

## Human Dignity and humiliation Studies (HDHS)

Notes submitted for discussion during the Zoom Conference in December 2021

*Hon. Emmanuel Ndahimana*

*Theme of the Working group:*

*Toward a new Global normal: Dignity through Solidarity*

### 1. Introduction

The global normal has been so far characterized by a high level of selfishness in the relationships between people and nations, in a fierce competition to maximize one's personal interest. **We are called to reflect on an vital topic of Dignity through Solidarity: what can we do to make this future possible?** We are blessed to have participated in Dignilogue conversations where we learn more and more, about the best practices of contributing to building a Dignifying World of our times. Our trainers are amongst the best we can have including our Founding President Dr Evelin Lindner, our Executive Director Dr Linda Hartling and all the contributing members from various disciplines and from all the corners of the World. There is nothing we cannot achieve, because they gave us the best tools to understand what is necessary in order to achieve our goals. Indeed we know that the ethical and moral values of humility, compassion, kindness, active solidarity and unconditional Love determine the quality of the living we shall have. We also know that many human attitudes and activities are determined by the levels of state of mind and spirit. Finally, we know that you cannot fix a problem, by using the same thinking which contributed to create the problem. All those concepts are quite familiar and have been discussed time and again in our previous meetings. They are real, can be tested and verified everytime and everywhere.

My cousin and friend Laurien Ntezimana challenged me that if I want to talk about human dignity and solidarity, I better get interested in the levels of consciousness in order to understand what goes wrong in the relationships between people in communities and nations. Laurien Ntezimana and Father Jean d'Amour Dusengumuremyi have contributed to finalize this short reflection and have expressed the wiliness to be present when it will be presented.

## 2. The 4 Levels of Consciousness model

Because more Human Dignity and Solidarity are both a dividend of Human progress, those who have devoted their lives to improve the conditions of Humanity consider this model as one of the best sources of inspiration to achieve their goal. Olivier Clouzot<sup>1</sup>, a French social Educator, in his Teaching has inspired many scholars and practitioners in their efforts to build awareness and verticality in the World. He has developed a model of 4 vertical levels also called "*levels of consciousness*", or "viewpoints on oneself and on the world which lead to radical changes of perspective on how situations present themselves. Literally, the person changing from one level of consciousness to the other can no longer see and appreciate things in the same manner. The four levels of consciousness are: the "socio-cultural" level, the "individualistic ego" level, the "individualised individual" level and the "transpersonal level". More specifically those levels are summarized in the following paragraphs:

**Level one (the socio cultural level).** This is the starting level of every human being coming into this world. At the beginning of his life, the individual is caught in what the philosophers call the "people", the crowd, in total dependence on the socio-culture that saw him born. Education only conditions and programs him by making him a follower, a "Panurge sheep". Here, the discourse of the individual is a simple repetition of cultural and socio-historical programming. The major characteristic of personality at this level is *Fear and submission to authority*. They move blindly behind a leader without asking too many questions. Like sheep in the prairie, they are dependent of where the "shepherd" wants to take them. Apparently in many communities, the number of those said to belong to this category, is overwhelming.

**Level two (Individualistic Ego level).** If the person manages *to overcome the fear of the judgment of others*, s/he goes to the second level where s/he builds a false independence in revolt against socio-historical programming and from her/his wounds and cravings. It is the construction of the "ego" or "secular me ". It is a level of *great greed* where the person is focused almost exclusively on their own needs and desires, often to the detriment of others and the community. At this level, the person is *constantly self-affirming* and his / her word tends *to silence any different opinion*. It is usually this level that provides society with its "ordinary" leaders with their tendency to (ab)use the common good rather than serve it! It is usually this level that creates the problems and then pretends to solve them!

---

<sup>1</sup> Olivier Clouzot, *Eveil et Verticalité : Essai sur la transcendance et sur le chemin de transformation qui y conduit*. Olivier Clouzot himself was inspired by Oscar Ichazo, the founder of Arica Institute

It's the level of those who feel superior and impose their rule to the first category of followers. Their ego is very high and generally that's where the executioners of humiliation are recruited. They can do wonderful things but generally they believe in their supremacy over those who accept to be submitted to their rule.

**Level 3 ( individualized Individual Level).** If the person succeeds in overcoming her/his greed after overcoming her/his fear, s/he moves to the third level where s/he begins to mature in humanity and notice the presence and dignity of others. S/he enters conscious interdependence with them. S/he begins to consciously develop the "self" or "essential being" and to serve the growth of the human in others. Here the word is more nuanced: the person asserts him/herself, but without silencing others; s/he accepts criticism and questioning. The compulsive need to be right is blurred because the ego is becoming transparent to the essential being. An attentive ear begins to develop at the same time as a just word, with less and less lies. It is this level that must be achieved to truly serve the common good. This level is accessible by a growing number of people through training and practice. Those who get there cannot be victims or executioners of humiliation. They are characterized by compassion and by unconditional love.

**Level 4 (Transpersonal level).** If the person manages to *make the consciousness of his essential being permanent*, s/he passes to the highest level in this model, where the human being is accomplished as human. The person who arrives at this level devotes him/herself unreservedly to the human development of the human race and the blossoming of all creation. *Understanding the true essence not only of oneself, but also the true essence of each and everyone around*, a creature of high nobility, unique and irreplaceable, a masterpiece in the whole Creation. This is the level of Masters in humanity, obviously a very rare level, where speech is totally delivered from internal and external boundaries. Yet it is our destination for all, and we are there every time we accept to be who we really are, "queens and kings" who only realize it by treating each other as such, here and now. (This mutual "royal" treatment of the members of a society must be considered as the foundation and the justification of a genuine democracy). **This is the ultimate level of spiritual development.** Those who get there are connected and in total Harmony with the Universe, accomplishing their mission beyond their interest.

### 3. The 4 levels model and its relevance to the Dignity through solidarity

Moving upwards from one level of Consciousness to the other is not a simple matter. You don't get up one day and decide to grow upwards. It happens through a graceful present or due to a painful experience which open your heart and your eyes and change your

perceptions and your appreciation. In any case, between one level and the following one, there is a crisis implicating a suffering to go through. There are transitional experiences of back and forth, of rising and falling before stabilizing the personal development to the next Level. The speed of progress itself depends on many things: the internal push to grow spiritually and move forward, the external opportunities offered by an enabling environment of the society we live in, the age which forces you to look at situations from a different perspective, and so on. Through the 4 levels of consciousness, humiliation is experienced with different intensity and its impact varies from one socio cultural environment to the other, even if the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> levels experience humiliation with empathy and compassion for both the victims and executioners.

The analysis and appreciation of historical realities and their meaning varies from one Historian to the other depending on their level of consciousness. There is a level of consciousness that can facilitate a peaceful exchange of opinion, aiming to build a better living together, free from all harmful passions generated by past humiliations. The model sheds another light on the individual and collective understanding of African societies and how they dealt with the challenging situations of humiliation.

The literature is full of misrepresentations on how the ancients lived, what they have achieved and how they related to each other. The story about the Kouroukan Fuga<sup>2</sup>, also known as the Mande Charter, is interesting. It was enacted during the empire of Mali, formed and united by force and by a very good system of organization. The charter came as an instrument to consolidate the governance of the empire, a result of a consensus between different communities, the first example of democracies where those who have joined the empire by force, were given a second chance to adopt a unifying charter that will guide the governors and governed ones, the young and the old, men and women, griots and marabouts, all committed to adopt a code of conduct for generations. There is a fascinating resemblance between what has happened in West Africa and Rwanda during the period starting in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century.

As we discussed recently, at a certain time in History, Rwanda was driven by the Philosophy of Ubuntu, According to the oral traditions, Rwanda had achieved an appreciable progress, which was highlighted in the social, economic and cultural relationships between people in their environment. The Ancients had built a feeling of belonging to the same family as brothers and sisters. Everybody was gaining in what everybody else was doing. This accepted interconnectedness can be described as "I have an interest in what you do and your success is my success and vice versa". Arnold

---

<sup>2</sup> [https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charte\\_du\\_Manden](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charte_du_Manden)

Schwarzenegger, former governor of Los Angeles, rightly said that the idea of a self-made man or self-made woman is a fallacy. Rwanda had a quite similar expression ("*Ntawigira*"), translating that everyone needs others to progress and prosper. Indeed, we all depend on so many other people who contribute to make us who we are. This was the foundation of solidarity, leading to traditional economic activities based on complementarity of talents in families and communities.

At a certain moment in History, the values supporting solidarity have been lost and have been replaced by their opposite where people lived in a new setting of winners and losers, with more and more discrimination and exclusion. The external influences imposed a different form of societal transactions, from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to date. Understanding these external forces goes beyond the conspiracy theories about Colonization stating that what happened was planned to "divide and rule", with the terrible consequences that followed. I suggest that the contacts with the West arrived at the worst moment of the World History when the West itself was undergoing the most brutal ideologies of humankind and when the Nazis tried to impose a policy of the second level of Consciousness, denying the right to live if you are different, by color, religion and otherwise. The wind of racial superiority contaminated the colonization process and without knowing, normal citizens were taught to believe in the ethnic supremacy and inequalities between neighbors, living in the same neighborhood, speaking the same language, and praying in the same Church.

A well balanced judgement should recognize that the contacts with the West have been full of opportunities: technologies and innovations in many areas, huge gains in modern infrastructure. Whatever they have learnt or acquired, Africans have lost a balanced interconnection and solidarity which make a peaceful and happy living together. The solution to repair the foundations of the society lies, not in condemnation of the individuals or institutions, but in understanding and repairing **the defense mechanisms** and the processes that have led the society to miss the opportunity to build a society of dignity and solidarity. Again, the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> level of consciousness are a better way to achieve more individual and collective solidarity between people.

#### 4. The Challenges of our times

Today the World is facing a growing number of serious problems such as the Climate deregulations and their consequences on our lives, the pandemics of a rare gravity, the growing threats of Violence and growing difficulties of living together in Peace and Harmony. In some places people it seems that very sophisticated and complicated number laws and the values of moral and ethical values which used to govern families

and communities, have gone away. People have lost a sense of what right and what is wrong. In Courts you are right if you have a Lawyer who knows how to manipulate the truth or if you bribe the judge. Therefore building Human dignity through solidarity requires *Changing the logics driving the current society of selfishness, of winners and losers, of dominated dominators which have produced the opposite of a well dignifying society for all.*

Keeping the same logics in order to fix the problems facing the World today and building a future where humans are treated like robots, easy to manipulate is not a credible option, because as Albert Einstein said: "You cannot solve a problem, using the same thinking that has contributed to create the problem" The only option is to build a future of humans who have the right to use the existing and future opportunities in order to live better and the obligation to contribute to the best of the Planet, our Global home.

Therefore, let us join the change makers of the World, participate in reviving the moral and ethical values and build a future of Humility, Compassion, Solidarity and Unconditional Love for a more and more Dignifying World for us and future generations to come.

## 5. Concluding remarks

Building a global family characterized by the values of human dignity and solidarity is not only desirable, but it is also possible. Some Change heroes and heroines, like Dr. Evelin Lindner and others around the World, have already shown that the kind of transformation we are talking about, is an achievable objective. All we need is a critical mass of change makers, involving young generations and a high level of advocacy, in order to embrace a better living while minimizing the level of waste of resources in order to safeguard the Heritage of Humanity. We have another wonderful example of a supreme solidarity as highlighted by Father Jean D'amour Dusengumuremyi<sup>3</sup> on few heroic personalities of Rwanda. Indeed Felicite Niyitegeka has showed how to transform a situation of humiliation into compassion and exemplary solidarity with the victims, so much that she decided to share their fate until the ultimate sacrifice. "Niyitegeka Felicite Foundation" in the process of creation, is trying to inform the World about her sacrifice, to keep alive her lifetime humanity and her amazing messages to her compatriots. Laurien Ntezimana<sup>4</sup>, her

---

<sup>3</sup> Jean d'Amour Dusengumuremyi : Une lumière dans la nuit rwandaise.

<sup>4</sup> Laurien Ntezimana, University of Peace in Africa, An introduction to the Real Inner Power principle.

brother, continues to build in his manner, the milestones for Peace in Africa. With a couple of friends, they are implementing a unique initiative comparable to our Dignity University approach, moving into the fundamental change of the spirit and attitudes, of how to grow in consciousness as a strategy to reach a lasting Peace in Africa.

There is an opportunity for a fruitful cooperation between the University of Peace in Africa (<http://www.universitedepaixenafrique.org/>) and our Dignity University. Laurien Ntezimana will be with me during the Conference in order to give more details, if requested, on their experience of building a sustainable Peace in Africa and how the concept of the 4 levels of Consciousness is used to achieve their objective, not only in Africa but also wherever it can be needed. He will be more than happy to elaborate on their model and their experience if we have time !. Their approach is about to prepare the victims to face better all the humiliation logics, to unveil the humiliation mechanisms and processes and building awareness of our *essential identity*. They believe that Human dignity does not need the goodwill or the blessing of the humiliation executioner. The Human dignity conquest is primarily in the hands of the victim when s/he grows to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> level of consciousness. Indeed, at the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> level of awareness, the defense mechanisms against the fear of Ego become automatically deactivated and humiliation attempts can no longer succeed. Therefore growing spiritually is the best *vaccine against humiliation*. It comes with positive values of compassion and respect, introduces the socio-economic relationships of solidarity and cooperation (at the workplace, in business and everywhere!)

## *6. Final word*

*HDHS Founders and Leaders rank very high on the 4 levels scale of Consciousness!!!* We are grateful and congratulate them for their efforts to lead the World in a new Global normal of Dignity through Solidarity. Indeed the current and the future generations deserve to live in a society of compassion and mutual respect, where the benefits of economic progress go hand in hand with more dignity and humanity.

Let me express my sincere gratitude to the organizers for giving me the opportunity to participate in this important zoom Conference, at a time of immense challenges, where Pandemics and Climate changes are calling for a collective and united action in order to safeguard our Planet

Emmanuel Ndahimana