

A Dignity Economy

by Evelin Lindner

Draft for “People in Conservation,” the newsletter of Kalpavriksh

May I begin with thanking Milind Wani for kindly inviting me to contribute to this newsletter with a small write-up that summarizes my ideas on a *dignity economy*. In 2012, I published a book titled *A Dignity Economy: Creating an Economy Which Serves Human Dignity and Preserves Our Planet* (Lake Oswego, OR: World Dignity University Press).

If we wish for a future world worth living in for our children, the ecological and the social realms need to be considered together. Richard Norgaard’s coevolutionary framework may be useful, whereby society and ecosystems coevolve, one constantly transforming the other.

The image of the Blue Planet stands for a historically unprecedented time, a call to re-evaluate everything that history has taught humankind so far. At the present historical juncture, the unprecedented level of global interconnectedness forces us to deeply rethink methods that grew out of the past. Completely new “socio-natures” are waiting to be co-created that offer future generations a dignified life within our planetary boundaries.

Around the world, people are coming to a single diagnosis: “Something is deeply unhealthy in our world.” A global government/corporate nexus is stuck in out-of-date competition for domination, competition that fuels war, violence, and environmental destruction.

In my work, I advocate a deep paradigm shift, not just from one rigid paradigm to another rigid paradigm, but away from rigidity altogether. Away from massive institutions toward a global movement that is co-created by people and their enthusiastic energy. We need a world dignity movement, a movement that creates inclusion, both locally and globally. Together, we can harvest the best of what helps create a dignified future, and leave behind what stands in the way.

Please see a book presentation and introduction of the term *dignism* at Columbia University, Teachers College, Gottesman Library, on December 5, 2012, at <http://youtu.be/L4Z4iG26OdI>.