

**WHAT EVERY NEGOTIATOR OUGHT TO KNOW:
UNDERSTANDING HUMILIATION**

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Abstract

This paper presents a theory of humiliation and identifies its significance as an interpretative tool for use by negotiators in many kinds of situations. Humiliation and its aftermath have an important impact upon patterns of conflict, culture and communication. The paper is organised in three parts. In the first part, following a brief introductory comparison between Hitler and Mandela, a sympathetic critique is undertaken of William Ury's discussion of the socio-historical roots of conflict and strategies for handling it. In the second part, it is argued that the structures and processes identified by Ury may be further illuminated by identifying the part played by humiliation. This is then done, drawing upon the author's research experience in Rwanda, Burundi and Somalia. The origins, characteristics and consequences of humiliation are examined, distinguishing between the forms it takes in three kinds of society: 'pride' societies, 'honour' societies' and 'dignity' societies. Particular attention is given to the impact of the Human Rights Revolution. In the final part, the paper returns briefly to the comparison between Hitler and Mandela, identifies the challenges that humiliation and its aftermath pose for negotiators, and suggests how these challenges might be met.

Hitler and Mandela

For thirty years most people expected a bloodbath in South Africa. Why did it not happen? Mainly because Nelson Mandela taught his followers how to overcome the pain and anger caused by humiliation under the system of apartheid.¹ In South Africa the humiliators and the humiliated sat down together and planned for a society in which ‘both black and white’ could be ‘assured of their inalienable right to human dignity.’²

By contrast, the humiliation imposed upon the German nation by the victorious powers after World War I sowed the seeds for an even more disastrous global conflict two decades later. Unlike Mandela, Adolf Hitler taught his followers to strike back violently; instead of reconciliation he promised the Germans bloody revenge.

Mandela and Hitler both understood the strength of the feelings stirred up by humiliation and they both appealed to the deepest wishes of their audiences. However, they used their understanding in different ways. The German nation felt ‘soiled’ by the Treaty of Versailles.³ Hitler gave the Germans a strategy, a disastrous one, for restoring their national honour. The black population of South Africa felt cheated and deprived by apartheid. Mandela gave the people of South Africa a strategy, an ambitious one, for gaining their human rights.

There are two differences between Hitler and Mandela. Firstly, they were responding to different kinds of humiliation. In Germany, as Norbert Elias has argued, what hurt most after 1918 was the damage done by military defeat to the sense of nationhood.⁴ It was a matter of collective honour, felt most keenly by the old political class but permeating throughout the society. In response, Hitler led a huge effort to put the German nation in a position where it could, in turn, deliver thunderbolts from on high against enemies, rivals and scapegoats.

In South Africa, by contrast, humiliation was a matter of human rights denied. As Mandela put it, the solution was for ‘ordinary South Africans ...[to] produce an actual South African reality that will reinforce humanity’s belief in justice.’⁵ To summarise: in Germany, national honour was felt to be at stake while in South Africa the issue was human rights.⁶

The second difference is that Hitler’s road led to war, Mandela’s to peace. For Hitler, the intense anguish of German humiliation was a source of destructive energy to be directed against targets chosen by the Führer. For Mandela, the task was to *dissipate* the destructive energy engendered by bitterness, to concentrate on implementing human rights rather than victimising enemies.⁷

¹ It is equally important to recognise Mandela’s prior role as one who engaged in violent resistance to apartheid. Reconciliation was only possible once apartheid had been abolished.

² The quotation is taken from President Mandela’s inaugural address, May 10, 1994.

³ It is important to make distinctions between different elements in the German population. The sense of national dishonour was more acutely felt in 1918 by the aristocracy and military hierarchy. Some of them used their residual power to undermine the Weimar government as far as possible, thus preparing the ground for Hitler, unwittingly.

⁴ See Elias 1996.

⁵ This quotation is also taken from President Mandela’s inaugural address. See note 1.

⁶ It is important to add that both Hitler and Mandela addressed the social identity of their followers. On this theme, which cannot be properly explored here but will be considered in a future paper, see Bush and Folger 1994; Prus 1999.

⁷ On the work of the truth and Reconciliation Commission, see Tutu 1999. For a discussion of the Ubuntu theology implicit in the philosophy of reconciliation, see Battle 1997. See also Lieberfeld 1999; Minow 1998.

As the examples of Hitler and Mandela show, when dealing with humiliation the stakes are high. The twentieth century was fundamentally influenced by Hitler. If the twenty-first century is to be shaped by the example of Mandela, the part played in human relations by humiliation must be better understood. We urgently need a sociology and a social psychology of this powerful force. This paper is a contribution to this task.

In the next three sections, a sympathetic critique is developed of William Ury's book entitled *Getting to Peace* (Ury 1999). It is suggested that Ury's valuable analysis may be extended by including a consideration of the mechanisms and processes of humiliation.⁸ Following this are three sections containing a more detailed discussion of different modalities of humiliation. In the final sections of the paper, some implications of this analysis for the practice of negotiation are examined.⁹

Homo Negotiator meets Homo Humiliator

According to William Ury, 'negotiation courses are ubiquitous...The hunger for knowledge about this subject has been overwhelming' (104). In his view, this reflects a deep-seated transformation in human relationships. Pyramids of hierarchical power are being replaced by horizontal networks that are becoming global in their extent: 'Humanity is weaving a boundaryless web.' This web of interdependence requires continuing cooperation between individuals, groups, organisations and states. However, 'Increasing interdependence means more conflict, not less' (99). The destructive consequences of conflict getting out of hand in the contemporary world are so great that a central figure in this networked world has to be 'Homo Negotiator' (103).

This paper adopts a stance of broad sympathy with Ury's emphasis upon the need to develop effective negotiating strategies which avoid violence. I also accept, along with Ury, that it is desirable to persuade people to maximise welfare in a context of peace. Like Ury, who draws extensively upon the example of the Kalahari Bushmen, I have learnt a great deal from my research in Africa.

I would like to expand Ury's framework and introduce an additional dimension, namely the part played by the processes of humiliation. I will argue that processes of humiliation are central aspects of social life and that negotiators need intimate knowledge of them. Homo Negotiator has to deal with the consequences of the activities of Homo Humiliator.

A brief summary of Ury's argument

Ury emphasises the importance of the 'thirdsider' (202) perspective in conflict situations. This acknowledges the interests of the conflicting sides but also the interests they share as members of the same 'extended community.' Everybody benefits if violence is avoided as far as possible and if disputes are settled through respectful and non-violent dialogue among all the parties concerned.

Ury argues that human beings are inclined to avoid violence. He points out that the archaeological record of organised violence and warfare is almost completely restricted to the last ten thousand years. This period is only a tiny proportion of all human existence. It

⁸ This paper contributes to the incorporation of social psychological and cultural dimensions in our understanding of negotiation. See also, for example, Adler, Rosen, and Silverstein 1998; Bendersky 1998; Fauré 1998; Fukushima 1999; Salacuse 1998; Shapiro 1999; Young 1998.

⁹ For a valuable overview of negotiation theory and practice, see Breslin and Rubin 1991.

represents just one percent of the two and a half million years during which human societies have been evolving on earth.

Ury presents a 'brief history of conflict' that passes through three phases. The first phase is a very long period of relatively peaceful co-existence during which hunter-gatherer groups wandered over the earth. Although nomadic hunter-gatherer societies were not free from conflict and violent acts against humans, there was a great emphasis upon cooperation within and between groups, for example in carrying out hunting and sharing the prey. Cooperation was essential for survival. Disagreements had to be debated until a consensus emerged.

In Ury's view, the situation changed during the relatively short second phase when systematic cultivation of the earth began. Farming was more productive than hunting and gathering and, as a result, population densities increased. Human groups became fixed in a single place. Land became scarcer relative to people. Coercion became endemic. Winners subjugated losers and unequal relations between masters and subordinates were maintained by force. This pattern of violence and coercion persisted into the urban-industrial era.

Ury uses the Book of Genesis to illuminate his analysis: 'In the biblical story..., Adam and Eve live in the Garden of Eden, wandering freely and gathering wild plants and fruits, much as humanity did for most of human evolution. After the expulsion from Eden, Adam and Eve settle down and have a son Cain, who becomes a farmer, and a son Abel, who becomes a herdsman. The first farmer kills the first herdsman. Cain's son Enoch goes on to build the first city and the killing of men continues by Enoch's great-great-grandson, Lamech' (61).

Ury believes we are now entering a third phase in which many of the conditions that were conducive to peaceful co-existence in the first phase are reappearing. One reason is that the 'Knowledge Revolution' (83) is transforming the way in which human beings relate to each other. In all spheres the old hierarchies of coercive control are being replaced by self-organising, cooperative networks reminiscent of hunter-gatherer societies. Leaders have to persuade, not bully. Scientific knowledge is advanced by sharing and cooperation within extensive networks. Unlike land, knowledge is not a 'fixed pie' (84) but an expandable one.

In order to survive, human beings have to rediscover the skill of resolving conflicts through negotiation informed by the 'thirdsider' perspective. In the final part of his book, Ury presents a methodology, honed through practice, for preventing, resolving or containing conflict. He distinguishes between ten roles that Homo Negotiator may adopt: the provider, the teacher, the bridge-builder, the mediator, the arbiter, the equalizer, the healer, the witness, the referee and the peacekeeper.

The aim of this paper is to deepen understanding of conflict and the challenge for negotiators by highlighting the humiliation process. Ury himself hints at the part played by humiliation: 'At the core of many conflicts...lie emotions – anger, fear, humiliation, hatred, insecurity and grief. The wounds may run deep' (162). I would add that the deeper the wounds, the more likely it is that humiliation played a central part in inflicting them.

Why humiliation is both relevant and important

Three focal ideas at the centre of Ury's argument are *interdependence*, *knowledge* and *coercion*. To oversimplify his argument: the demands imposed by increasing *interdependence* and the *Knowledge Revolution* are undermining *coercive* hierarchies.

Coercion is the most salient point for the introduction of the concept of humiliation. I suggest that the imposition of hierarchical structures typically involves a process of humiliation carried out by new overlords who reduce those around them to a subordinate situation.

History offers numerous examples of this process from all corners of the world. To name just a few: the making of tax-collecting and *corvée*-enforcing states in Mesopotamia in the late fourth century BC; the creation of feudal obligations in early medieval Europe through vassal homage; the Iberian conquest of Central and South America; the establishment of a stable centralised French monarchy during the seventeenth century after the French religious wars; the British conquest of India; and, not least, the dropping of atomic bombs upon Hiroshima and Nagasaki.¹⁰

In every case, a violent assertion of superior force was carried out in order to put a new hierarchical structure into place. In every case, the subordinated people experienced a radical loss of autonomy and a devastating blow to their pride. They were taught to bow down to their new masters. They were humiliated.

By humiliation I mean the enforced lowering of a person or group, a process of subjugation that damages or strips away their pride, honour or dignity. To be humiliated is to be placed, against your will and often in a deeply hurtful way, in a situation that is greatly inferior to what you feel you should expect. Humiliation entails demeaning treatment that transgresses established expectations. It involves acts of force, including violent force. At its heart is the idea of pinning down, putting down or holding to the ground. Indeed, one of the defining characteristics of humiliation as a process is that the victim is forced into passivity, acted upon, made helpless.¹¹

In fact, humiliation has hardly been studied at all and certainly not in a systematic way. The list of relevant publications is very brief and covers a highly divergent collection of themes. For example, Miller wrote a book entitled *Humiliation and Other Essays on Honor, Social Discomfort, and Violence* (Miller 1993). Two journals have dedicated issues to the topic in recent years.¹² Humiliation has been addressed in such fields as international relations, love, sex, and social attractiveness, depression, society and identity formation, sports, serial murder, war and violence. A few examples from history, literature and film illustrate humiliation.¹³

¹⁰ See Bloch 1962, 145-62; Mann 1986, 73-93; Elias 1983.

¹¹ The term 'humiliation' has roots in the Latin word *humus*, or earth. Spatially, it entails a downward orientation, literally a 'de-gradation.' 'Ned-verdigelse' (Norwegian), 'Er-niedrig-ung' (German), 'a-baisse-ment' (French), all mean 'de-gradation.' All these words are built on the same spatial, *orientational* metaphor. To humiliate is, clearly, to strike *down*, put *down* or take *down*. Lakoff and Johnson describe orientational metaphors as up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-shallow, and central-peripheral (Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

¹² *Social Research* in 1997; the *Journal of Primary Prevention* in 1992.

¹³ See Baumeister, Votaw, and Stillwell 1993; Brown, Harris, and Hepworth 1995; Brossat 1995; Cviic 1993; Gilbert 1997; Gilligan 1996; Hale 1994; Hardman et al. 1996; Lehmann 1995; Luo 1993; Markus, Kitayama, and Heimann Higgins and Kruglanski 1996; Masson 1996; Midiohouan 1991; Miller 1988; Proulx et al. 1994; Schlesinger 1998; Silver et al. 1986; Stadtwald 1992; Steinberg 1991a; Steinberg 1991b; Steinberg 1996; Toles 1995; Urban Prins 1990; Vogel and Lazare 1990; Wood et al. 1994; Vachon 1993; Znakov 1990; Zender 1994.

Feelings and violence have been addressed by more authors. See for example Bar-On 1996; Moses Volkan, Demetrios, and Montville 1999; Scheff 1997; Rapoport 1995; Staub 1989; Volkan, Demetrios, and Montville 1990.

In this paper I would like to present a complementary narrative of the development of human society, an account which is, at the same time, a typology of contemporary forms of humiliation. I am going to argue that at different phases of human history the process of humiliation has taken different forms and has been perceived in different ways. I argue that humankind and humiliation have a very close relationship. This relationship has passed through clearly distinguishable phases. Each of these phases builds upon and incorporates its predecessor, and in successive phases the meaning and experience of humiliation are transformed.

Let me retell the Adam and Eve myth, building upon Ury's insight that the biblical couple were the original hunter-gatherers. Adam and Eve were favoured occupants of the Garden of Eden and had permission to pluck and eat the fruit of almost every tree in the Garden. Adam, the proud hunter-gatherer, was given a license to enjoy and 'pin down' nature: 'and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof' (*Genesis 2, 19*). His words were tools to control nature, ways of subjugating nature to the human will. God permitted this. Adam 'humiliated' nature by imposing his linguistic concepts upon it.

However, Adam and Eve went too far. As everybody knows, they were not supposed to take fruit from 'the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ... for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die' (*Genesis 2, 17*). They picked fruit from the forbidden tree. This was an attempt to impose their own will over a part of nature's garden that God was protecting from their intrusion. The human pair committed a forbidden act of attempted humiliation against Nature and God. Urged on by the serpent, and the desire to have godlike wisdom, Adam and Eve ate fruit from the forbidden tree. The pride of the hunter-gatherers brought punishment from God. He made Adam and Eve feel ashamed and threw them out of the Garden. God forced Adam to become a farmer, condemned 'to till the ground from whence he was taken' (*Genesis, 3, 23*). Humankind was kicked off its pedestal and made to accept a much more lowly place in the scheme of things.

The Genesis myth has many interpretations, but from the particular perspective adopted here it illustrates the shift from a pristine human condition of equality and pride to one in which the majority of human beings are in a subjugated situation within hierarchical societies.

Some elements of Adam and Eve's pristine human condition of equality and pride still exist in a few societies, especially those with strong nomadic traditions such as Somalia. In such societies, human beings share a culture of strong self-*pride*. They are free from the constraints imposed by strong and stable political hierarchies and, in turn, do not hesitate (like Adam and Eve) to subject nature to domination as far as they are able, wresting a living from their land, trees, rivers and seas.

There is a second, hierarchical, type of society in which human beings aspire to social *honour*. In unequal societies of this kind, not only is nature the subject of forceful domination but so are human beings. Most participants in such societies find themselves at the bottom of the hierarchy. Many learn to accept as legitimate the humble position imposed upon them. Others struggle to rise in the hierarchy or try to downgrade their rivals. However, few challenge the fact of hierarchy as such.

In the third kind of society all human beings claim equal human rights and a condition of *dignity*. Competition is an accepted aspect of life as are social hierarchies, but such factors are

supposed to operate within the limits set by respect for universal human rights. The ideas of universal rights and dignity are currently even extended beyond humankind. In particular, there is increasing opposition to unrestrained forceful domination over the natural world by humankind. All acts of forceful domination are perceived as an illegitimate attack upon the intrinsic rights and nature of their victims. A crucially important difference from the second kind of society is that the experience of demeaning treatment at the hands of others imposes much deeper hurt in 'dignity societies' than in 'honour societies' where the imposition of inequality is accepted to a greater extent.

In practice, many societies are complex amalgams of the three tendencies just outlined. Take, for example, the case of the United States. The frontier tradition of pioneers wresting an existence from the wilderness feeds a spirit of self-*pride* among Americans. This element of pristine pride at the heart of American culture is interwoven in a complex way with the Southern *honour* code bred into plantation owners (Cohen et al. 1996), and the emphasis on human *dignity* that runs through documents such as the American Declaration of Independence.¹⁴

In the rest of this paper I will elaborate in greater depth the distinctions just made between social orders based upon pride, honour and dignity and their implications for the ways in which humiliation manifests itself.¹⁵ The ideas presented here have their origin partly in my empirical research in Africa¹⁶ and partly in my theoretical reflections on personal experience. During 1998-99 I visited Rwanda, Burundi and Somalia in order to interview the victims and perpetrators of genocide and mass killings as part of a research project sponsored by the

¹⁴ 'We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.'

¹⁵ The ideas presented in this paper, and many other arguments, will be developed further in a book I am currently writing in collaboration with Dennis Smith. Smith is professor of sociology at Loughborough University (UK), see his publications: Smith 2000a; Smith 2000b; Smith 2000c; Smith 1999; Smith 1997a; Smith 1997b; Smith 1991; Smith 1984a; Smith 1984b; Smith 1983; Smith 1981.

¹⁶ The research project is entitled: *The Feeling of Being Humiliated: A Central Theme in Armed Conflicts. A Study of the Role of Humiliation in Somalia, and Rwanda/Burundi, Between the Warring Parties, and in Relation to Third Intervening Parties*. See www.uio.no/~evelin/. The project is supported by the Norwegian Research Council and the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I am grateful for their support, and would also like to thank the Institute of Psychology at the University of Oslo for hosting it. I extend my warmest thanks to all my informants in and from Africa, many of whom survive under the most difficult life circumstances. I hope that at some point in the future I will be able to give back at least a fraction of all the support I received from them! I thank Reidar Ommundsen at the Institute of Psychology for his constant support, together with Jan Smedslund, Hilde Nafstad, Malvern Lumsden (Lumsden 1997), Carl-Erik Grenness, Jon Martin Sundet, Finn Tschudi (Ekelund and Tschudi 1994), Kjell Flekkøy, and Astrid Bastiansen. The project is interdisciplinary and has benefited from the help of many colleagues at the University of Oslo. I would especially like to thank Johan Galtung (Galtung 1996, Galtung and Tschudi 1999), Dagfinn Føllesdal (Føllesdal Robert Sokolowski 1988), Thomas Pogge, Helge Høybråten, Thorleif Lund, Thomas Hylland Eriksen (Eriksen 1993a; Eriksen 1993b), Unni Wikan (Wikan 1984), Asbjørn Eide and Bernt Hagtvet (Eide and Hagtvet 1996), Leif Ahnstrøm, and Jan Brøgger (Brøgger 1986). The project would not have been possible without the help of Dennis Smith, see above, and Lee D. Ross, Stanford University, who is a principal investigator and co-founder of the Stanford Center on Conflict and Negotiation (SCCN; Ross and Ward Brown, Reed, and Turiel 1996; Ross and Nisbett 1991; Ross and Samuels 1993; Ross and Ward 1995; Ross Arrow, Mnookin, Ross, Tversky, and Wilson 1995).

Norwegian Research Council.¹⁷ Hopefully, the analysis presented in this paper will suggest ideas that may be useful to negotiators and mediators in a wide range of social and organisational contexts.

Pride and pristine equality

Hunters and gatherers and, also, nomadic herdsman such as the Somalis do not have much experience of subjugating other human beings, a fact which is reflected in their egalitarian societal structure.¹⁸

As Abdirizak A. Osman, a Somali intellectual and author¹⁹ wrote to me (personal communication, 5.10.1999, capitalisation in original), ‘Evelin, Somalis are an extremely proud people. This had and has both positive and negative sides. During slavery and colonisation Somalis lost and gained a lot. Perhaps more than the rest of other Africans. Because of their pride they succeeded in holding onto their language, culture and religion, where virtually ALL the other black Africans “accepted” the languages and religions of the European masters. Somalia is the only black African nation-state whose national language is hers except for Ethiopia who was NEVER colonized. ...’

‘By the same token Somalis did not benefit from the Europeans in the sense that they did not inherit universities and schools after they left their country like the rest of black Africa. In a way that explains why Somalis are not as “educated” as their brothers and sisters in the Mother Continent. It’s only now we can see “educated” Somalis around and that’s mainly due to the fact that many Somalis left for the “West” after the war... But being a nomad is being noble, Evelin. And therefore it is only understandable to see a former nomad seeking a high status city job: they both are of a high position job with a respect and good income. A Somali wouldn’t work as a garbage collector, gravedigger, brick layer, etc. even if he never learned to read. In fact I remember a doorman (my neighbour’s house back in Somalia) who beat his employer who shouted at him in the middle of the night to open the door. Of course he lost his job and probably went to jail for it but he KEPT his dignity and pride. I work here I am NOT your slave!’

Somali society has a strong egalitarian tradition in spite of the fact that outcast ‘minorities’ live among the ‘proud’ nomad clans. The hand of colonialism rested relatively lightly upon them and they think of themselves as a free people managing their own affairs. After independence in 1960, Somalia adopted a modern state administration. Somali society did not experience an oppressively centralising bureaucratic apparatus of hierarchy until the last half of Barre dictatorship, inaugurated in 1969. This ultimately brutal ‘experiment’ was discontinued in 1991. Since then centralised government has broken down and been abandoned, leaving behind a divided and devastated country.²⁰ Today the Somali clans divide

¹⁷ See Lindner 2000a; Lindner 2000b; Lindner 2000c; Lindner 1999; Lindner 2000d; Lindner Breines, Gierycz, and Reardon 1999.

¹⁸ For literature about Somalia, see Ahmed 1995; Lewis and Mayall 1995; Lewis 1994a; Lewis 1994b; Lewis 1961.

¹⁹ See his book *In the Name of the Fathers* (Osman 1996).

²⁰ Somalia had a multi-party parliamentary system from 1960 to 1969. In 1969 Major General Mohammed Siad came to power in a military coup. He was a force uniting the Somali clans in a ‘socialist’ society until Somalia’s defeat in the war against Ethiopia in 1978. After that, his regime played the clans off against each other and became much more oppressive. Siad was driven out in 1991. See Bradbury 1993; Farah and Lewis 1993; Ghalib 1995; Ihonvbere 1996; Laitin and Samatar

up control between themselves in the same rather egalitarian way as ever before in history, while trying to regain a sense of meaning and working order.

In my interviews in Somalia (1998, 1999) I asked what circumstances Somalis would consider 'humiliating.' In fact, most people had little use for this concept. They frequently replied that when they had 'grievances' or 'wrongs' their clan would decide whether their claim was justified and, if it was, the clan would do what it could to obtain compensation.

This system was disrupted during the dictatorship of Siad Barre who made the state into an oppressive 'super-clan.' However, before and after Barre the clan system was the main mechanism for regulating grievances among equals. Abdirizak A. Osman writes (7.10.1999): "'Humiliation", as I understand as a Somali myself, means when one did not fight back during the PROCESS of that action and NOT what you feel AFTER. In other words, what you might call humiliation, a Somali might call "losing" a war, property, etc.' (capitalisation in original).

Barre's quasi-genocidal onslaught on his own population²¹ inflicted enormous 'grievances' on the victims, - the use of humiliation through public rape was especially resented.²² The victimised clans responded with the creation of liberation armies which finally deposed of the dictator.

I suggest that the near-absence of humiliation among the major Somali clans is a product of the near-absence of hierarchy. The sparse Somali semi-deserts do not provide material resources for building up such a hierarchy. Why should outsiders take the trouble to subjugate the Somalis?

England used its protectorate in the North of Somalia to feed their people in Aden while Italy colonised the South. An Australian humanitarian aid worker confirmed in an interview (29.11.1998) that even today he can feel the effects of the relatively unoppressive colonial relationship in the North of Somalia: 'There was respect for the Somalis, there was a kind of equal relationship. When England gave away the Ogaden [or Haud, a semi-desert which England gave to Ethiopia against the promises they had given the Somalis], the Somalis were very angry: "You are our friends (!) how can you betray us!" And also the British officers would be furious at London, who just gave the Haud away as a kind of normal bargaining chip. So, there was a kind of partnership [between the Somalis and British].'²³

In other words, the Somalis, especially in the north, have not yet been 'taught' the lesson of hierarchy and humiliation. As a consequence, Somalis have a national habitus of immense pride, which I now want to differentiate from honour in hierarchical societal systems.²⁴

Honour and imposed hierarchy: the advent of 'honour-humiliation'

1987; Mazrui Adam and Ford 1997; Sahnoun 1994; Samatar 1991; Samatar 1988; Simons 1995; The Africa Watch Committee 1990.

²¹ President Barre ordered scorched-earth policy against the Majerteen and later Isaaq clan in the north of Somalia during the 1980s.

²² as pointed out by the majority of Somali informants.

²³ On the historical background see, for example, Mazrui 1986. Many people I talked to were proud of the 'equal' colonial relationship with the British. For examples, see Hanley 1971.

²⁴ The Somali habitus of pride does not imply that Somali society is in all respects completely equal. There is also the issue of gender relations, a theme I intend to take up in a future paper. See also Lindner Breines, Gierycz, and Reardon 1999.

In 'pride societies' such as Somalia nature was subjected to human order through the use of language (imposing human categories and concepts), the making of tools, and the semi-domestication of animals by herdsman. The introduction of agriculture based on the digging stick and the plough inaugurated a new kind of subjugation, the subjugation of people. This involved the instrumentalisation of some human beings (the 'slaves') by others (the 'masters').

Some 'masters' within hierarchical systems offered protection,²⁵ others were just oppressive. In both cases, many 'slaves' accepted their lot as God's will or nature's order, a pattern partly illuminated by Johan Galtung's notion of 'penetration',²⁶ the idea of 'learned helplessness',²⁷ and the discussion of the 'Stockholm Syndrome'.²⁸ Other 'slaves' had to be forced or bribed into humility by the 'masters.' This strategy of expanding resources by instrumentalising human beings has been intensified and optimised in the course of history.²⁹

An extreme manifestation of the tensions engendered by hierarchy and humiliation is found in Rwanda where, as is well known, Tutsi and moderate Hutu were the object of an orchestrated campaign of genocide at the hands of extremist Hutu in 1994.³⁰ To quote the words of a Hutu from the North of Burundi, now an international intellectual³¹: 'A son of a Tutsi got the conviction that he is born to rule, that he was above the servants, while a son of a Hutu learned to be convinced that he was a servant, therefore he learned to be polite and humble, while a Tutsi was proud. A Tutsi learned that he could kill a Hutu at any time.' He adds: 'The concept of humiliation is related to tradition and culture: Tutsi are convinced that they are "born to rule," they cannot imagine how they can survive without being in power.'³²

Everybody I spoke to from Rwanda and Burundi in 1999 told me that the Belgian colonists were responsible for spreading the idea that 'Tutsi are born to rule,' and 'Hutu can be utilised as workers in agriculture, mining, handicrafts, etc.'³³ I was told that 'the administrators were always Belgian, blacks were assistants, and they were exclusively Tutsi. Tutsi children were sent to special schools, where they were taught to rule. Only Tutsi had access.' I was repeatedly made aware of the following myth, inspired by the Belgian colonists: 'Tutsi have

²⁵ 'Peasants were also locked into a situation in which their well-being depended on rulers who could defend them from external attack and maintain the internal order on which the systems of production had come to depend... Hence, so long as rulers did not exploit their subjects beyond conventional limits, their rule was accepted.' (Trigger 1993, 53, 54).

²⁶ 'implanting the topdog inside the underdog ...' (Galtung 1996, 199).

²⁷ 'A term coined by M. Seligman to characterize the generalization that helplessness is a learned state produced by exposure to noxious, unpleasant situations in which there is no possibility of escape or avoidance.' The Penguin Dictionary of Psychology (Reber 1985). See also Peterson and Maier 1993.

²⁸ 'An emotional bond between hostages and their captors which is frequently observed when the hostages are held for long periods of time under emotionally straining circumstances. The name derives from the instance when it was first publicly noted, when a group of hostages was held by robbers in a Stockholm bank for five days.' The Penguin Dictionary of Psychology, 1985.

²⁹ See Trigger 1993, 52: '...slavery appears to have been a less extensive and less oppressive institution in the early civilizations than it was in classical Greek and Roman society.'

³⁰ See Des Forges 1999, also on <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/rwanda/>; Destexhe 1995; Gourevitch 1998; Guichaoua 1995; Kamuka 1995; de Lame 1997; Ngakoutou 1994; O'Halloran 1995; Prunier 1995; Reyntjens 1994; Scherrer 1996; Omar and Alex de Waal 1994.

³¹ He wishes to stay anonymous.

³² The interview was carried out in December 1998.

³³ See also a Belgian colonial officer (Logiest 1982) who describes colonial times from his perspective; he helped implement Hutu power in Rwanda 1959.

longer face, their ladies are beautiful, they have long nails, they come from Arab countries, they are a mixture of Arab and white blood, therefore nearer to the whites than other Africans, they are almost relatives of the whites.’

Rwanda and Burundi belong to a broad category of cases that includes most European and Asian societies before the ‘Human Rights Revolution’ of the twentieth century. These are societies in which bowing, curtsying, kow-towing and prostration are commonplace. In all such cases, processes of humiliation create, maintain and express inequalities *between* groups and *within* them. They mark out the dominant ‘honourable’ classes, estates or castes from the ‘servile’ subordinate classes, estates or castes. They also separate out the higher ranking from the lower ranking individuals or families *within* each class, estate or caste.

The principle of inequality, enforced through violence and humiliation, is accepted as legitimate in such societies. The forceful techniques of humiliation are used to challenge or reassert the particular place that individuals, families or groups have within the hierarchy. This typically does not involve a challenge to the fact of hierarchy as such.

For example, in medieval and early modern Europe, armed combat among members of the most ‘honourable’ class, the aristocracy, was a means of defending or enhancing family honour. Defeat in a duel lowered the loser’s rank in the scale of honour. Small humiliations could be borne by those who had fought bravely. However, a cowardly response to a challenge could mean that all honour was lost. Furthermore, it was not possible to accept defeat by an opponent one did not respect. In extreme cases where no road back to honour existed, suicide was preferable. The main point is that within ‘honour societies,’ humiliation and violence were regarded as normal means of managing tensions. For the most part, people accepted them and got on with their lives. Violence did not have the strong connotation of ‘violation’ it has since acquired.³⁴

There is a link between humiliation and the civilizing process as described by Norbert Elias. According to Elias, human beings acquired a civilized habitus as they became subject to control ‘from above’ at the hands of a powerful state apparatus. They learned that exercising self-control was the best way to survive when they had been stripped of their weapons. To quote Fletcher’s summary, ‘The process of civilization involves the gradual, partial and unplanned long-term pacification of human societies, within, and increasingly between, states – a process which is “never completed and constantly endangered”’ (Fletcher 1997, 178).³⁵

According to Elias, pacified and civilized people learn to feel embarrassed.³⁶ Widespread ‘social anxiety’ among inferiors is one outcome of the successful implementation of honour-humiliation. This attitude among inferiors helps to keep the hierarchy in existence. Nothing serves a ‘master’ better than people who, humbly and fearfully, ‘keep their heads down.’³⁷

Despite the normality and ubiquity of violent coercion in ‘honour societies,’ and the aura of legitimacy that surrounds it, the humiliation it imposes is certainly resented by those who come out worst. In many cases, when the opportunity to ‘do your (actual or supposed)

³⁴ To put it another way, honour-humiliation regards ‘structural violence’ (Galtung 1996) as legitimate.

³⁵ See also Mennell 1989; Goudsblom and Mennell 1998.

³⁶ See Miller 1996. See also Smith 2000c forthcoming.

³⁷ Today a person with ‘social anxiety’ may pay a lot of money for psychotherapy in order to ‘undo’ this learning process.

oppressor down' comes along, it is taken. The 'old regime' of Belgian colonialism came to an end and Rwanda achieved independence in 1960. Political power was given to the Hutu, the majority group who had traditionally been subordinate to the Tutsi under Belgian rule. Hutu feelings against the Tutsi provided the basis for the genocidal attacks upon the latter orchestrated by the government in 1994. The genocide was directed from above and the killers were acting under orders. In other words, it was not a spontaneous popular movement. Even so, the genocide would not have been possible if the government had not been able to exploit the bitterness of a population that resented its servile condition. Furthermore, citizens who are accustomed to humiliation, because it is a legitimate part of their hierarchical societal environment, are 'inoculated,' - they know not only how to receive humiliation, but also how to deliver it.

A similar pattern may be found in other 'honour societies.' For example, the peasantry was both oppressed and servile under the Tsarist regime in the early twentieth century. When the Russian empire collapsed and power was achieved by the Bolsheviks, the new government was eventually able to liquidate the richer stratum of peasants known as the kulaks. 15 million peasants perished or were killed between 1929 and the end of 1933 (Bullock 1991, 299). In this case also, old resentments were exploited by the authorities. The half-starving majority peasant population had little sympathy for those who seemed to be doing better than themselves.

The final example comes from Germany. The Kaiser's empire was notorious for its rigid authoritarianism at every level of society. The resentment experienced by the majority who were subject to this oppressive system was intensified by Germany's defeat and the empire's collapse in 1918. As in Rwanda and Russia there was a government-inspired programme of mass liquidation a few years after the collapse of the 'old regime.' Once again, the government was able to exploit the resentment of the majority and direct it against members of a stigmatised category, in this case, the Jews.³⁸

I would like to label the processes discussed in this section of the paper 'honour-humiliation.' This makes it possible to distinguish them from another set of processes, to be discussed in the next section, which I will call 'human rights-humiliation.' The crucial point is that in cases of honour-humiliation it is possible, indeed normal, to accept that the forceful imposition of inequality is legitimate even if one objects to the particular place in the hierarchy that one occupies.

Honour-humiliation does not yet incorporate the idea that all human beings are equally worthy of respect and have a core of dignity irrespective of their particular place in any social hierarchy. By contrast, that very idea is central to societies that accept the ideal of human rights. In societies based on human rights, humiliation takes a new form: human-rights humiliation. In cases of human rights-humiliation, the forceful imposition of inequality is regarded as completely and utterly unacceptable.

³⁸ For a comparison the treatment of the Jews and the kulaks, see Bullock 1991, 299.

Dignity and human rights: the advent of ‘human rights-humiliation’

As Ury shows, the Knowledge Revolution has weakened all social hierarchies and is gradually making servility obsolete. Modern society needs people who have a sense of competence and self-possession. Such people are more creative and highly motivated, more likely to develop innovative new products, services and strategies.³⁹

One aspect of the Knowledge Revolution is the startling advance in the technology of mass communications.⁴⁰ Satellite television and the Internet mean that local evidence of conflict, cruelty and abuse almost always becomes visible, sooner or later, to a global audience. Oppression can no longer be perpetrated for long without being observed by third parties.⁴¹

Among the global audience are institutions and groups who oppose honour-humiliation on the grounds that it undermines human rights. This global third party is deeply hostile to the suggestion that some people are ‘sub-human’ (at the bottom of social hierarchies) and others ‘super-human’ (at the top). From this critical point of view, the ‘legitimate’ humiliations of ‘honour societies’ are translated into illegitimate forms of ‘structural violence,’ to borrow Galtung’s term.⁴²

This critical perspective is the outcome of a long period of cultural change. The very word ‘humiliation’ gradually altered its meaning as the idea of universal human dignity slowly percolated through Western societies and then became global. For example, ‘According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* the earliest recorded use of *to humiliate* meaning to mortify or to lower or to depress the dignity or self-respect of someone does not occur until 1757. Its usual sense prior to the mid-eighteenth century is more closely related to the physical act of bowing, or prostrating oneself ... The metaphoric underpinning of *humiliate* connected it more to humility and making humble than to what we now think of as humiliation’ (Miller 1993, 175, italics in original).

³⁹ TORONTO, June 23 1997 (UPI) -- U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan says the information revolution is the key to ensuring democracy and wiping out poverty around the world. ‘Information has a great democratizing power waiting to be harnessed to our global struggle for peace and development,’ Annan told the opening session of Global Knowledge 97, an international conference in Toronto on the information revolution and the developing world. The Global Knowledge conference, organized by the World Bank and the Canadian government, is intended to explore ways of extending the information revolution to the poorer regions of the world. Annan called on the nearly 2,000 delegates to work to promote access to information technology, to eliminate censorship, to foster the transfer of technology and to ensure that young people are the first to be involved in information revolution. ‘The extreme inequalities in the world are morally untenable, economically irrational and politically indefensible,’ Annan said. ‘The great democratizing power of information has given us all a chance to effect changes and alleviate poverty in ways we cannot even imagine today.’ The conference, the first of its kind, has attracted delegates from 124 nations, including 500 representatives from some of the least- developed countries, World Bank President James Wolfensohn said.

⁴⁰ Relevant work in this area is being carried out by Ray Loveridge who has been exploring the growing importance of new information communication technologies in organising decision making within companies and the new flexibility of boundaries this produces. See, for example, Hooley, Loveridge, and Wilson 1998; Casson, Loveridge, and Singh Boyd. and Rugman 1997.

⁴¹ See, for example, Pavri 1997; Watkins and Winters 1997.

⁴² Galtung 1996.

These changes of meaning have significant sociological and psychological consequences. After the Human Rights Revolution the wounds of humiliation strike much deeper than they did before.⁴³ In ‘honour societies,’ the threat of dishonour endangers the public face presented by each individual or group. Honour-humiliation menaces the status enjoyed by each within an asymmetrical network of social relationships. This form of humiliation takes the form of dishonour done to the coat of arms, so to speak, displayed on one’s shield. By contrast, in ‘dignity societies’ humiliation is a lance that brushes aside the shield and penetrates the body. Human rights-humiliation attacks the very self.

In societies that value human rights, every human being is seen to possess an inner core of dignity in his or her capacity as a human being. This inner dignity is untouched by ‘outer’ characteristics such as social position. From this modern perspective, even criminal offenders should keep their dignity: they should be humbled (‘brought down to earth’) but not humiliated (ground down into the earth).⁴⁴ To humiliate a person is now regarded as one of the worst violations possible. It is akin to the destruction of that person, an intolerable violation of their inner core of dignity as a human being.⁴⁵

The advent of universal human rights means that humiliation has ceased to be a legitimate device for maintaining social order. Even less is it acceptable as a means of enforcing a coercive hierarchy. On the contrary, the notion of universal human rights spreads the revolutionary idea that the powerful should respect the weak. It dignifies everybody’s hopes, wishes and personal sensitivities.⁴⁶ Table one summarises this transformation of attitudes.

The increased popularity of the ideal of human rights certainly does not mean that those rights are universally implemented. On the contrary, inequality, both globally and locally, increase.⁴⁷ What we observe today, however, is an international community that is growing in size and forming a strong movement in favour of the values and practices expressed in the United Nations’ Declaration of Human Rights. This movement has gained confidence since the collapse of the Soviet empire.

Despite this, in some societies the rhetoric and practices of honour-humiliation remain dominant. In fact, this tradition remains strong in almost all political establishments, especially in matters where national sovereignty and external relations are at issue. Independent states today protect their honour as jealously as members of the French aristocracy at Versailles. This is as true of the British and American states as it is their Serbian and Iraqi counterparts. Indeed, it applies to practically every sovereign state represented in the

⁴³ As Graham Dyson points out, in South Africa (and elsewhere) it was not simply a matter of human rights denied. ‘Apartheid and its predecessors were a question of humanness denied.’ This may or may not be the same thing as “human rights” (personal communication). See, on this matter, the work of Manfred Max-Neef, e. g. Ekins and Max-Neef 1992.

⁴⁴ See Zehr 1990.

⁴⁵ For a valuable discussion of some aspects of the complex relationship between identity and dignity, see Kelman 1997.

⁴⁶ See for example Bauman 1993; Ignatieff 1997; Wiener 1998.

⁴⁷ See, for example, Brecher and Costello 1994, or Hurrell and Woods 1999. Hurrell and Woods argue that inequality is becoming an urgent issue of world politics at the end of the twentieth century. Their book investigates eight core areas of world politics. It suggests that growing inequality is reducing the capacity of governments and international organizations to manage effectively the challenges confronted in respect of international order, international law, welfare and social policy, global justice, regionalism and multilateralism, environmental protection, gender equality, military power, and security.

United Nations General Assembly. Some of these ‘honourable’ states claim to be implementing universal human rights within the polities they control; others do not.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ These processes are in fact more complex than this brief discussion conveys. See also, for example, Billig 1995; Featherstone 1990; Urry 1999.

TABLE ONE
PRIDE, HONOUR AND DIGNITY: THREE MODALITIES OF HUMILIATION

| | Egalitarian hunter-gatherer societies | Hierarchical agrarian and industrial societies | Today's global and egalitarian knowledge society |
|--|--|---|--|
| Step one: Nature is subjugated, instrumentalised, turned into a series of tools for human purposes. | <p>Pride and pristine equality.</p> <p>Humiliation is rare in human relationships.</p> <p>Rhetoric of 'wrongs', 'grievances' and restitution of fairness and equality.</p> | | |
| <p>Step two: Human beings are subjugated, turned into tools.</p> <p>'Honour-humiliation' involves the 'legitimate' violation of honour.</p> | | <p>Honour and imposed hierarchy.</p> <p>Humiliation is a 'normal' device of hierarchy-building.</p> <p>Honour is attacked, defended, won and lost within a social hierarchy of dominant and subordinate groups, and this is accepted as legitimate.</p> | |
| <p>Step three: Moral condemnation of the subjugation of human beings, including their use as tools or their destruction.</p> <p>'Human rights-humiliation' involves the 'illegitimate' violation of human rights and the infliction of moral and emotional injury.</p> | | | <p>Dignity and human rights.</p> <p>Humiliation attacks a person's core as a human being, and inflicts very deep emotional wounds.</p> |

Despite the resilience of the old paradigm of honour-humiliation, there are strong internal and external pressures today that make regimes pay at least lip service to human rights. Although

lip service is a feeble token of change,⁴⁹ its potential should not be underestimated. As Lee D. Ross has commented,⁵⁰ 'You are what you pretend to be.' Hypocritical words, however false, put pressure upon those who utter them to back up those words with actions. These considerations ultimately increase human rights' chances, especially as monitoring organisations such as Human Rights Watch gain international respect.

Similar tensions between practise and lip service may be found within business organisations and public sector bureaucracies. As has been noticed, human creativity is increasingly acknowledged as an underused resource, one that requires team-mindedness and the co-operative (as distinct from the submissive or aggressive) personality. The new requirement to be creative undermines the old coercive hierarchies. However, those who have ruled can hardly be expected to accept with equanimity that they are no more than equals among equals. In the early stages, many 'masters' will try to restrict equality to relations between 'underlings' while keeping themselves 'above' this process. They will support empowerment, flat hierarchies, and teamwork as long as they can stay out of it themselves. However, it will become increasingly difficult for 'masters' to pay mere lip service to equality. The authority of managers will, increasingly, depend upon their ability to join wholeheartedly this co-operative, team-minded culture.⁵¹

Most importantly, no leader can afford to overlook the fact that the modern regime of human rights makes inequality more socially and politically dangerous than ever before. This is the most urgent point this paper makes. It can be illustrated by using the myth of a kind and jovial Father Christmas.⁵² The rich countries who dominate the international community are like Father Christmas with a sack full of presents. The presents bear the label 'human rights.' Father Christmas travels the world. In some places (e. g. China and other 'honour societies') he cannot gain entry. The doors are barred. The masters feel threatened by human rights.⁵³

⁴⁹ During my fieldwork in Africa in 1998 and 1999 one of the most prominent results was the detection of almost unequivocal suffering from 'double standards.' Almost everybody I talked to expressed grievance about 'double standards' which they felt are being used by 'the powerful' around the world. Almost everybody related to me that these 'double standards' are a source of deep and painful feelings of humiliation among those who believe in human rights and finally are 'forced' to become cynical. The former first lady of Somalia, Edna Adan, said: 'I hope you have strong cupboards to put your conscience into! Where are all the weapons produced which kill innocent people?'

⁵⁰ In a personal conversation 1999.

⁵¹ And, insofar as life in the 'Global Village' becomes defined as a 'community game' rather than a 'Wallstreet Game,' people will in fact acquire 'co-operative personalities,' helping to push toward a situation where Human Rights become a reality, not simply an ideal. See Lee D. Ross' work on Naïve Realism (Ross and Ward Brown, Reed, and Turiel 1996) and 'Construal and Social Inference' (Ross and Samuels 1993), where he describes how people act in a co-operative way when they are asked to play the Prisoner's Dilemma Game as a 'community game,' while people act non-co-operatively when the same game is called 'Wallstreet Game.'

⁵² Father Christmas in the British and American traditions is meant here rather than the more stern and severe figure of Saint Nicolas who chastises naughty children.

⁵³ In time, the knowledge revolution will break down the coercive hierarchies which support those honour cultures, just as differences between supporters of human rights and adherents of traditional codes of honour were gradually overcome within Western societies. Such differences do not inevitably lead to violence. Most Western societies avoided full-scale bloody revolutions in achieving human rights. It is still possible that the gradual extension of those rights to the non-Western world may be peacefully achieved. It is not necessary to accept that a 'clash of civilizations' is inevitable. It is worth adding that populations belonging to *different* civilizations – for example, Christian and Islamic – may share the *same* belief in the priority of honour. In Kosovo during the early months of 1999 people from two 'honour' cultures – Serbian and Albanian – were fighting each other. NATO decided to

The ordinary people living in those places have heard about Father Christmas (perhaps through the Internet) and they are deeply distressed that Father Christmas does not visit them. Why should they be denied having something that every one should get? It is deeply humiliating to be prevented from enjoying your basic human rights.

In other places (e. g. South Africa) Father Christmas is welcomed in with open arms. The people there are unjustly deprived and look forward to what is in Father Christmas's sack. However, when the people open their presents they find that the human rights they have been given are not enough. They still lack what they need. In fact, they are further behind than before. Their new rights give them a new freedom to go out into the capitalist market place but the market makes the rich richer and the poor poorer. These people, too, feel very upset. It is deeply humiliating to discover that the human rights you have been given are not enough to achieve the human dignity you deserve.

As already noted, economic inequality between poor and rich is actually growing at present, both locally and globally. The gap between the human rights' vision of an equal and just world and the actual state of inequality in the 'global village' is creating feelings of humiliation that are intensely wounding. The world's poor are facing a worsening life-situation *at the same time as they are learning that such a situation 'ought not' to prevail.*

Conclusion

The Human Rights Revolution seems unstoppable although the transition period will be lengthy and difficult. It seems very likely that global society will become more violent (atrocities, massacres, genocide, ethnic cleansing, terrorism) in the medium term. This is because degradations that were normal and accepted in 'honourable' societies become unforgivable violations in societies whose members have been 'dignified' by the acquisition of human rights. Unforgivable humiliations trigger unforgiving responses.⁵⁴ A related prediction is that only insofar as the global information society develops more egalitarian structures will the tendency towards atrocities be reversed, producing the peaceful society envisaged by theorists such as William Ury (see figure one).

I started this paper by referring to Hitler and Mandela. It is now clear that Hitler perceived his role as responding to the challenge of honour-humiliation. By contrast, Mandela has seen his task as healing the wounds inflicted by human rights-humiliation.⁵⁵ Fortunately for the West, human rights-humiliation in the Third World has not yet found its Hitler. It would be disastrous if such a leader created a global following among the humiliated by arguing, for example, that the West's human rights' rhetoric was merely a hypocritical device to divert attention from the fact that the divide between rich and poor is greater than before.

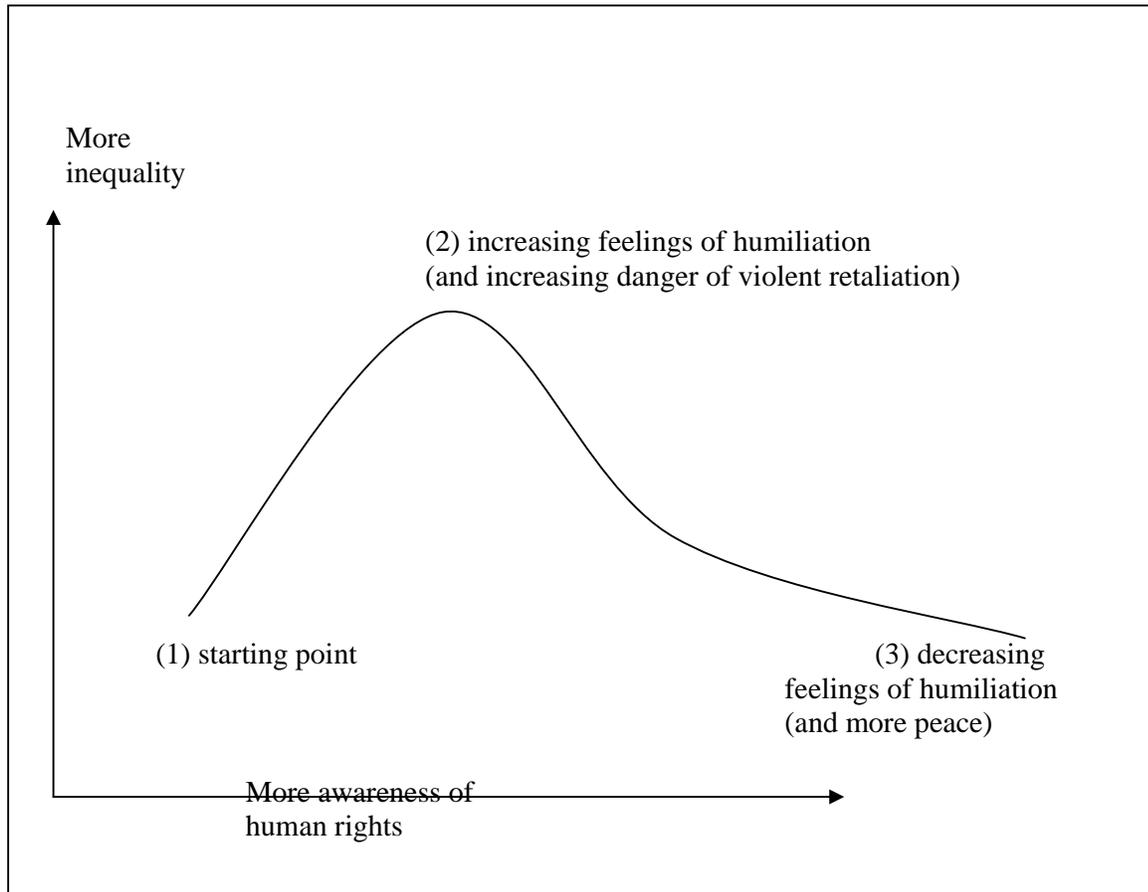
intervene with the stated objective of protecting the Kosovan Albanians from a humiliating denial of their human rights. With its superior technology, NATO humiliated the Serbian state, forcing it to sue for peace. From a Serbian perspective, NATO's actions were hypocritical, using unconvincing 'human rights' rhetoric in order to pursue a 'dishonourable' intervention in the affairs of a sovereign neighbour. NATO tried, unsuccessfully, to prevent violent acts between Serbs and Albanians that Western observers perceived in terms of human rights-humiliation. In doing so they imposed honour-humiliation upon Serbia. On the 'clash of civilizations,' see Huntington 1998.

⁵⁴ See for 'moral disengagement' Bandura Reich 1990.

⁵⁵ From the perspective of many white people in South Africa, apartheid was the expression of an utterly legitimate form of honour-humiliation. Mandela taught them to see that it was an illegitimate deprivation of the human rights of the majority.

In view of the danger that a new Hitler would present, the West is fortunate that the influence and prestige of Nelson Mandela are so great. Mandela has filled three of the roles that Ury identifies for Homo Negotiator. He is a *bridge-builder* helping to prevent further violent conflict, a *healer* binding the wounds of humiliation, and a *witness* to the suffering of apartheid's victims which include himself.

FIGURE ONE
THE CURVE OF VIOLENCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY



However, Mandela is not just trying to prevent violence within the existing structures. He is also trying to change those structures. That is why Mandela repeatedly proclaims the need for a great increase in educational provision. It is a theme to which he repeatedly refers, going as far back as the speech at his trial in 1964.⁵⁶ It is a deeply radical demand. The Knowledge Revolution is the main driver of the Human Rights Revolution. It will continue to break down coercive social and political hierarchies and empower an increasingly educated workforce.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ As Mandela said on April 20th, 1964, during his trial, 'The complaint of Africans...is not only that they are poor and the whites are rich, but that the laws which are made by the whites are designed to preserve this situation. There are two ways to break out of poverty. The first is by formal education, and the second is by the worker acquiring a greater skill at his work and thus higher wages. As far as Africans are concerned, both these avenues of advancement are deliberately curtailed by legislation' (www.historyplace.com/speeches/mandela.htm).

⁵⁷ One example of the efforts being made is the work of the Desmond Tutu Educational Trust that is seeking to redress the educational imbalance experienced by Black, Coloured and Indian students in the Western Cape during the regime of apartheid.

Empowerment means the disappearance of barriers to the free availability of information and ideas. *However, empowerment will be accompanied by an increase in anger:* the anger of the oppressed who discover that their subjection is an immoral attack upon their human rights; and the anger of ex-underlings who find that the current breakdown of oppressive hierarchies - something which feeds their hopes for more equality and human rights, - actually coincides with a disappointment of these hopes and an increase in their humiliation.

If the global rich – in their twin guise as the ‘North’ and the ‘West’ - wish to convert the healing, bridge-building spirit of Mandela into lasting peace they should begin by taking seriously the anger of newly-empowered citizens throughout the world. The North should respond more constructively to the needs of the South for trade, investment, infrastructure, training, health services and so on. The North should adopt on a global scale the strategy Mandela has attempted in South Africa: ‘[to] produce an actual...reality that will reinforce humanity’s belief in justice.’ This will do much to answer the charge that the rich countries are applying double standards. When this begins to happen, then the East might begin to respond more positively to the West’s demand that they respect human rights. If none of these things happen, then the pain and anger caused by unhealed humiliation could bring global torment.

In fact, the pattern of humiliation, flawed communication, disappointment and cynicism is not restricted to international relations. It also affects gender relations, human relations within business organisations, and national politics. All these spheres of life provide illustrations of Ury’s maxim that as the Knowledge Revolution brings greater interdependence, society’s vulnerability to conflict increases. This paper has argued that the task of keeping that conflict non-violent is made much more difficult by the deep wounds inflicted by humiliation.

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