eight hours bus journey from Pocitos, at the Argentinian-Bolivian border, to Santa Cruz de la Sierra in Bolivia.

In the morning, at 9.00, I had arrived in Salvador Mazza (also called Pocitos) at the border between Argentina and Bolivia. A kind and helpful Andesmar employee put me into a taxi which brought me to a Señor Miguel Valdiviesa. Since I had too little Argentinian money to pay the taxi, he changed 10 Euros for me (Chilean currency would not have been welcome, I learned). Miguel Valdiviesa called upon Señora Elida and her daughter, who, with their little dog, took me to the border in a taxi, where they helped me through the Argentinian and Bolivian pass and custom's control. Then we went by taxi to the Yacuiba bus terminal, on the other side of the border. There, we caught the bus to Santa Cruz de la Sierra in the very last moment, after a very rushed money exchange to get Bolivian money to pay the taxi driver on the Bolivian side.

Eight hours of bus journey followed, through the most fertile of Bolivian nature. Arrival in Santa Cruz de la Sierra in the evening, after dark.

### **Monday, 7th May 2012**

On Monday, 7th May 2012, I was staying on for one more day in Hostal Rio Magdalena, Calle Arenales No 353, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia. Problems with public transport in La Paz indicated that it was wiser to wait one day in Santa Cruz de la Sierra instead of proceeding to La Paz immediately.

When I had arrived in Santa Cruz in the evening of 6th May, the taxi driver at the bus terminal in Santa Cruz did not know the location of the hotel, and he was afraid to ask. Increasingly desperate, and upon my urgent recommendation, he asked around, and we finally found the hotel. This was the first time that I began to suspect that there is a certain amount of fear permeating Bolivian society.

Upon arrival in the hotel in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, I approached a young French traveller couple since I suspected them to know the practice of sharing valid information with newcomers. And indeed, they warned me that fake policemen would stop tourists; ask for their passports, only to steal them. I also learned that also Bolivian banks limit the minimum amount of money one can draw with one's credit card from their machines to maximise the already exorbitant fees for each transaction. I was told that Union Bank in Santa Cruz was somewhat preferable.

On the next morning, I succeeded in explaining to the kind hotel manager Johnny Rojas Oporto that he should phone Señor Rodolfo Marquez Mirabal on my behalf, the person who had issued my bus ticket from Chile to La Paz. Señor Rodolfo came to the hotel (see the picture of the gentleman with the open shirt on [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelinpics12.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelinpics12.php)). On the phone, he had asked the hotel manager whether I was one person or two. When he arrived, to my surprise, he was very astonished that I wished to proceed to La Paz, and asked me when I would want



to take the bus to La Paz. He explained to me that the bus trip to La Paz was not included in the ticket (remember, also the first leg of the journey, from Chile to Argentina had not been included, unexpectedly, as I had learned the day prior to departure).

### **8th–14<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

I had spent a wonderful week with dear friends in La Paz. Johann and Daniela taught me words, I had never heard before: *yatiri*, *kayagualla/kallahualla*, *curandero*, *preste* (big party), or *padrinaje*.

Daniela and Johann formulated their views as follows: (still to come\*)

### **Tuesday, 15th May 2012**

After a wonderful week with my friends in La Paz, I returned to Santa Cruz (18 hours bus trip La Paz–Santa Cruz), to catch my bus to São Paulo on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2012.

From the bus, I saw three kinds of roofs in Bolivia: 1. thatched roofs, 2. tiles, and, 3. corrugated iron. Do the thatched roofs represent the traditional style?

I saw little ponds in front of some villages, perhaps for small-scale fish farming?

I saw two kinds of cattle in Bolivia, the Friesian black-and-white cattle, and a plain beige kind of cattle.

I also caught a glimpse of many agro-businesses along the road between Santa Cruz and La Paz in Bolivia.

I also saw an Araucaria tree along that road, the one Claudia Arcos had pointed out to me in Chile as indigenous tree.

Upon arrival in Santa Cruz, Señor Rodolfo was to pick me up and help me go to my hotel. I searched for him in the bus terminal in vain and learned that he works for Bolipar. I understood that Bolipar, Yacyreta, and Trans Rosario were the same company, all with headquarters in Paraguay. I met Señor Pedro A. Fernandez (Señor Rodolfo's superior?), who had been very helpful. When Claudia phoned from Mendoza and was referred to Señor Pedro, he had stepped in and sent the ticket to Andesmar in Mendoza for a second time, with the effect that we finally were able to identify it. I thanked him with a postcard from Norway.

The ticket for São Paulo that had been given to me a week earlier, when in Santa Cruz, was unfortunately dated for 16<sup>th</sup> July, rather than 16<sup>th</sup> May. This seemed to have been a writing error, this is what Señor Rodolfo told my friends in La Paz when they phoned him. I waited for two hours for Señor Rodolfo because I was keen to have my ticket date for the next day corrected. Finally another employee of the company, Juan Alarcón, with whom I could share some Japanese since he had studied there, was so kind to do this. He also helped me explain to a taxi driver the location of my hotel Rio Magdalena (remember, a week earlier, the taxi driver had gone in circles, not able to find the hotel).

### **Wednesday–Thursday, 15th–17th May 2012**

From Wednesday to Thursday, 16th–17th May, 2012, I was travelling from Santa Cruz de la Sierra, in Bolivia, to the ‘frontera’ between Bolivia and Brazil, with Puerto Suarez on the Bolivian side and Corumbá on the Brazilian side.<sup>68</sup>

Dear Señor (or Don) Johnny Rojas Oporto from the Hostal Rio Magdalena in Santa Cruz faithfully accompanied me to the bus in the Bimodal bus terminal of Santa Cruz, waiting with me for three hours until I was safely sitting in the bus. He told me about his life, and about Bolivia and its history. His family lives in Sucre, Bolivia’s capital.

Don Johnny patiently explained everything to me in Spanish, slowly enough for me to understand. He explained, for example, that it was Señor Rodolfo, who would decide which of the two available routes to São Paulo I was to take, the ‘direct’ route of ca. 33 hours, or the route via Paraguay, more than 40 hours. Luckily (I thought), I was to be on the ‘direct’ route.

Don Johnny also explained to me that bus drivers in Brazil are not allowed to drive more than four hours in one stretch, and then they have to sleep, and be replaced by another driver. In Bolivia, in contrast, there are no such rules, he told me. Later, when the bus would be stuck in the mud, I remembered his words and wondered whether the driver had fallen asleep for a moment, since the bus stood diagonal, with the front having slid almost into the bushes. However, perhaps it was the condition of this particular part of the road, since, at some point, also a big truck was stuck behind us. The truck had a stronger motor than our bus and managed to free himself by carefully driving forward and then back again. The sound of this action, the big motor being brought to its maximum capacity, was to be heard for about half an hour.

I remembered Don Johnny’s words also when I encountered the first Brazilian bus drivers. They looked like pilots of important airlines, dressed in elegant uniforms, with name tags, proudly strolling in front of the bus!

Don Johnny conveyed to me Señor Rodolfo’s message that I should not worry: ‘You will have a ticket’, I was told (unlike in Mendoza). I was again reminded of the lesson I have learned throughout my life, namely, that it is high time to consider getting worried, when one is told not to worry: remember the work of Watzlawick! And, indeed, at the frontier to Brazil, in Puerto Suarez, once more, I would *not* have a ticket!

Don Johnny was very proud that the road to the border was asphalted. I was astonished why he should mention this fact and sensed that his pride might be hiding another truth, a truth that was perhaps more significant in practice. I asked him, therefore, whether the entire stretch to the border was asphalted. No, he replied, a ‘brief’ part was not. Clearly, this was precisely the stretch of the road (not that brief) that kept us for many hours during the night. (Google Maps does not include this route as a possible route. When I googled more, I found that there are plans to implement a road connection between Santa Cruz and Puerto Suarez,<sup>69</sup> enabling smooth traffic throughout the year. Between Santa Cruz and Pailón, there is already a paved road of 62 km. Opposite the airport of Puerto Suarez and Arroyo Concepción there is already a paved road of 17 km.)

The bus was less comfortable than the other buses I had encountered so far. The journey to the border was to take ca. 12 hours, I was to arrive at ca. 6.00 in the morning next day, and catch the bus on the other side of the border to São Paulo at ca. 10.00 am. Upon departure in Santa Cruz, Señor Rodolfo gave me an envelope, where he had written the name Juan Da Silva Carbal, Bus Andorinha, who would help me to get the bus to São

Paulo. Inside the envelope was a piece of paper indicating that my destination was São Paulo.

However, everything evolved rather differently. The bus was stuck in the mud on the non-asphalted stretch of the journey, in the middle of the night. The crew of the bus, clearly, was well prepared. They set up an external spotlight on some wooden beams, and started working with large shovels. The entire bus had sunk deep into the mud, almost sliding off the road to the right, leaning to the right side. It took several hours to free the bus. Another vehicle finally pulled it out. See the pictures I took without flash, in order not to startle the hard-working men who gave their all to free the bus.

I was hugely impressed by the men accompanying the bus, first how they worked diligently, for hours, to free the bus, digging, putting planks, trying to drive forward and then back again to get out. Later, when the bus was on the road again, it was amazing to observe how the driver negotiated the most impossible conditions for hours upon hours, inching through mud hole after mud hole, carefully avoiding the stones that stuck out everywhere, all in complete darkness, with only rather dim lighting coming from the bus. Luckily, there was a lot of other traffic, busses and trucks drove by, and they added light, since most of them had stronger lighting than our bus. Finally, we reached the asphalted road.

I was also impressed by the passengers. Most Bolivians slept through the accident, no sound was to be heard from the children. Only after one hour or so, did two men get up to look out of the window to check what was happening. As I usually observe, in Europe, most men will immediately get up, watch, and discuss what they would do to save the situation. Fully in the European fashion, the three European-looking Mennonites were talking loudly. As it seemed, it was a couple with their adult son, the father in a blue overall with a beige hat.<sup>70</sup> It was a very interesting experience for me to hear them speak Plautdietsch.<sup>71</sup> The woman was constantly looking out of the window (that she had opened, thus inviting mosquitoes into the bus); she was talking loudly to her male company throughout the entire episode. The son even went out of the bus, only to be immediately told, by the shovelling bus crew, to return inside.

In the morning, one of the men responsible for the bus appeared in front of the passengers, asking who needed to get off at the next station. Visibly, his mouth was full of coca leaves; the right side of his face was bulging. His eyes were overstimulated, wide open, staring wildly: The night had clearly taken its toll and the coca leaves were meant to keep him awake.

When the morning light appeared, I took pictures from the bus window with the aim to honour the wonderful chapter about Beni and its human-made landscape in Charles Mann's book *1491* (the bus drove through the adjacent Santa Cruz Department of Bolivia). The landscape was extremely uniform, hour after hour: lush greenery, not even an electricity cable following the road, two lone dwellings for hours. I was not sure as to whether I caught glimpses of the human-made mounds that Mann describes.

I saw an 'urbanización' project, in the middle of nowhere, that made particularly clear how misguided it is to use what I call the 'prison camp' approach. This approach typically starts with a prototype that an architect far from the locality has designed, to then multiply this prototype and arrange those copies in a rectangular grid-like manner on the piece of land that an investor had designated. I would recommend offering people

local material and allowing them to use their own creativity to design their dwellings. The Organization Workshop approach of Iván Labra is the solution!

By the way, I have learned to drink very little, to be able to survive without a toilet for many bus-hours! I also have learned to carry my own paper with me. And, I have learned to avoid throwing any paper into the toilet, even used paper, but into a bin, so as not to clog the pipes.

In that way, I arrived many hours too late at the border and missed my bus to São Paulo (I might have missed it anyway, due to Señor Rodolfo's delaying tactics, see more further down). I managed to get reluctant help from two passengers, who allowed me to share their taxi, and, luckily, they went to the Andorinha office, where, to my surprise, I found Señor Rodolfo's contact man, Señor Juan Da Silva Carbal, who told me that he would phone Señor Rodolfo. He disappeared, and I did not see him again. I was sitting in the Andorinha office for many hours, writing these reflections.

As mentioned earlier I always refrain from aggressive, indignant, accusatory behaviour, as I just saw it in a German tourist. By simply staying present and calm, friendliness and helpfulness may emerge in the people around me, and perhaps even a smile (even on a continent of few smiles, as the Spanish-speaking South America seems to be to me so far). With accusatory behaviour, I create enemies, who might help only as far as they are being pressured. By calmness, I create friends, who help also where I do not have enough oversight over the situation to know what kind of help I might actually need.

Finally, I approached the two men who had helped me with the taxi, and they kindly phoned Señor Juan Da Silva Carbal (since I do not have a cell phone) and they told me that the problem was that the fact that the ticket had been prepaid for was not being communicated: the money was not being freed (this is what I understood from their Spanish explanations).

Soon after, the head of the Andorinha office took initiative spontaneously and phoned Señor Rodolfo himself. He did that with a very firm voice, shouting into the phone. He then kindly explained to me that I could walk to the border and get the stamps into my passport for leaving Bolivia and entering Brazil, which I did. I thanked him with a postcard from Norway and a brochure from Hamelin.

At the end, the evening bus to São Paulo was too full. I am writing these sentences in a hotel a few meters from the border, ready to get on the bus tomorrow, 18th May, 9.00 in the morning, arrival in São Paulo on 19th May, at 11.00 am at the Barra Funda terminal.

Upon reflection, as mentioned earlier, if I were to believe the worst, I would hypothesise that intentional delaying tactics were applied to me, perhaps in the hope to capitalise on the impatience of a foreigner.

Before sharing my reflections further, I want to repeat that I do not think in terms of right or wrong, and that I am not personally affected by situations like this in ways such as being indignant, or hurt, or similarly self-referential reactions. I simply regard this as an interesting case for understanding human behaviour. I do not become sad or mad or frustrated, or anything in this vein in situations as this. (I just had to explain this to dear friends. I sometimes forget that other people might react in those ways, and that I have to repeatedly make clear that I do not.)

My friends in La Paz, when they kindly bought two tickets on my behalf, believed that

they had bought one ticket from Santiago de Chile to La Paz in Bolivia, and another ticket from La Paz to São Paulo in Brazil.

As it turned out, there was no ticket for me to start my journey from Santiago de Chile. Instead, I had to buy a ticket from Chile to Mendoza in Argentina myself, and, later, I also had to buy the tickets between La Paz and Santa Cruz in Bolivia myself.

But that was no all. For both tickets, there was a time when an impatient foreigner would have given up and bought an alternative ticket, instead of waiting for the prepaid ticket to materialise. Only due to the perseverance of Claudia Arcos, who kindly had accompanied me from Chile to Mendoza, did we manage to manifest the prepaid ticket to Bolivia in Mendoza, and it took us two days.

I was aware that I had to buy an alternative ticket, would we remain unsuccessful, and that my friends then would need evidence to get refunded. Therefore, I urged Claudia to ask in the main Andesmar office in Mendoza for some kind of paper that would give evidence that we had searched for my prepaid ticket in vain. We reaped nothing but aggressive rejection: This would certainly not be given to us! This was the reply from the very aggressive Andesmar employees, two ladies, whom we asked in their main office. Later, in La Paz, my friends told me that they had phoned the Andesmar office in Mendoza and had been informed that nobody resembling me had ever asked for a ticket! In other words, my friends would most probably not have been refunded, had I bought an alternative ticket in frustration.

In the case of the second ticket, the one to São Paulo, when I arrived in Puerto Suarez, at the border to Brazil, I learned only from a fellow traveller who was so kind as to phone the contact person that Señor Rodolfo had indicated to me, Señor Juan (the one who was supposed to help me over the border and into the bus to São Paulo), that the problem was that my prepaid ticket was not being authorised to go to the company Andorinha that operated the bus to São Paulo. In other words, Señor Rodolfo was sitting on the funds he had received instead of using them for the purpose he had received the payment for. Again, I assume, had I paid an alternative ticket at the Andorinha counter, instead of waiting patiently in their office for hour upon hour, no refund would have been given to my friends.

In both cases, had I become impatient and paid alternative tickets, my tickets would have been paid twice, and the first payment would have been Señor Rodolfo's in full and total...

In case this was the strategy, I must say in admiration for the shrewdness of the calculus: well calculated! It would have worked with most foreigners!

I guess that the entire situation was due to a host of other reasons; perhaps Señor Rodolfo has a tendency to overload himself, with the result that he makes grave mistakes and cannot follow up his commitments. Or it is 'normality' in Bolivia, as Diana, who works at the airport in Santa Cruz, told me.

Who knows! In any case, an interesting opportunity to observe human behaviour!

### **Friday-Saturday, 18th–19th May 2012**

From Friday to Saturday, 18th–19th May 2012, I made the transition from Bolivia to

Brazil. On Friday at 9.00, a bus left from Puerto Suarez on the Bolivian side to Corumbá on the Brazilian side. Then, at 11.30, the bus for São Paulo departed from Corumbá, arrival in São Paulo next day at 11.00 (we arrived an hour earlier).

I spent the night from the 17th to 18th in Hotel Vini in Puerto Suarez, a few steps from the Bolivian side of the border to Brazil, at the end of the officially non-existent road from Santa Cruz.

The head of the Andorinha office took, Ney Egeuz Yorge, and his crew, all studied intensely the brochure from Hamelin I had given to them as my sign of gratitude the evening before.

I was surprised when I encountered the first Brazilian bus drivers. They looked like pilots of important airlines, dressed in elegant uniforms, with name tags, proudly strolling in front of the bus!

In Corumbá, while waiting for the bus to São Paulo, I met Josy, a young medical student in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, who was on her way to her sick grandmother in Vilhena in Brazil. I learned a lot from her, when she shared her life story with me.

In the bus to São Paulo, I was extremely lucky to have Sandra as my kind neighbour. It was by far the most comfortable bus I so far experienced in South America. Sandra would most kindly chaperon me like her sixth child! We held a small linguistic university on board of the bus, Sandra kindly teaching me Portuguese! She told me that ca. 20.000 Brasileiros are living in Santa Cruz. Many Brazilians come to study medicine, not least because it is much more difficult and costly to get into medical school in Brazil. She agreed with my impression that the atmosphere in a plural country such as Bolivia is not always easy. For her, the government in Bolivia is an indigenous dictatorship, trying to emulate Cuba and Venezuela.

See the pictures with the termites! They covered entire fields with their *cupinzeiro* mounds!

See also the Brazilian *Rodovia* (highway) system<sup>72</sup>! Our bus used a road maintained by private concessionaires.

See, furthermore, the large billboards alongside the road. One says: 'Crack: Independência ou morte'.

Finally, I arrived in São Paulo, and Gabriela Saab so very kindly picked me up at the Terminal Rodoviário da Barra Funda!

### **Saturday, 19th May 2012**

Saturday, 19th May 2012, was a wonderful day with Gabriela Saab, her husband Fabio, her mother Rosy, and her partner! What a welcome! In a Japanese restaurant á la Brazilian style! And Gaby had prepared a comprehensive program for me! After almost being stuck forever in the mud of Bolivia, I could almost not believe my happiness of being with Gaby and her family!

### Monday, 21th May 2012

On Monday, 21th May 2012, Gabriela Saab's mother-in-law, Doña Regina Riva, brought us to the young people of the Missão Belem.<sup>73</sup> We also visited the church Igreja São José do Belém, where Gaby and Fabio got married, as well as the second-hand shop whose profits go to buying basic goods for needy families.

The young Missão Belem missionaries (one could also call them activists) live under circumstances in a favela in Belem, which most people would deem impossible. Among the missionaries are former drug addicts. They regularly join the street children (many of whom are addicted to crack) in the street also at night. A police razzia in February this year that aimed at expelling the youth from the centre of the city did not discriminate between the missionaries and the youth. Many of the street children hid behind the missionaries, and, later, many sought refuge with Missão Belem.

The missionaries have quarters for their women, and other quarters for their men. See the women's quarters, where up to sixteen women sleep on a few square meters; see their cupboard, their library, and their meditation space on the pictures. See also the corridor that represents the male quarters, where up to nine men sleep on the floor.

The women explained to us how their mothers, though of religious orientation, have grave problems with their daughters choosing this extreme degree of 'walking the talk' of religious conviction. Equally, the men shared with us that their parents would rather have them live 'normal' lives.

For me, it was deeply touching to see the fulfilment in the eyes of these young people. New research on the importance of relationships underpins how significant it is to feel that one belongs. Furthermore, these young people gave proof of how fulfilling it can be to dedicate one's life to aims broader and higher than the mere amassment of material possessions or the attempt to be a 'normal' part in a context that produces unnecessary suffering to others. The dedication that these young people gave us the privilege of witnessing was exemplary in many ways. First, since many had experienced street life and drug addiction themselves, they were first-class helpers for others in similar situations (research underpins this insight). Second, they follow the motto (see one of the photos): 'Se nao fomos 'reduzidos a pobres', como entenderemos os pobres?' (Google Translator: 'If we were not 'reduced to the poor', how could we understand the poor?'). In this way they avoid committing the humiliation of patronising charity that ignorant do-gooders might perpetrate.

For me, using terms such as *human dignity* or *true humanity* are ways to describe such commitment, be it carried with religious or non-religious motivations. As mentioned in other places, I myself resonate with fourteenth century Persian Sufi poet Hafiz, who said, 'I have learned so much from God that I can no longer call myself a Christian, a Hindu, a Muslim, a Buddhist, a Jew. The truth has shed so much of itself in me that I can no longer call myself a man, a woman..'. I resonate with this phrase not least because I would like to avoid the impression that my motivation to help might be secondary to wanting to trap people, through help, into certain world views. If at all, I resonate with *the Holy* (this is philosopher Rudolf Otto's term for what connects all religions, see Otto, 1928). Trapping people into religious doctrine would, at least to my view, be as unholy as any other manipulation. Furthermore, I personally think that it is our human duty to be human—

that it would be rather blasphemous to unload this duty onto the shoulders of religion, and, even more banal would it be to do this in order to gain spiritual ‘advantages’ for oneself in the same way others try to gain worldly advantages. Questions of religion ought to be free from having to carry tasks humans have to shoulder as humans, this is my view. Using religion as justification for why we should have the common good at heart, for why we ought to love each other, for why it would be better to live a life that makes social cohesion possible and sustainable, to me, would represent an abuse of religion. I felt that these young people were very aware of such reflections. They confirmed repeatedly that they were keeping an extremely low profile and would never push people in any way. When they witness drug abuse in their favela, for example, they would not interfere, they explained.

Incidentally, Neil Walsh, a dear member in our HumanDHS network,<sup>74</sup> wrote to me on the same day, 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2012:

Evelin, today I met a real life example of someone who is embodying your work here in the North East. Iran Nazario lost his brother to gang violence and has, since then, been on a mission to transform the streets by going out at the times when kids are most vulnerable, 3-4 am and giving them options, other than drugs and run-ins with the police. Iran is putting kids in touch with mentors, taking them to the countryside, and teaching them prosocial behaviour. Iran really understands the community and knows that gangs, in and of themselves, are not really the problem, but that the problems are much more rooted in lack of community engagement and a limited kind of view of the world. I have worked with youth in Georgia who, nominally involved in gangs, were more vulnerable because of lack of opportunities in their families and communities. Gangs, I observed, were just kind of local groups of friends who fight with other neighbourhood kids. What I also observed was that if someone in a poor community got involved with law enforcement and it was suspected they were in a gang their criminal record would become very complicated and could lead to a downward spiral in terms of behaviour. Iran understands the situation and seems to offer very positive solutions informed by dignity and justice.

I want to recommend that Iran be invited to speak at one of the roundtables at the conference this December. I feel that he would be very well received and that he could make connections within the network that will empower his program and the communities he serves. Best, Neil.

### **Sunday, 17th June 2012**

I enjoyed the extraordinarily kind and loving hospitality of Giselda Costa, Fatima Souza, her daughter, her mother, and her husband Umberto Souza, in Teresina.

In the morning, I woke up to the sound of a rooster and realised how lucky I was to grow up on a traditional farm. As a child, I woke up to the sound of roosters, ducks, geese, cows, horses, pigs, dogs, cats, not to speak of the many birds in the trees. Later, when I stayed in the near-by town, I was amazed that the only thing I heard was mainly the sound of doves. What an impoverishment!



At 14.30 I embarked on a 16 hours trip by bus to Marabá, Pará.

### **2nd July 2012**

On 2nd July 2012, I departed from Brazil. It was difficult to leave. I spent a little over a month in Brazil, and it feels like many years. The people I had the privilege of getting to know were a gift I did not imagine I would get. I will carry everybody with me in my heart. And I am very happy that many are now members of our HumanDHS network and will help build the Portuguese branch of our World Dignity University initiative.

### **3rd July 2012**

On 3rd July 2012, I flew from São Paulo, first to Bogota, Colombia, then to Quito, Ecuador.

From Marabá, I could have reached Quito by going up the Amazon River system by boat and bus; it would have taken ca. ten days. I would have had to go by bus or plane from Marabá to Belém, by boat first to Manaus and then to Leticia in Colombia; from there to Quito by bus. Since I did not know about this option, and did not plan for a 10 days trip, I had to go for the (unfortunately very expensive) flight option. And, since South America is not integrated as well as I thought (like in Africa, where many flights between African countries go via Paris or London, their former colonisers), I had to fly all the way from the Amazon to Brasilia, then to São Paulo, staying there over night, kindly hosted by dear Rosy, Gaby's mother, then to Bogota in Columbia, and from there to Quito in Ecuador. Thank you, dear Gaby, Rosy, Marcelle, and David, for making this path possible for me with so much care and love!

From the plane, I tried to get glimpses of the Brazilian landscape. I saw large undulating rivers, dams, and interesting land formations that resembled scars. I saw a road cutting straight through the rain forest and understood from the sky how a road can make the encroachment of settlements possible.

Near São Paulo, the landscape was human-made, with settlements and land divisions clearly having grown organically. The further away we got from São Paulo, increasingly, division lines were drawn with a ruler, in rectangular grid-like shapes. The more we approached the Amazon, grid-like patches of cleared land appeared in the middle of a vast green carpet.

I was reminded of the United States, which has small states at the East Coast, where new settlers first landed, while large grid-like lines appear further west. The East Coast of Brazil resembles the East Coast of the United States, with smaller states having grown organically, while rectangular lines divide states like Pará and the Amazon further west. Similarly, countries in Africa and the Middle East have been drawn with the ruler on the map, with rectangular lines cutting through any organic growth of settlements on the ground.

### 6th July 2012

On 5th June 2012, I arrived in the Ruku Kausay branch of the World Dignity University initiative located in the community of Rio Blanco in the Amazonian part of Ecuador. I was kindly welcomed by Mariana Ines Vergara on behalf of the Grefa family, an extended indigenous Kichwa family, who, for over 20 years, has developed ecotourism as a way to preserve their sacred rainforest lands and culture (Kichwa, or Kichwa shimi, Runashimi, also Spanish Quichua, is a Quechuan language, and includes all Quechua varieties of Ecuador and Colombia). Ruku Kausay (pronounced 'roo- koo - kow - sigh') means 'wisdom of the ancestors' in the indigenous Kichwa language. Ruku Kausay invites into experiencing the wisdom of the rainforest and the authentic culture and traditions of its people. The Grefa family has practiced the shamanic healing traditions of its people for generations.

In the early morning, before sunrise, Mariana guided me to a waterfall. It was an often very difficult walk of altogether ca. two hours. I was hugely impressed by Mariana's state of knowledge. She has acquired a significant amount of insight about the rainforest, both practical and theoretical, from Agustin Grefa and his family.

It was profoundly disheartening to see the path being almost made unwalkable by the cattle owned by a neighbour, who does not wish to protect the rainforest on his land. Another neighbour has cleared the rainforest to plant corn. These are small-scale clearings, incomparable with what I saw in Pará, where areas large as countries have been cleared, yet, witnessing the beginnings of such clearances is as painful to see.

Later, we were able to swim in the near-by river.

### Until the end of July 2012

During my weeks in Quito, my dear friend Mariana Vergara made a few more excursions with me, within Quito, or to the north of Ecuador. We also produced more videos for the World Dignity University initiative.

Otherwise, I was lucky enough that Mariana was able to integrate me into her large extended family in Quito, Ecuador, in ways that I could attend to the more than 2,000 important emails that had accumulated and that I needed to urgently reply to. I know from experience that I need to work for circa one month from morning to evening to get on top of such an amount of emails, and since they partly had to do with our upcoming conferences, they were particularly urgent. In other words, if I wished to avoid getting into an impossible situation, I could not afford having any intense programme in Quito.

Luckily, Mariana could explain to her family that I need to work on my computer from morning to evening and that they should not feel that they needed to entertain me. In other words, I was experiencing my favourite work situation: I was in my guest room with good Wi-Fi access, could work all day, yet, I was not alone. I was embedded into an extended group of loving people, and from time to time some members of the family dropped into my *dignitório* to have a brief conversation with me. I managed to explain that I only wished to participate in having lunch with everybody, but not breakfast or dinner. In that way, I preserved many hours of uninterrupted concentration, and at the

same time I avoided large meals, something I need to avoid anyway. I had a stock of fruit in my guest room, which I could eat slowly while staying focused in concentration.

Our dear Uli Spalthoff had installed a second computer for me, a very small one, which I use to stay connected with the world's news when I can, while continuing to work on the first laptop. In that way, the weeks in Quito were mainly dedicated to immersing myself into the preparation of our conferences, among others, and, at the same time, getting updated on what is happening in the world and in our network, and enjoying the privilege of being part of an extended Ecuadorian family.

Perhaps it is fitting to conclude these reflections on South America by turning to world politics. I learned that many South American leaders have or had cancer. I understood that Hugo Chavez suspects that cancer has been brought to those leaders in South America who are not ideologically welcome. 'Chavez Muses on US Latin America Cancer Plot' is a BBC News headline.<sup>75</sup> This is the text of this BBC News item:

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has questioned whether the US has developed a secret technology to give cancer to left-wing leaders in Latin America.

Treated for cancer this year, Mr Chavez was speaking a day after news that Argentina's president had the disease.

Fernando Lugo of Paraguay, Dilma Rousseff of Brazil and her predecessor Lula have also had cancer.

Mr Chavez said this was 'very strange' but stressed that he was thinking aloud rather than making 'rash accusations'.

But he said the instances of cancer among Latin American leaders were 'difficult to explain using the law of probabilities'.

'Would it be strange if they had developed the technology to induce cancer and nobody knew about it?' Mr Chavez asked in a televised speech to soldiers at an army base.

Who next?

Mr Chavez noted that US government scientists had infected Guatemalan prisoners with syphilis and other diseases in the 1940s, but that this had only come to light last year.

And he joked that he would now take extra care of the presidents of Bolivia and Ecuador - Evo Morales and Rafael Correa - lest they also be diagnosed with cancer. Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff has beaten cancer, and Lula is fighting the disease. The Venezuelan leader, who is 57, has often accused the US of plotting to overthrow or even kill him.

He says he is now free of cancer after having surgery and chemotherapy in Cuba earlier this year.

The exact details of his illness have not been made public, fuelling speculation that his condition may be worse than he has let on.

Mr Chavez was the first regional leader to offer support to the Argentine President, Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, after it was announced on Tuesday that she had thyroid cancer.

'We will live and we will conquer!' he told her.

Ms Fernandez, 58, is due to have an operation on 4 January, but doctors say her

prognosis is very good.

Survivors' summit: Doctors treating former Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva for throat cancer say the 66-year-old is responding well to chemotherapy and should make a full recovery.

Dilma Rousseff, 64 - who took over from Lula as Brazilian president a year ago - is fully recovered after receiving treatment for lymphoma cancer in 2009.

Paraguayan President Fernando Lugo, 60, was diagnosed with lymphoma in August 2010 but is now in remission after chemotherapy.

Lula and Mr Chavez have previously joked that they would hold a summit of Latin American leaders who had beaten cancer.

Ms Fernandez has now said that she will insist on being the 'honorary president' of the summit of cancer survivors.

When I googled to find out more, I found a site with the following headline 'Who is poisoning the South American leaders, to make them get cancer?' A contributor to the site made a list:

- Lula - Former President of Brazil - cancer of the larynx
- Dilma - Current president - reversing cancer in the lymphatic system
- Cristina Kirchner – Argentina's current president - thyroid cancer
- Nestor Kirchner - Former president of Argentina - died of colon cancer.
- Hugo Chavez – Venezuela's President - prostate cancer
- Evo Morales – Bolivia's President - cancer in the nasal cavities
- Fernando Lugo - The Paraguayan President - lymph cancer
- Ollanta Humala - President of Peru - cancer in the gut

Another contributor wrote: 'The South American presidents who are 'aligned' with the USA, like Sebastián Piñera (Chile), Alvaro Uribe and Juan Manuel Santos (Colombia), NEVER GET CANCER!!!'<sup>76</sup>

## CONCLUSION

How can these digniventure reflections be rounded up? Perhaps, to begin with, by highlighting the message of Charles Mann, namely, that South America had a much higher level of "civilization" prior to Columbus' arrival than previously assumed. Second, that South America has lessons to offer to today's world, a world in crisis, lessons that are worth considering. I wrote my last book on *A Dignity Economy*, not least because I believe that our economic frames need to be re-thought deeply, locally, but particularly globally. South America is a place to go for innovative thinking. Solidarity economics is but one buzzword. Luis Razeto, Howard Richards, Clodomir Santos de Moraes, Iván Labra, Paul Singer, Eduardo Suplicy, and David Calderoni are some of the important names to remember. I very much recommend the book *Rethinking Thinking* by Catherine Hoppers and Howard Richards, of which I read a first draft (Hoppers & Richards, 2012).

South America can also serve as a source of inspiration when we think of the inclusive identity that we, as a human family, must develop if we are to create a dignified future for our children. It is an identity of unity in diversity, where we are unified enough, as a human family, to be able to celebrate our diversity and learn from it. Particularly Brazil's culture of connectivity has impressed me in this regard.

My most important message is to invite people in so-called developed countries to cancel their next vacation and rather come and observe from close hold the unsustainability and cruelty of the contemporary raiding of the planet's riches in South America, particularly in the Amazon. The world suffers from a tragic gap between motivation and resources: where there is motivation, resources lack, while motivation lacks where there are resources. In other words, those who are close to the brutality of the raiding lack the resources to intervene effectively, while those people who have the education, the time, and the funds to change the world for the better do not feel the necessity to do so as urgently as those who are exposed to the plunder. People in so-called developed countries are far removed from the damage that is caused so that they can happily indulge in all the consumer goods they might wish for without being burdened with too much awareness of the fact that somewhere else the planet is being plundered on their behalf.

My main message to all those who are thinking of their next vacation is therefore as follows: Go to the Amazon and have a look yourself. Pará is a state in Brazil that is bigger than Western Europe, and only forty years ago it was covered with rainforest. People could live off the Brazil nut tree. Today, there is no rainforest there anymore, and no Brazil nut tree. Do you really wish to destroy our planet for a burger?

Remember the words of Nnimmo Bassey, chairman of Friends of the Earth International, who summarised the Rio + 20 event as follows: 'Governmental positions have been hijacked by corporate interests linked to polluting industries'.

In other words, at the current historical juncture, the ship of humankind is without responsible pilots.

YOU have to stand up and do something.

**Interviewing Evelin G. Lindner: Humankind, Brazilians, Dignity and Brazil  
Rhymed reflections for *DIGNIcumentation* (Dignifying documentation)**

by Francisco Gomes de Matos, a peace linguist based in Recife, Brazil, and co-founder of The World Dignity University initiative, 3rd July 2012

The interview below was planned as a set of pairs of rhymed reflections. Look forward to your replies:

1. About Brazilians and Brazil what did you know?  
About Brazilians and Brazil what didn't you know?
2. In Brazil, where did you first set your feet?  
In your stay in that city, who did you meet?
3. In your visit to Brasília what did you seek?  
Was your Brasiliense experience politically unique?
4. Why did your interviewer say that your visit to Recife was a dream come true?  
Who did you meet there and what kind of hospitality was provided for you?
5. What environmental contrasts and similarities among São Paulo, Brasília and Recife did you see?  
In those cities what additional signs of globalization do you anticipate there will be?
6. In Teresina, who took care of you?  
In that Northeastern capital, what could you leisurely do?
7. In Marabá, what act of violence you learned about made you so sad ?  
Where in that city were living conditions bad?
8. What contributions to the World do you think Brazilians can make?  
Why, in their decisions, do think Brazilians a planetary consciousness need to take?
9. About what kinds of DIGNITY were you impressed?  
About what kinds of INDIGNITY were you oppressed?
10. After visiting Brazil why, your hope for Humankind will you sustain?  
About your Brazilian *DIGNIventure*, what could you complain?

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<sup>1</sup> See also [www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/evelin/NeedforaNewWorld.pdf](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/evelin/NeedforaNewWorld.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Henrik Wergeland (1843) wrote, ‘Haard er den Himmel, som bedækker Norge, Klimatet er strength; vi ere Beboere af en hyperboræisk Afkrog paa Kloden, og Naturen har bestemt os til at savne saamange af de mildere Landes Fordele. Men Naturen, god midt i sin tilsyneladende Ubarmhjertighed, og retfærdig midt i sin Uretfærdighed, har aabenbar villet levne os Erstatning for hine Savn, og derfor beskikket, at Norges, i nogle Henseender saa ufordeelagtige, Beliggenhed skulde i andre Henseender være saare velgjørende’ (p. 23). I thank Bernt Hagtvet and Nikolai Brandal for making me aware of this quote.

<sup>3</sup> The Union with Denmark (1537–1814), for example, was not characterised by thorough subjugation. A relatively small number of Danes mainly resided in the capital Christiania (today’s Oslo). The subsequent Union with Sweden, was shorter, though experienced as less benign, almost ending in war in 1905. Nazi-Germany’s occupation of Norway from 1940 to 1945 represented the most serious and brutal occupation of Norway, luckily not lasting for thousand years, as Hitler had envisaged.

<sup>4</sup> Sri Ananda Acharya, 1985.

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Scandinavia is probably within the zone of the Harivarsha of the ancient Hindu geographers, with the

land of the *Uttara-Kurus* as its northernmost extremity (*Uttara* = north). *Uttara-Kurus* were known to the author of the *Rāmāyāna*.

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Cf: ‘In that place live the *Uttara-Kurus* and *Kuruvarsha* is the home for those who are proficient in virtuous works’. It is very probable that the Arctic Circle formed the extreme Northern boundary of *Kuruvarsha*, for it is said in the *Rāmāyāna*, ‘No one can go to the North beyond the *Uttara-Kurus*; even creatures other than humans cannot go further, and the mountain chain called *Somagiri* (the ancient name of Finland was *Suomi*, or *Suomenmaa*) even the gods find difficult to cross’. And again: ‘Beyond the land of the *Uttara-Kurus* lies the ocean, and *Uttara-Kuruvarsha* is bounded on the North by a chain of mountains called *Somagiri*, bright as the luster of gold’. This ocean here mentioned is the Arctic Ocean and *Somagiri* refers to the chain of high mountain which form the barrier between the land and the sea.

Aitareya Brāhmana says that the nations occupying this Northern land known as the *Uttara-Kurus* and *Uttara-Madras*, are dedicated to Vairājyaya ('glorious supremacy') and other nations address them as "the dignified ones".

The Vishnu Purāna gives a wonderful picture of the *Uttara-Kurus*; ‘There are no such inequalities as are conveyed by the words 'higher', 'lower' and 'middling' among the people of the *Uttara-Kurus*'. And again: ‘They are a race of healthy men and women, free from all kinds of misery, and their land is full of natural springs’.

That the *Uttara-Kurus* were a heroic nation in ancient times appears from passages in the Mahābharāta. Arjuna, Prince of India, when on a conquering expedition was warned by the *Uttara-Kurus* not to invade their country. ‘Thou canst not, O son of Prthā, conquer our town. Retire, O fortunate man, for our land is invincible. He must be an immortal who aspires to violate our town. There is nothing here which you would wish to take away. Here dwell the *Uttara-Kurus*, whom no one cares to conquer, and even if you succeed in penetrating our country you will see nothing. We are very much pleased with you; there is no need to fight, we

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are quite prepared to carry out your wishes.” Prince Arjuna smilingly replied: ‘I wish to establish the suzerainty of my brother, the righteous Emperor Yudhisthira, but if these lands are not to be violated by foreign conquerors then pay just a nominal tribute to my brother’. At this the *Kurus* were greatly pleased and gave him presents of woven stuff, precious ornaments, embroidery and rare skins. (Chapter XXVII of the *Sabha Parva*.) It is remarkable that the names ‘*Mleccha*’ (barbarian) and ‘*Dasyu*’ (robber) which were contemptuously applied to other races conquered by Arjuna were never given to the *Uttara-Kurus*.

From these and other allusions in the ancient Sanskrit writings it seems evident that in prehistoric times Scandinavia was inhabited by a highly-gifted people who developed a great civilisation and culture. There is a notable passage in the Mahābharāta which shows that they were great engineers and general scientists. This passage compares the cities of the *Uttara-Kurus* to Amarāvati, the heavenly city of Indra, Lord of Paradise. That they were a very honest people is evident from the epithet *punyām* (= holy) applied to in the passage: ‘*uttaram va kurum punyām*’ (‘the holy northern *Kurus*’).

The *Rāmāyāna* speaks about the *Uttara-Kurus* as of very happy disposition and fond of giving gifts. The independence of their women is particularly noticed by Vyāsa. There was communication between the Hindus and the *Uttara-Kurus* even during the Buddhist period, for the Mahāyāna alchemist, Nāgārjuna, who lived either in the first century of the Christian era or the preceding century, visited their land. The civilisation of the *Uttara-Kurus* referred to in ancient Sanskrit works must have existed at least many thousand years ago – but of course such dates are purely hypothetical. (It is of interest to note that many of the names of Norwegian places, rivers, mountains, valleys etc. are purely Sanskrit e.g. ‘*Jotun*’, ‘*jaette*’ (in compounds) = giant, Skt. *yatu*; *Dovre*, Skt. *dava*; *Rondana*, Skt. *Ranada*. These are

mountain names. Rivers: Glaama (*Gangā*); Jöмна (*Yamunā*); Faa-a (*Payasa*); Sölna (*Sarna*); Saanaa (Skt. *Śanai-śanai*) etc.)

<sup>5</sup> Steffen, 2008.

<sup>6</sup> I formulated this conclusion in Israel in 2003, together with J. L., a Holocaust survivor, who observed, firsthand, how his pessimistic friends died, while the optimistic ones survived.

<sup>7</sup> There is too little skepticism with respect to what *the experts* teach, and too much of the sort of cynicism that forecloses necessary efforts to create expertise that is more valid than the expertise available so far. For example, expertise is invalid when it teaches that it is possible to continue ravaging the planet Earth's resources, even if this is meant to *secure jobs*.

<sup>8</sup> This view was also professed to me by John Vasconcellos, representative of the Silicon Valley as a member of the California State Assembly for 30 years and a California State Senator for 8 years, at the 'Creating Change Together' 2009 Hollyhock Summer Gathering, July 26-31, 2009, Cortes Island, BC, Canada.

<sup>9</sup> See [www.humiliationstudies.org/intervention/dialoguehome.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/intervention/dialoguehome.php).

<sup>10</sup> Cardenas, 2009.

<sup>11</sup> Richards, 1979.

<sup>12</sup> See, among others, [www.santiagotimes.cl/chile/politics/chile/politics/chile/human-rights-a-law/23452-violence-escalates-in-chiles-aysen-region](http://www.santiagotimes.cl/chile/politics/chile/politics/chile/human-rights-a-law/23452-violence-escalates-in-chiles-aysen-region). Later, violent protests broke out in Freirina, see [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-18219799](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-18219799).

<sup>13</sup> See, among others, [www.economist.com/node/21552566](http://www.economist.com/node/21552566).

<sup>14</sup> See [www.youtube.com/watch?v=unQs3DUTu8Q](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unQs3DUTu8Q).

<sup>15</sup> See, among others, [globalvoicesonline.org/2012/02/17/bolivia-conflict-over-road-through-tipnis-national-park-continues/](http://globalvoicesonline.org/2012/02/17/bolivia-conflict-over-road-through-tipnis-national-park-continues/).

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, [amazonwatch.org/work/belo-monte-dam](http://amazonwatch.org/work/belo-monte-dam).

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, [www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2012/jan/24/brazil-pinheirinho- eviction-inspiration](http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2012/jan/24/brazil-pinheirinho- eviction-inspiration).

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, [www.recid.org.br/component/k2/item/767-manifesto-contra-o-fechamento-do-sarau-do-binho.html](http://www.recid.org.br/component/k2/item/767-manifesto-contra-o-fechamento-do-sarau-do-binho.html).

<sup>19</sup> Lindner, 2009a, 'Unmask Covert Manipulation', pp. 124-137.

<sup>20</sup> See 'BoliviaBella!' at [www.boliviabella.com/bolivian-clothing.html](http://www.boliviabella.com/bolivian-clothing.html).

<sup>21</sup> See [www.ndr.de/fernsehen/sendungen/die\\_reportage/hintergrund/altkleider109.html](http://www.ndr.de/fernsehen/sendungen/die_reportage/hintergrund/altkleider109.html).

<sup>22</sup> See the video *Iván Labra and the Organization Workshop / Ivan Labra y el Laboratorio Organizacional* (Español/English) at <http://youtu.be/SaxNvVBDfks>.

<sup>23</sup> KurokawaSchmal, Flagge, & Visscher (Eds.), 2005.

<sup>24</sup> The term *Washington Consensus* has come to be used to refer to an orientation towards a strongly market-based approach. It was coined in 1989 by the economist John Williamson to describe the 'standard' reform package promoted for developing countries in crisis by Washington, D.C.-based institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and the US Treasury Department.

<sup>25</sup> Freyre, 1933. I thank Clara Becker for making me aware of Freyre's work, and also the work of

Sérgio Buarque de Holanda.

<sup>26</sup> Vale de Almeida, Miguel (2008). Portugal's Colonial Complex: From Colonial Lusotropicalism to Postcolonial Lusophony. Belfast, Northern Ireland: Queen's Postcolonial Research Forum, Queen's University, [site.miguelvaledalmeida.net/wp-content/uploads/portugals-colonial-complex.pdf](http://site.miguelvaledalmeida.net/wp-content/uploads/portugals-colonial-complex.pdf), pp. 3-4.

<sup>27</sup> Meira Monteiro, 2008.

<sup>28</sup> See [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toilets\\_in\\_Japan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toilets_in_Japan).

<sup>29</sup> See [www.ctonline.com.br/noticias\\_leitura.php?id=478&id\\_caderno=8](http://www.ctonline.com.br/noticias_leitura.php?id=478&id_caderno=8).

A doutora Evelin Lindner, da Noruega, acaba de desembarcar em Marabá, ao invés de permanecer no Rio de Janeiro, onde deveria participar das discussões do encontro mundial Rio+20. Ela é expert na área de direitos humanos e transformação de conflito em justiça social e deverá colaborar com o projeto Rios de Encontro, no bairro Cabelo Seco. A convidada vai participar em uma semana de conversas com jovens, mães, professores, artistas e educadores de movimentos sociais e de escolas, como uma contribuição comunitária ao Rio+20, em busca de um mundo sustentável.

Presidentes e representantes dos povos estão reunidos em encontros paralelos para definir metas urgentes para salvar o planeta. A decisão de Lindner de passar duas semanas em Marabá em vez de participar no grande encontro da 'Cúpula dos Povos' (da qual ela é convidada) é inspirada pelo projeto Rios de Encontro, que afirma o poder da cultura viva para transformar comunidades em risco e cidades insustentáveis.

Com dois doutorados em medicina e psicologia, Evelin Lindner optou em ficar na Casinha de Cultura no Cabelo Seco para aprender com a comunidade afro-descendente. 'Acredito que a humilhação da honra e da dignidade causada pela exclusão e injustiça pode estar dentre os mais fortes obstáculos no caminho para uma comunidade mundial ética e responsável', disse Evelin a Dan Baron, quando se comprometeu a conviver com as famílias do Cabelo Seco.

Desde a preparação da festa do Dia das Mães, as jovens lideranças do grupo As Latinhas de Quintal vêm sensibilizando sua comunidade para estas semanas de ações culturais e educativas dedicadas à compreensão da relação entre opções da vida e a sustentabilidade dos Rios Tocantins e Itacaiúnas, da Amazônia e do mundo.

Elas distribuíram mudas de plantas medicinais entre 150 famílias no bairro, afirmando a sabedoria da comunidade, ameaçada pela indústria farmacêutica e o desenvolvimento acelerado da região. 'Quando entreguei uma muda de boldo às jovens mães, foi muito mais do que um presente. Foi uma celebração de nossa cultura e os saberes de nossas bisavós. Me senti feliz por ser parte de uma ação de cuidado e carinho tão simples!', explicou Matheus Sá, integrante do núcleo gestor jovem do projeto.

Matheus e outros jovens lideranças do Rios de Encontro convidaram a Companhia de Teatro Kiwi, de São Paulo, para apresentar sua obra 'Carne' no início de junho para destacar a relação entre gênero, justiça social e um mundo humanizado. A Kiwi lotou o Cine Marrocos e realizou duas oficinas de sensibilização para os professores e os líderes das turmas na escola Judith Gomes Leitão, parceira do projeto. Em uma manhã, o Teatro Kiwi dialogou com mais de 400 jovens, transformando o pátio da escola em uma vivência de uma nova escola possível, baseada em teatro e música de respeito. 'Mas a oficina para mães e filhas e o debate que seguiu o documentário 'Fala Mulher' em nosso Barracão de Cultura sensibilizaram o grupo de São Paulo sobre a riqueza e humanidade de nossa comunidade. Não quiseram ir embora', ressalta Elizângela Neves, integrante

do núcleo gestor adulto do projeto.

Evelin Lindner é advogada mundial sobre as relações entre cuidado, carinho, generosidade e sociedade sustentável. Em um diálogo nos próximos dias, ela vai discutir as preocupações dos professores, artistas e famílias urbanas e camponesas com os quais ela vai se encontrar nessa semana, para compreender a dor da comunidade que ergueu o monumento de Eldorado dos Carajás e das irmãs de Maria do Espírito Santo da Silva e José Claudio Ribeiro, mortos há um ano na zona rural de Nova Ipixuna. ‘Qualquer massacre, militar, econômico ou doméstico gera humilhações, baixa auto-estima e conflito e dificulta a percepção da causa de toda a violência no mundo. Uma sociedade baseada em competição e lucro’, diz Evelin.

A convivência no bairro Cabelo Seco tem a capacidade de ampliar a compreensão desta pensadora e escritora mundial que fala inglês, francês, alemão, norueguês e árabe egípcio fluentemente e possui sólidos conhecimentos de português, sueco, dinamarquês, holandês, russo, indonésio, chinês, japonês e hebraico moderno.

‘Ela vai encontrar jovens artistas e mães que estão reconstruindo sua dignidade pessoal e coletiva através do resgate de suas raízes culturais e do reconhecimento que suas ruas e casas. São ‘poços’ de cuidado e solidariedade’, disse Dan Baron, um dos gestores do projeto. Dan espera que a troca entre Evelin e Cabelo Seco nesta semana aponte alternativas ao que se chama de ‘desenvolvimento verde’ que ameaça consumir a Amazônia.

Maiores informações podem ser obtidas com Manoela Souza, gestora do Instituto Transformance no bairro Cabelo Seco (94-9192 0171). (Ulisses Pompeu)

<sup>30</sup> See [www.cultura21.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Harvest-in-Times-of-Drought-Colheita-em-Tempos-de-Seca.pdf](http://www.cultura21.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Harvest-in-Times-of-Drought-Colheita-em-Tempos-de-Seca.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> See <http://planetsave.com/2011/05/29/outrag-grows-over-new-brazilian-rain-forest-law/>.

<sup>32</sup> See [globalvoicesonline.org/2012/04/16/brazil-amazon-victims-washington/](http://globalvoicesonline.org/2012/04/16/brazil-amazon-victims-washington/).

<sup>33</sup> See [www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/may/24/amazon-rainforest-activist-killed](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/may/24/amazon-rainforest-activist-killed). For the book *Harvest in Times of Drought - Colheita em Tempo de Seca*, see [www.cultura21.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Harvest-in-Times-of-Drought-Colheita-em-Tempos-de-Seca.pdf](http://www.cultura21.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Harvest-in-Times-of-Drought-Colheita-em-Tempos-de-Seca.pdf).

<sup>34</sup> See [www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/jun/19/environment-activist-deaths](http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/jun/19/environment-activist-deaths).

<sup>35</sup> See [www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/the-scam-wall-street-learned-from-the-mafia-20120620](http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/the-scam-wall-street-learned-from-the-mafia-20120620).

<sup>36</sup> See “The Paraguayan Coup: How Agribusiness, Landowning and Media Elite, and the U.S. Are Paving a Way for Regional Destabilization,” by Francesca Fiorentini, 4th July 2012, Buenos Aires, <http://war-times.org/node/463>.

<sup>37</sup> On the 22nd June 2012, ‘Rusmeldingen’ or the ‘White Paper on the policy on substance abuse’ was presented by the Norwegian government. Critical comments followed. Here is the English translation from Norwegian by the author of one of the comments: ‘Conservative Bent Høie, chairman of Parliament’s Health and Human Services Committee, believes that the correct name should be ‘Do something!’ . He calls for including specific commitments on the escalation of treatment.

- The White Paper does not offer the improvement of services that the over 4,000 drug addicts who are waiting deserved, says Høie. He said the health minister has left the control of substance abuse to health authorities who are now building down long-term treatment and plan to use as much as possible short-term services.

- It looks nice on paper, but can cause catastrophic results for the individual, says the committee chairman’. Norwegian original: ‘Høyres Bent Høie, leder av Stortingets helse- og omsorgskomiteé, mener at det riktige

navnet burde være 'Gjør noe!'. Han etterlyser blant annet konkrete forpliktelser om opptrapping av behandlingstilbudet.

– Rusmeldingen er ikke den opptrappingsplan som de over 4.000 rusavhengige i kø hadde fortjent, sier Høie. Han mener helseministeren har overlatt styringen av rusfeltet til helseforetakene som nå bygger ned langtidsplasser og kjører flest mulig gjennom korttidsbehandling.

– Det ser pent ut på papiret, men kan gi katastrofale resultater for den enkelte, sier komitélederen'. See <http://www.siste.no/Innenriks/article6118836.ece?service>.

<sup>38</sup> See 'Looking Beyond Rio, Towards Degrowth', by Charles Eisenstein, 1st July 2012, [postgrowth.org/looking-beyond-rio-towards-degrowth/](http://postgrowth.org/looking-beyond-rio-towards-degrowth/).

<sup>39</sup> See [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Açaí\\_palm](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Açaí_palm).

<sup>40</sup> See [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/annualmeeting17.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/annualmeeting17.php).

<sup>41</sup> See [www.humiliationstudies.org/images/2011/nz/conference/danbaron/Alerta Amazonia \(Zequinha de Cabelo Seco\).wma](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/images/2011/nz/conference/danbaron/Alerta%20Amazonia%20(Zequinha%20de%20Cabelo%20Seco).wma).

<sup>42</sup> See [www.humiliationstudies.org/images/2011/nz/conference/danbaron/Clamor popular \(Zequinha de Cabelo Seco\).wma](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/images/2011/nz/conference/danbaron/Clamor%20popular%20(Zequinha%20de%20Cabelo%20Seco).wma).

<sup>43</sup> See [www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/BaronCohenVozesdoCampo\\_VoicesoftheCountry.pdf](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/BaronCohenVozesdoCampo_VoicesoftheCountry.pdf).

<sup>44</sup> Ray & Anderson, 2000. Ray and 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 *traditionalists* (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, traditionalists 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>45</sup> Lindner, 2006, 158-160.

<sup>46</sup> Guha & Spivak (Eds.) 1988.

<sup>47</sup> Nandy, 1998.

<sup>48</sup> Lindner, 2009b.

<sup>49</sup> Wallerstein, 2004.

<sup>50</sup> See [redesustentavelbrasil.com.br/2012/06/28/vale-cavernas-carajas/](http://redesustentavelbrasil.com.br/2012/06/28/vale-cavernas-carajas/).

<sup>51</sup> See this text, for example, on [www.boell.de/ecology/climate/climate-energy-7852.html](http://www.boell.de/ecology/climate/climate-energy-7852.html).

<sup>52</sup> Simmons, 2004.

<sup>53</sup> 'In Brazil, Peasants Claim Farmland', by Kevin Karner, *Commons Magazine*, February 14, 2011, [onthecommons.org/brazil-peasants-claim-farmland](http://onthecommons.org/brazil-peasants-claim-farmland).

<sup>54</sup> Mathews, 2009.

<sup>55</sup> Eisler, 1987.

<sup>56</sup> 'Brazil's Landless Mobilize Protest', by Jaylan Boyle, Senior Contributing Reporter, *Rio Times*, April

27, 2010, [riotimesonline.com/brazil-news/rio-politics/brazils-landless-mobilize-protest/#](http://riotimesonline.com/brazil-news/rio-politics/brazils-landless-mobilize-protest/#).

<sup>57</sup> ‘Outrage Grows Over New Brazilian Rain Forest Law’, by Michael Ricciardi, May 29, 2011, [planetsave.com/2011/05/29/outrag-grows-over-new-brazilian-rain-forest-law/](http://planetsave.com/2011/05/29/outrag-grows-over-new-brazilian-rain-forest-law/).

<sup>58</sup> See [www.fao.org/righttofood/KC/downloads/vl/docs/AH264.pdf](http://www.fao.org/righttofood/KC/downloads/vl/docs/AH264.pdf).

<sup>59</sup> ‘Project Amazonia’, [web.mit.edu/12.000/www/m2006/final/index.html](http://web.mit.edu/12.000/www/m2006/final/index.html).

<sup>60</sup> ‘Land ownership’, entry from 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2002, [web.mit.edu/12.000/www/m2006/teams/mariond/landownership.html](http://web.mit.edu/12.000/www/m2006/teams/mariond/landownership.html).

<sup>61</sup> ‘Land ownership’, entry from 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2002, [web.mit.edu/12.000/www/m2006/teams/mariond/landownership.html](http://web.mit.edu/12.000/www/m2006/teams/mariond/landownership.html).

<sup>62</sup> Project Amazonia: Solutions - Sustainable Land Management - Land Distribution, [web.mit.edu/12.000/www/m2006/final/solutions/sols\\_sust\\_land\\_1.html](http://web.mit.edu/12.000/www/m2006/final/solutions/sols_sust_land_1.html).

<sup>63</sup> Ludewigs et al., 2009.

<sup>64</sup> ‘Environmental Law in Brazil: Compromise or Deadlock?’, *The Economist* São Paulo, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2012, [www.economist.com/node/21556245](http://www.economist.com/node/21556245).

<sup>65</sup> Trindade, 2010.

<sup>66</sup> See also Earp, Jhally, & Bollier, 2010.

<sup>67</sup> See [www.zeri.org](http://www.zeri.org), [www.zerieuador.webs.com](http://www.zerieuador.webs.com), and [theblueeconomy.org](http://theblueeconomy.org).

<sup>68</sup> See [www.bicusa.org/es/Project.10480.aspx](http://www.bicusa.org/es/Project.10480.aspx)

<sup>69</sup> See [www.bicusa.org/es/Project.10480.aspx](http://www.bicusa.org/es/Project.10480.aspx).

<sup>70</sup> See [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mennonites\\_in\\_Bolivia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mennonites_in_Bolivia).

<sup>71</sup> See [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plautdietsch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plautdietsch).

<sup>72</sup> See [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brazilian\\_Highway\\_System#BR-230\\_.28Rodovia\\_Transamaz.C3.B4nica.29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brazilian_Highway_System#BR-230_.28Rodovia_Transamaz.C3.B4nica.29).

<sup>73</sup> See [www.sosjundiai.com.br/missao\\_belem.htm](http://www.sosjundiai.com.br/missao_belem.htm).

<sup>74</sup> See [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/coreteamlong.php#walsh](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/coreteamlong.php#walsh).

<sup>75</sup> ‘Chavez Muses on US Latin America Cancer Plot’, *BBC News*, 29th December 2011, [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-16349845](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-16349845).

<sup>76</sup> See [www.godlikeproductions.com/forum1/message1739257/pg1](http://www.godlikeproductions.com/forum1/message1739257/pg1).