

On Humiliation To Dignity: Future of Global Solidarity
IANS Interview after the E-Conclave with Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vihar in Indore
26th July 2020

E-Conclave:
Sunday, 12th July 2020
Original streaming: <https://youtu.be/59JxZAA4nOA>
Downloaded video: https://youtu.be/URE-xLN_w-E



The E-Conclave started by thanking everyone who joined the conclave. Then the event and the speaker were introduced. The host of the event was one of the leading schools of India, the Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vihar in Indore. Their mission is ‘creating an environment and culture of selfless Love conducive to the emergence of universal human values’, and they greet with ‘Sai Ram’ because they are inspired by the teachings of Sathya Sai Baba (born 1926 and passed away in 2011), who was an Indian spiritual leader and philanthropist.



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First, I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to the team of the *Indo-Asian News Service* for formulating cogent questions. Then my gratitude goes to our respected Swapnil Kothari, who hosted our Dignity Conference in 2017 at the Renaissance University in Indore.



See our 2017 conference at www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/annualmeeting/29.php

The answers to the questions further down are adapted from the manuscript that is to be published later this year:

Lindner, Evelin Gerda (2020). *From humiliation to dignity: For a future of global solidarity*. Lake Oswego, OR: World Dignity University Press, Dignity Press.

Question 1: Tell us about the Srijan E-Conclave? And was your experience?

Evelin Lindner's response:

I was extremely happy to be invited to this E-Conclave, because humanity is in crisis and needs new ideas. These new ideas may not come from the power centres of the past, but from you. My main message to world regions such as the Indian subcontinent is this:

India, wake up! You have traditions that are far more valuable than what so-called 'modernity' has brought to the world.¹ Remember the 'Forest Academy' in the Himalayas one or two thousand years ago.² Look at the world from your own perspective, avoid the mistakes we, as humanity, have committed throughout the past millennia, centuries, and past decades! Help 'save the world' with the wealth of your wisdom!

My message, especially to young people, is the following: Please be extremely careful when you hear phrases such as 'developed country', or 'success', or 'progress', or 'wealthy', or 'rich'. Always ask: 'Developed in what?' 'Success in what?' 'Progress in what?' 'Wealthy in what?' 'Rich in what?'

We do not have much time, we, as human family on planet Earth. After more than forty-five years of being at home on all continents, I know that we need to be utterly alarmed. I have seen, with my own eyes, that it is impossible for us, as humankind, to continue with business as usual. We destroy the very foundation of our livelihood by ‘making a living’ through ‘making money’. We cut the tree of life for our livelihood. We cut the tree of life that we need to nurture us in the future for our livelihood here and now. Highly responsible scientists have predicted the possible extinction of the human species within one decade’s time, around 2026.³ Even if this prediction is exaggerated, it should serve us as a wake-up call.

As global social and ecological interdependencies increase, they force us, humankind, to lift our eyes beyond our cultural and national particularities. No longer is it one local problem here or there that needs to be solved, it is the survival of all of humankind that is at stake. We face rapid collapse — the so-called *Seneca cliff* — which over-complex systems typically experience at some point — this is also why ‘covid crushed the world’.⁴

Some of you may get angry at me now. They will say to me, ‘But look at all the progress in the past decades, and we in India also want to become a developed country! Do not take this from us!’ People in so-called ‘developed countries’ will get as angry: ‘Why should we give up our privileges?’

Luckily, we also get unprecedented help in this difficult situation, first, from a paradigm-shifting view, the uniting view on our small and vulnerable Blue Planet from outside, second, from the fact that we possess all the knowledge needed for a radical turnaround. It is now or never.

Few people take in that our species, *Homo sapiens*, lives in a historical moment that is unparalleled in terms of opportunity. History is not a predetermined process with humans as helpless victims. For the first time in its history, humankind is in a position to succeed in bringing about the adaptations that are long overdue. For the first time, humanity can fully appreciate its place in the cosmos. Unlike our ancestors, we can see pictures of our Blue Marble from the perspective of an astronaut.⁵ Unlike our forebears, we have the privilege of experiencing the *overview effect* with respect to our planet,⁶ an effect that helps us understand that we humans are *one* species living on *one* tiny planet. We can embrace *biophilia*,⁷ we can feel ‘the ecology of the living’ taking place within *one* circumscribed *biopoetic* space that is shared between all beings.⁸ We have access to a much more comprehensive knowledge base about the universe and our place in it than our grandparents ever had. We have the good news from research that human nature is neither ‘good’ nor ‘evil’ but social, and that much of human action depends on the ways constitutive rules frame relational contexts — in other words, cooperation in solidarity in the world can be increased systemically, through building appropriate societal frames.⁹

Let me describe the task before us by using the metaphor of the Titanic. I think you will agree with me that it is easy to mistake a feast for ordinary life as long as the party lasts. We all know that throwing a party cannot last forever. ‘Success’ that is achieved by way of overuse of resources is short-term and cannot be mistaken as success. This is, however, precisely the kind of party that is being thrown on the luxury floor of the cruise ship Titanic, where the people of the so-called Global North and the so-called ‘developed countries’ live. When they see cracks in their cabins, they repair them with the best intentions, while overlooking the huge holes they create in the hull of the ship, where all the poor people live. To this party, only a few privileged are invited and the rest, like India, hopes to pass through the door soon. But, this party is thrown at the expense of future generations and the planet.

The only solution is to change the design and the course of the ship. We are in the radically new situation now that we must understand that it is an illusion that our world is a cruise ship. In reality we are all together in a lifeboat. In a lifeboat, internal fighting is suicidal and money has very limited value. A tiny coronavirus confirms the uselessness of our weapons and our money. We cannot shoot the ‘empire of all viruses’ and we cannot bribe it. Direct solidarity is the way forward, solidarity that is free from the barriers that oppressive hierarchies and money-based contracts erect between people. And humility is the way forward, the humility to realise that we are but a small part

of nature and not its master. I use dignity as a word to connote the challenges of this radically new situation. One can also use words such as dialogue and partnership in equal dignity.

Now we need the so-called *partnership model* for world society. This is the only model that fits our lifeboat situation. Social scientist and activist Riane Eisler developed a cultural transformation theory through which she describes how throughout the past millennia otherwise widely divergent societies manifested what she calls a *dominator* model rather than a *partnership* model.¹⁰ Within the dominator model it is seen as normal and morally correct to have overlords preside over underlings and superiors rule over inferiors. Overlords have the duty to keep underlings 'down where they belong' and routinely humiliate them so they 'know their place'. The duty of these underlings is to respectfully learn submissive humility when humiliated. Slavery was not yet seen as a human rights violation in that context.¹¹

Human rights ideals, in contrast, promise partnership: 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights'. One lesson to be learned from the historical moment in 1948 when this sentence became the core statement of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is that norms need not come from powerful states, as the emergence of human rights norms in the Global South countries shows.

Let me explain. In 1941, the president of the United States Franklin D. Roosevelt held his famous Four Freedoms Speech, in which he encouraged U.S. civil society organisations to trust that war was being fought for freedom and rights. Human rights were part of the war aims of the Allied forces in the Second World War. Yet, in 1944, when it came to preparing for the actual legal protection of individual rights, Allied enthusiasm waned. They feared that they themselves and their very own practices would become the target of such international law. It was the time when the United Kingdom was still an empire that held vast colonies in subjugation, the United States was racially disunited under Jim Crow, while Stalin held USSR's citizens in a brutal iron grip. Thus, when the Big Four (the U.K., the U.S., the USSR, and China) met in Dumbarton Oaks in 1944 to draft a charter for the United Nations, they excluded all but one mention of human rights from the draft charter for the United Nations. China, the weakest of the four, was the only one who tried to include a statement against racial discrimination in the draft United Nations Charter, while the other three rejected it.

This would have been the end of human rights declarations, had it not been for a sufficiently large number of pro-human-rights advocates mustering the courage to take on the challenge. Latin American countries were much more democratic at that time than in later years, and they organised the Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace in Mexico City in February 1945. They succeeded in influencing the San Francisco Conference that took place a few weeks later, together with U.S. civil society organisations who also were disappointed by the neglect of human rights in the Dumbarton Oaks draft. Forty civil society groups were allowed to serve as consultants to the U.S. delegation in San Francisco, among them women's organisations, religious organisations, labour groups, and academics.

Although an exact definition of human rights remained wanting, the forty civil society groups, together with a number of small states, were able to convince the U.S. to join them in making human rights a major focus of the United Nations. It was in this way that the United Nations Charter drafted in the San Francisco Conference of 1945 could become the launch pad of the international protection of human rights through law.

Eleanor Roosevelt chaired the new United Nations Human Rights Commission, with French jurist René Cassin as a member of the Commission. Deeply involved in writing the UDHR was also Charles Malik from Lebanon, Peng Chun Chang from China — a student of John Dewey — together with Hernán Santa Cruz from Chile who worked to include economic, social, and cultural rights. People like Bertha Lutz, a Brazilian biologist, feminist, and lawyer, and Hansa Mehta, an Indian delegate and independence activist, insisted on the explicit recognition of equal rights of women and men in the UN Charter and the UDHR.

It would be great to have Hansa Mehta with us now, together with Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, an Oxford University professor, philosopher and post-war president of India, who in 1931 took part in the discussions and planning for the Post-WW2 International organisation in the League of Nations' Committee for Intellectual Cooperation, the predecessor of UNESCO. The *Panchayati Raj* system of self-government practiced in Indian villages throughout India can serve as a perfect model to inspire worldwide unity in diversity.¹²

All this happened before I was born. I was born in 1954 and began my global life project at the age of twenty. After more than forty-five years of pursuing this project, I must admit that I do not know any place in the world that truly manifests equal worthiness in its societal structures, despite much dignity rhetoric.¹³ What I observe, instead, is that empty human-rights rhetoric creates a deeply humiliating expectation gap between talk and practice: 'To recognise humanity hypocritically and betray the promise, humiliates in the most devastating way by denying the humanity professed'.¹⁴

Research shows that humiliation is the most intense human emotion — it leads to the mobilisation of more processing power and a greater consumption of mental resources than other emotions. 'Humiliation is a particularly intense and cognitively demanding negative emotional experience that has far-reaching consequences for individuals and groups alike'.¹⁵ Research shows that the combination of loss and humiliation is the strongest predictor of major depression,¹⁶ and research on childhood trauma found that 'recurrent chronic humiliation' is the most damaging childhood experience.¹⁷ The Suicide Narrative Inventory (SNI) captures interpersonal risk factors for suicide, and humiliation is one of the factors, alongside thwarted belongingness, perceived burdensomeness, and social defeat.¹⁸ Humiliation-attrition can have the effect of wearing down people to the point of apathy and depression,¹⁹ and of inertia.²⁰ Protracted cycles of humiliation can lead to the kind of paralysis and apathy that is similar to what so-called learned helplessness engenders.²¹ A seemingly 'peaceful' society may be the outcome of such processes, peaceful through structural violence,²² as the price for this 'peace' is being paid for by the victims' pain.²³

Psychologist Linda Hartling, director of our Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies fellowship, of which I am the founding president, was the very first to write a doctoral dissertation on humiliation and to separate humiliation from the shame continuum, treating humiliation on its own account. She finalised her work in 1995, two years before I began with my doctoral research on humiliation.²⁴ She developed the *humiliation inventory*, a scale from 1 to 5 that assesses the internal experience of derision and degradation, gauging the extent to which a person feels harmed by humiliating incidents throughout her life, how much she fears 'being teased, bullied, scorned, excluded, laughed at, or, harassed'.²⁵ This inventory has so far been translated into Italian, French, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Korean, and Norwegian, and it has been crucial in extending the global research on humiliation. It has been used around the world in research on the link between humiliation and social and psychological concerns such as global poverty, immigration, depression, eating disorders, emotional isolation, or narcissism.

Let us look at development as an example of systemic humiliation. 'Development is the management of a promise — and what if the promise does not deliver?'²⁶ Critical post-development voices warn that 'it is not the failure of development which has to be feared, but its success'.²⁷

Norwegian development specialist and scholar Benedicte Bull sheds light on the decades between 1980 and 2000, on what she calls a 'perverse twist':

On the one hand, from the 1980s, there were governments, businesses, international organisations and intellectuals — often lumped into the neo-liberal category — that argued for a continued focus on growth and modernisation, but rejected the developmentalists' focus on knowledge, technology and industrialisation. Moreover, in a perverse twist on the modernisation schools' belief in linear evolution, they saw development as an immanent process in all societies that would naturally take place if hindrances were removed. They thus rejected the developmentalists' notion of development as a purposeful process pursued by development

actors, primarily the state, and considered it rather a natural process that would unfold if state interventions were removed and the market were allowed to regulate prices and encourage entrepreneurship.²⁸

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are often acclaimed, yet, there is still a long way to go. Goal 8, for instance, has the potential to undermine all the other goals as it ‘lumps together important need-related goals — participation in work and acceptable conditions in work — with economic growth, a questionable means to achieving these goals’.²⁹ ‘The UN’s sustainable development goals... are clearly not going to be met without drastic recalibration’, warns Philip Alston, outgoing UN special rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, as ‘the SDG framework places immense and mistaken faith in growth and the private sector’.³⁰

Through my work, I offer a *big history* explanation,³¹ using sociologist Max Weber’s *ideal-type* approach that differentiates between various levels of abstraction.³² I see humankind standing in the middle of the second major turning point in our history, similarly historically unparalleled as the first one. The first one began to unfold circa twelve thousand years ago, around the time of the so-called Neolithic Revolution, a time that I conceptualise as the endpoint of humanity’s first round of globalisation. Prior to that, for the first 97 per cent of our species *Homo sapiens*’ history, we humans were lucky to live in what game theorists call a win-win context, which allowed us to freely populate all accessible lands on planet Earth.³³ A context of abundance is like a feast that makes mutually beneficial arrangements of relationships relatively easy to establish — we could learn cooperation, dialogue, and partnership with nature and each other.³⁴ Around twelve thousand years ago, however, the banquet of abundance was over. Our species *Homo sapiens* walked on all continents for the first time in our history, we had arrived in South America, the last so far untouched continent, in sum, we had completed our first globalisation campaign. I call this short moment, short in historical terms, the ‘first major turning point in human history’, the first time the context for human life on Earth changed radically: the win-win contexts that reigned prior to this turning point began to be replaced by win-lose contexts.³⁵ A win-lose context is much harder to live with than a win-win context and we adapted by learning competition for domination — from now on, cooperation was invested in competition between out-groups.

By now, as we stand in the middle of the second major turning point in our history, we are in a situation where we have to prepare for the lose-lose impasses the future will likely bring. We are at the end of our final round of globalisation, we reach the limits of everything, not just the limits of the surface of our planet but the limits of all resources, from minerals to clean air to clean water. We will have to find solutions that are superior to the competition for domination that we applied to the win-lose dilemmas of the past millennia.³⁶ We have to understand that we cause *omnicide* — the killing of everything — if we continue with competition for domination. This strategy was a solution that worked for the past millennia, but only at first glance, in the long run, competition for domination makes the core problems worse. The long run has arrived now.

Throughout the past forty-five years of global living, all around the world, I found remnants of the age-old egalitarian coalition-seeking strategies, and I suggest we build on them now. A memory from egalitarian times prior to the Neolithic transition has lingered on,³⁷ even while the dominator paradigm was imposed on most people on the globe during the past millennia. While the first chiefdoms emerged in West Asia and the first archaic states appeared circa 5000 years ago, subaltern resistance persisted as *the art of not being governed*.³⁸ The awareness that every person deserves to be treated as equal in worthiness is embedded in many world philosophies long before today’s concepts of human rights began to be articulated. ‘The strong shall not abuse the weak’ is a maxim known from Sumer, the first permanently settled region of southern Mesopotamia between 5500 and 4000 BCE. It is also known from the Code of Hammurabi, named after Babylonian king Hammurabi, who lived circa 1810 to 1750 BCE, a code that was later followed by the Law of Moses in the Torah. The charter of Cyrus the Great (580–529 BCE) is often hailed as the first statement of human rights.³⁹

Philosopher and sociologist Jürgen Habermas describes how a ‘legitimation crisis of the early state’ occurred,⁴⁰ and ‘prophet-like’ figures emerged who risked their lives to hold existing power structures accountable to a universally egalitarian ethic.⁴¹ The *axial age* is a term that philosopher Karl Jaspers coined in 1949 for the philosophical, religious, and technical developments that arose in relatively independent cultural regions around the world in a comparatively short period of time, from eight to two hundred years BCE.⁴² The assumption of an axial period of world history, even though it does not stand up to closer historical scrutiny, became a founding myth of modernity and can still serve as a starting point to overcome a Eurocentric view of history today.⁴³ From Confucius and Laozi in China, to the Brahmins in late Vedic India, to Buddha’s teachings in India, to Israel’s biblical prophets, to Zoroaster in Iran, the list includes also Greece with its epic poems *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and the natural philosophers Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes, followed by Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.⁴⁴

Many founders of religions and philosophies were ‘renouncers’, which means ‘critics of power’.⁴⁵ They had followers precisely because they re-kindled the revolutionary message of equality in worthiness, precisely because they rejected the idea that higher-placed ‘dignitaries’ should have the sole access to divinity. They asked questions such as the following: Are not all people equally worthy? Is it legitimate to oppress people in the name of divinity? They even asked a very modern question: Is not also the degradation of our environment a violation?⁴⁶ Buddhism has a claim of having pioneered ideals of equal dignity, as has Islam, or the Sikh religion, to name just a few. Orthodox Confucianism regards all people as being equally morally good by nature — ‘Just as all water has a down-going tendency, all people have a tendency toward goodness’, these were the words of Chinese philosopher Mencius, also called Mengzi (372–289 BCE; or 385–303/302 BCE).⁴⁷ Mencius was known to be a humble person and he taught that even though there might be differences in professional rank, the ranking of human value should be rejected.⁴⁸ Political thinker Mo Di (or Moti or MoTse or Mozi), a rival of Confucius in the fifth century BCE, advocated universal love and non-violent communal and collective self-defence.⁴⁹ The traditional African *ubuntu* philosophy emphasises living together and solving conflicts in an atmosphere of shared humility — ‘I am because of you’.⁵⁰ All these influences often cross-fertilised each other, for instance, important parallels exist between Buddhism and classical Greek philosophy — indeed, Greek sculptors gave Buddha his human face.⁵¹

In 2009, I wrote at text titled ‘what Asia can contribute to world peace’,⁵² where I reflected on so-called *non-dualistic* approaches (in contrast to mind-body dualism, or the monism of either materialism or idealism).⁵³ To the nondualist, reality is ultimately neither physical nor mental, but an overwhelming state or realisation beyond words. There are many variations of this view, with non-dualism proper holding that while different phenomena are not the same, they are inseparable, or that there is no hard line between them. We see this approach in mystical traditions of many religions, particularly traditions originating in Asia.⁵⁴

I learned about non-dualism first when I lived in Japan, and was introduced to the work of intercultural communication scholar Muneo Yoshikawa who brings together Western and Eastern thought into his non-dualistic *double swing model*, graphically visualised as the infinity symbol, or Möbius strip ∞ . Unity is created out of the realisation of differences, and in that way, individuals, cultures, and intercultural concepts can blend in constructive ways.⁵⁵ Yoshikawa draws on philosopher Martin Buber’s idea of *dialogical unity* — the act of meeting between two different beings without eliminating the otherness or uniqueness of each — an idea that is in harmony with the ideal of equal dignity as enshrined in many religions around the world, as well as in human rights ideals. Yoshikawa connected these insights with the notion of *soku*, the Buddhist non-dualistic logic of ‘not-one, not-two’, or the twofold movement between the self and the other that allows for both unity and uniqueness. Yoshikawa calls the unity that is created out of the realisation of differences *identity in unity* — dialogical unity does not eliminate the tension between basic potential unity and apparent duality.⁵⁶ Yoshikawa’s model includes also a third element, namely, an emphasis on the processual, relational, and contradictory nature of intercultural communication.⁵⁷

The two prongs of *unity and diversity* are both essential and complementary.⁵⁸ The tension between the Many and the One extends across the entire range of human thinking, explains cognitive scientist Bruce Schuman.⁵⁹ This tension can be expressed in mathematical form and we can easily detect it wherever it appears, because the term *versus* always signals it. Schuman recommends reviving the ancient wisdom for how to balance this tension. His view is that if humankind is to succeed with the radical transition that is needed now, then the core challenge is to accept this tension and envision its endless practical implications. Unity must not become uniformity and diversity not division.

In order to succeed, the world needs a leap of consciousness now and here you can help. The world would benefit from learning more from you about the ‘spontaneous recognition’ that Kashmir Shaivism once taught.⁶⁰ I have learned that this school has died out. As far as I have been able to understand, Kashmir Shaivism can be divided in three fundamental traditions, one of them being Pratyabhijna Sastra, emphasising nothing other than mere ‘realisation’ and ‘recognition’ (of Anuttara, the Supreme).⁶¹ The Pratyabhijna school, in Sanskrit ‘spontaneous recognition’, does not require any *upayas* (means), that is, there is nothing to practice. Recognising ‘who you are’ is all what is needed.

You know much more than me about the ultimate nondual reality that can be called ‘God,’ ‘Shunyata’ (Emptiness, especially emphasised in Mahayana Buddhism), ‘Brahman’ (8th century philosopher Adi Shankara), ‘Spirit’ (Integral Advaita and thinker Sri Aurobindo, 1872–1950),⁶² ‘The Self’ (Tamil sage Ramana Maharshi, 1879–1950),⁶³ or ‘The Dao’ (Chinese philosopher Lao Zi).⁶⁴ I have learned that Zen Buddhism and the system of Advaita Vedanta are two of the strongest traditions of non-duality, with Advaita Vedanta having a tendency to attaining non-dualism by conceptually dissolving the object into the subject, while Buddhism does the inverse.⁶⁵ Advaita Vedanta, for example, a sub-school of the Vedanta school of Hindu philosophy, holds that we form an identity based on the content of the mind (feelings, sensations, hopes, dreams, thoughts), however that our true identity or nature is that which observes all of these things – the seer, the witness or the Self.

You know much more than me about the vast treasures of wisdom that have emerged from the world region we you were born and live. We can conclude that many religious movements throughout the past millennia were imbued with the message of equality at their outset. Yet, messages of equality usually did not survive long, because as soon as religious or philosophical awakenings of equality became institutionalised, they had to become part of their larger dominator context, and the hierarchical social and societal structures that surrounded them co-opted them. In the course of this process, they usually turned against their own message and built rigidly stratified hierarchical structures. There is a German saying, ‘Sagt der König zum Bischof: Halt Du sie dumm, ich halte sie arm’, translated, ‘Says the king to the bishop: You keep them dumb, I keep them poor’.

At the present point in our history, we are in the midst of a dignity refolution (*refolution* is a term coined by Timothy Garton Ash to connote a mix of reform and revolution). As we observe, it proceeds two steps forward only to fall back one step again. Sometimes it even lapses into millennia-old practices of revolutions that were driven by violent cycles of honour humiliation. This dignity refolution is history’s first continuous revolution, a refolution that will never ‘finish’ and will always be precarious, as it depends on being kept alive by large enough numbers of people from one generation to the next.

My message to India: ‘You have traditions of partnership that are very old. Bring them back, and bring them to the rest of the world!’ There is work by anthropologist Alan Page Fiske’s on *kama muta*, which is Sanskrit for ‘moved by love’ (whereby *kama* originally meant erotic love).⁶⁶ The *kama muta* framework posits ‘that being moved induces communal sharing and increases feelings of warmth’, and that ‘being moved is a culturally dependent positive affective state that often includes tears, goose bumps or chills and informs the experiencing, engaging, reinforcement, and building of communal sharing relationships’.⁶⁷

Anthropologist Alan Page Fiske found that people create relationships that are ‘not simply

combinations of the characteristics of the individuals that engage in them', Fiske explains, they follow 'shared models of how people should coordinate with each other'.⁶⁸ Anthropologists can list innumerable systems, yet, Fiske found that people, most of the time and in all cultures, use just four elementary and universal forms or models for organising most aspects of sociality, four 'structures out of which people construct, understand, evaluate, sanction, and motivate most joint activities'.⁶⁹ Interaction can be structured, first, according to what people have in common or *communal sharing*, second, according to ordered differences or *authority ranking*, third, by using additive imbalances or *equality matching*, and, fourth, according to ratios or *market pricing*.⁷⁰ These four social models follow the well-known four mathematical scales of measurement of nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio, of which the first is the most comprehensive and qualitative and the last the least comprehensive and most quantitative.⁷¹

If we look at contemporary trends in the light of a long time frame, then we see that indigenous foragers did not 'go to work' — they had 'a life'.⁷² Theirs was the most comprehensive way of being on this planet, living in communion with nature and in dignifying humility with all life on this planet.⁷³ This is what Alan Page Fiske called *communal sharing*. Today, every aspect of life is moving into the least comprehensive way of being, namely, reducing the universally enriching quality of life on this planet into a cold and fragmented calculation of quantification, or what Fiske calls *market pricing*.

Indeed, my entire life project aims at nurturing *kama muta* across all possible fault lines that separate people in this emerging global village. My entire life project aims at bringing back communal sharing and solidarity not just locally but globally. Will there be another 'Eleanor Roosevelt moment' at some point? Will the coronavirus pandemic offer this moment? Will there be another Hansa Mehta and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan coming from India now?

Question 2: Is this an epidemic of loneliness?

What's going to be repercussions of social distancing norms on the psychology of people?

Evelin Lindner's response:

In 2003, a forerunner of the SARS Covid-19, namely, SARS-CoV-1, afflicted the world. In 2004, the psychological effects of quarantine were studied in Toronto, Canada, and among quarantined persons a high prevalence of psychological distress was found, including symptoms of depression and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).⁷⁴ A key takeaway for 2020 is that 'Even if we can halt the physical spread of a disease through the expeditious use of quarantine and social distancing, we will still have to contend with its mental health effects in the long-term'.⁷⁵

Social distancing norms amplify pre-existing problems and intensify the urgent need to repair and replenish our social ecosystems, our sociosphere. As the world watches the heart-breaking coronavirus pandemic unfold, our hope is for an exponential change of heart so that global unity rooted in respect for local diversity becomes possible. The central question we face, which we must ask and answer together, remains: *How must we, humankind, arrange our affairs on this planet so that dignified life will be possible in the long term?*

Most countries have witnessed a dramatic increase of income inequality in the past three decades, and income inequality is associated with the population prevalence of depression. There is a 10 to 15 year difference in life expectancy between Americans at the bottom of the economic ladder and those at the very top, and income inequality has been linked with depression risk.⁷⁶ Covid-19 could deepen this inequality over the long-term, while, in the short-term, it undermines the peace of mind necessary for robust mental health and compounds the challenges of people already prone to mental health struggles.⁷⁷

Eighty-five per cent of people worldwide 'hate their jobs' in the sense of 'I hate that which I can't live without'.⁷⁸ Twenty-two per cent of American men without college degree follow their *hikikomori* brothers in Japan in spending their days playing video games, while disease and death

claims many of them.⁷⁹ There is an epidemic of suicide, either directly in response to the economic system's pressures,⁸⁰ or as a consequence of the social disconnection that this system creates, a disconnection that leads to degrees of loneliness that motivate suicide.⁸¹ Britain had to appoint a special minister to address its loneliness epidemic, as 'most doctors in Britain see between one and five patients a day who have come mainly because they are lonely, according to the Campaign to End Loneliness'.⁸²

The political consequences of loneliness and alienation are grave. Online hatred and real-life violence are waged by so-called *incels* — men who claim to be 'involuntarily celibate' — a reminder 'that isolated young people are vulnerable to extremism of every sort'.⁸³ In the United States, atomisation affects also families, insofar as the atomised 'neo-liberal family' is expected to bear primary responsibility for the welfare of its members. Through privatised risk and deficit spending, familial loyalty is used to guarantee loans, so that traditional family values are enforced by way of shared debt bondage.⁸⁴

The 'School of Life', headquartered in London, admonished already in 2018, long before the coronavirus pandemic unfolded, that the modern world is 'powerfully and tragically geared to causing a high background level of anxiety and widespread low-level depression'.⁸⁵

My seven years of working as a psychotherapist in Egypt's capital Cairo, taught me many lessons that relate to this problem. I learned to value the ability that traditional collectivistic family networks have to create social glue among its members. This does not mean that I was blind to the dark sides of collectivism, after all, its victims came as clients to me as a therapist. Through them, I learned about the harmfulness of collectivism, when it turns into division and oppression. I saw how the formation of trust in larger society is impeded when social bonds are limited to tribal settings.⁸⁶ I do see the advantages of creating larger and more abstract networks of relationships, I am an admirer of Paulo Freire's colleague Clodomir de Moraes, who calls it the 'artisan weakness' not to let go of control.⁸⁷ I welcome the liberation from all aspects of traditional collectivistic mindsets and society models that fail to nurture dignity. I do not wish to return to any kind of idealisation of the past.

Yet, there is a 'too little' and a 'too much', and what I see individualistic orientations do in Western societies is 'too much'.⁸⁸ Driven by the promise of equal dignity, they go too far. What is sacrificed is the solidarity that is embedded in collectivistic settings, notwithstanding their oppressive and divisive aspects. Going too far with individualism leads to *anomie*,⁸⁹ anomie that is now exacerbated by rising inequality.⁹⁰ By ripping the individual out from the collective, Western societies have thrown out the baby with the bath water so to speak, and instead of manifesting the ideal of equal dignity for all in solidarity, what has happened is atomisation.⁹¹ As this mindset is part of a global 'colonisation campaign' from the West, it continues to empty the world of its social and ecological resources, leaving behind a ravaged habitat where disconnected lonely 'losers' are blinded by the illusion that they can become 'winners',⁹² if they only work hard enough to buy 'the right life'.

What is overlooked, as I see it, is the benefits of the collectivistic mindset to create the quality of relationships that provide the social glue of societies, relationships in which one is valued, protected, and nurtured, rather than sacrificed to a monetary system. Non-Western communities hail traditions such as filial piety, and certain aspects of it may very well deserve to be maintained rather than thrown out wholesale. The *reciprocal* aspect of filial piety, for instance, is worth nurturing, it is only the oppressive *authoritarian* aspect that needs to be left behind.⁹³ The non-Western diaspora in Western countries is building precisely these bridges. For example, people of Iranian and other Middle Eastern backgrounds based in America appreciate the Iranian veneration of the elderly even though they have 'turned their backs on the other main Iranian cultural marker, namely, control over women and their sexuality' — even radical feminists who believe in women's social and sexual self-determination are 'proud of the Iranian esteem for parents'.⁹⁴ In other words, here are bridge builders who validate and nurture benign horizontal aspects of collectivism, while avoiding malign vertical aspects.⁹⁵ By doing so, they are close to the pro-liberal, pro-multicultural kind of

communitarianism and collectivism that theorists such as Michael Walzer and Charles Taylor stand for.⁹⁶

Mental health experts in the West recommend the following for the post-Covid-19 time:

...we need to realise that we are all in this together, that no one should ever have to feel alone. As we continue to use social distancing in the coming months, we should also reach out in whatever safe ways we can, letting the ones in our lives know that, though perhaps physically isolated, they remain embedded in a web of care and concern. Our health, both physical and mental, is linked. When trauma strikes a society, it does not just strike a group of individuals who happen to live in the same place. It exposes how connected we are, and want to be. It is compassion and simply looking out for each other that will support health—physical and mental—in the days to come.⁹⁷

If we were to rephrase this advice, we arrive at the wealth entailed in *kama muta*, ‘moved by love’.⁹⁸ We see that world regions like India, where the ‘glue’ of love that keeps families together is not yet sold out completely to the mindset of market pricing, need to become aware of the relational treasure they have, a treasure that is worth more than all the money of the world. Remember the Cree prophecy, ‘When all the trees have been cut down, when all the animals have been hunted, when all the waters are polluted, when all the air is unsafe to breathe, only then will you discover you cannot eat money’.⁹⁹ Remember that ‘it is easier to build strong children than it is to repair broken men’. We build strong children that grow into healthy men and women through loving relationships.¹⁰⁰

Remember the adage that ‘it takes a village to raise a child’. At our present point in history, the responsibility lies on the shoulders of the entire global village, on the shoulders of all of world society. I call on the entire global community to think about ways of living together that are nurturing and offer dignifying opportunities to next generations, rather than driving them down a path of atomised existence and disconnected competition for domination.

My ‘religion’ is love, humility, and a deep sense of awe in a universe that is so much larger than what we, as humans, can fathom.¹⁰¹ Fourteenth century Persian Sufi poet Hāfez impressed me. He composed these lines: ‘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...’ My personal version would go as follows: ‘I have learned so much from the larger universe of meaning around us 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...’

Question 3: Conflict inside homes seems to have heightened

especially when it comes to violence against vulnerable dependants. Do you agree? Can you explain this from a psychological POV?

Evelin Lindner’s response:

Social psychologists have demonstrated in experiments that personal inclinations depend to a large extent on systemic frames. This is how they demonstrated this: They let students play the so-called prisoner’s dilemma game and framed the situation by informing them that this is a community game. The students cooperated. Other students were told that this is a Wall Street game. Consequently, they cheated on each other.¹⁰² If you were to tell the students that this is a game of slavery, they would oppress each other. When students tried to predict what other players would do in the next round, their predictions went wrong when they overlooked the frames and assumed that personal inclinations drove everyone’s decisions.¹⁰³

In other words, we need to look at large-scale societal and social frames when we want to know why vulnerable people face violence, why vulnerable people fail to elicit compassion. Compassion depends to a large extent on a ‘community frame’ or ‘partnership frame’, while slavery and Wall Street frames are dominator frames that facilitate might-is-right mindsets in public as much as at home.

Today, we live in a world, where the traditional dominator model of society that Riane Eisler describes is still widespread, and even market economies that promised the partnership model have in the past decades evolved into the dominator model in practice. Economist Thomas Piketty, in his book *Capital in the twenty-first century*, shows that throughout the past hundreds of years, the dominating trend has always been that capital grew faster than the economy in general.¹⁰⁴ This trend has only been interrupted in the nineteenth century by capital shocks caused by two world wars and the ending of colonies. The years directly after WWII with their higher economic equality were a historical exception. In the course of the last thirty years, neo-liberal deregulation, tax cuts, and lower economic growth have brought back levels of inequality comparable with the eighteenth century. The coronavirus pandemic magnifies this trend.¹⁰⁵

The loss of happiness in market democracies is the title of a book that spelled out the ways in which monetary wealth fails its promise.¹⁰⁶ As material prosperity in Western countries increased, family solidarity and community integration eroded, with people becoming increasingly suspicious of their political institutions and each other. ‘Competent communities have been invaded and colonised by professionalised services — often with devastating results’.¹⁰⁷ Drug addiction has increased dramatically in some Western countries, particularly in the United States of America.¹⁰⁸ Robert Lane, the author of *The loss of happiness*, a political scientist, urged people in the West to increase companionship even at the price of decreasing income. Indeed, ‘the existing economic systems are rigged against connection, leading to relational malnutrition, breaking down the fabric of society’, adds psychologist Linda Hartling.¹⁰⁹ The impersonal bureaucracy of the so-called public sector, in concert with the profit orientation of the so-called corporate sector, risk degrading the social fabric, in a situation, where in reality the only viable ‘currency’ is the *currency of loving solidarity*.

All these warnings amount to very ‘unhappy news’. The popular market response of introducing happiness programmes will never solve this profound form of unhappiness. It does not ennoble slavery to make slaves happier so to speak. Large-scale change of global frames is needed so that also local frames can elicit compassion for the vulnerable rather than violence.

Question 4: Mental health is getting increased attention. Your views

Evelin Lindner’s response:

There are good reasons and bad reasons for why mental health is getting increased attention. In short: the ‘good reason’ is dignity, while the ‘bad reason’ is money.

The ‘bad reason’: Making more money

Throughout the past decades, Anglo-Saxon overshoot-individualism has influenced even science — psychology and sociology, for instance — with the result that economic arrangements that fit the *Homo oeconomicus* image of human nature were being justified. Everyone is made to believe that the *Homo oeconomicus* version of ‘freedom’ will guarantee well-being for planet and people — except for ‘the lazy’ who need to be shamed and stigmatised. Research in ecological and mental health now exposes the failings of this experiment and we understand that individualised Western psychology is too limited, that it has crowded out communal solidarity. In this situation, the economic system needs to make a radical turnaround and establish new constitutive rules that nurture what I call a *Homo amans relationalis* concept of human nature, instead of overlooking the

externalities of presently existing arrangements or monetising them, from Carbon emissions trading to the mental suffering of the stranded victims of these arrangement.¹¹⁰

The mental health care sector has experienced a ‘concept creep’ during the past years. Normal sadness, worry, and fear have become exaggerated so they can be labelled as mental disorders and be overmedicated.¹¹¹ Psychologist Nick Haslam laments how normal sadness, worry, and fear have now become labelled as mental disorders to be overmedicated by the mental health professions, with serious consequences, for instance, that resources are deflected away from where they would really be needed.¹¹²

The idea of neo-liberal individualism, ‘where free agents’ supposedly ‘navigate free markets in pursuit of happiness, success, and productivity’, misleads the mental health profession to engage in ‘person-blaming explanations’.¹¹³ The remedy is to ‘re-socialise a series of issues that have been medicalised’, to stop believing that ‘only the individual is the site of therapeutic engagement’.¹¹⁴ A group of psychologists has recently developed an alternative to mainstream psychiatric diagnoses, as an approach for victims of power abuse in mental health to regain dignity.¹¹⁵ They call it Power Threat Meaning Framework, that ‘can be used as a way of helping people to create more hopeful narratives or stories about their lives and the difficulties they have faced or are still facing, instead of seeing themselves as blameworthy, weak, deficient, or “mentally ill”’.¹¹⁶

The ‘good reason’: Restoring dignity

As a psychologist, I cannot avoid being aware that the social ‘glue’ that traditionally was provided by the extended family could never be expected from the abstract contracts of the market. New research in relational neuroscience confirms that the human brain and physiology flourish best when people are embedded in webs of caring relationships and that isolation and exclusion activate the same neural pathways as physical pain.¹¹⁷ Lifelong mental damage results from being neglected, whereas feeling loved renders long-term physical and mental health benefits. Nature and nurture are not separate, they are mutually dependent. A study on adult development, starting in 1938, tracked the lives of 724 men for 75 years and found that nourishing relationships are the key factor for long-lasting happiness.¹¹⁸

I once trained as a clinical psychologist and medical doctor, and now I attend to the health of all of humankind in its symbiosis with planet Earth, I promote global mental health,¹¹⁹ I nurture ‘equity in mental health for all people worldwide’.¹²⁰ I am engaged in *world family systemic therapy*, so to speak.¹²¹ I dedicate my life to nurturing the large-scale systemic change that is needed to create psycho-social contexts that can hold trauma without overly individualising it or abusing it as commercial opportunity.¹²²

I have coined the term *dignism* (dignity + ism).¹²³ This is how I describe dignism:

Dignism describes a world, where every newborn finds space and is nurtured to unfold their highest and best, embedded in a social context of loving appreciation and connection. It is a world, where the carrying capacity of the planet guides the ways in which everybody’s basic needs are met. It is a world, where we unite in respecting human dignity and celebrating diversity, where we prevent unity from devolving into oppressive uniformity and keep diversity from sliding into hostile division.

Evelin Lindner's biography

Evelin G. Lindner has a dual education as a Medical Doctor and a Psychologist, with a Ph.D. in Medicine (Dr. med.) and a Ph.D. in Psychology (Dr. psychol.). She is the founding president of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (HumanDHS, humiliationstudies.org), a global community of concerned academics and practitioners who wish to promote dignity around the world. Dr. Lindner is also co-founder of the World Dignity University initiative, including the publishing house Dignity Press. All initiatives are not-for-profit labours of love based on the practice of direct solidarity and gift economy.

Lindner lives and teaches globally and is affiliated, among others, with the University of Oslo in Norway since 1997, with Columbia University in New York City since 2001 (with the Advanced Consortium on Cooperation, Conflict, and Complexity, AC4), and since 2003 with the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris.

Together with the HumanDHS network, she convenes two conferences per year. First, the "Workshop on Transforming Humiliation and Violent Conflict" takes place each December at Columbia University in New York City, and, second, the other conference is held in a different location each year, since 2003 in Europe (Paris, Berlin, Oslo, Dubrovnik), Costa Rica, China, Hawai'i, Turkey, Egypt, New Zealand, South Africa, Rwanda, Thailand, India, and the Brazilian Amazon.

The nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2015, 2016, and 2017 gave all network members great courage.

If you wish to receive copies of Evelin Lindner's books, please contact her:

- *Making Enemies: Humiliation and International Conflict*, 2006, Foreword by Morton Deutsch
 - *Emotion and Conflict: How Human Rights Can Dignify Emotion and Help Us Wage Good Conflict*, 2009, Foreword by Morton Deutsch
 - *Gender, Humiliation, and Global Security: Dignifying Relationships from Love, Sex, and Parenthood to World Affairs*, 2010, Foreword by Desmond Tutu
 - *A Dignity Economy: Creating an Economy That Serves Human Dignity and Preserves Our Planet*, 2012, Foreword by Linda Hartling and Ulrich Spalthoff
 - *Honor, Humiliation, and Terror: An Explosive Mix – And How We Can Defuse It with Dignity*, 2017, Foreword by Linda Hartling
 - *From Humiliation to Dignity: For a Future of Global Solidarity*, forthcoming in 2020, Foreword by Howard Richards
- See more chapters and papers in full text on www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin02.php

Please see several links to more biographical information:

- Search Wikipedia for Evelin Lindner
- See www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin.php and search for *A Psychologist's Personal Experience as a Global Citizen* and *A Global Life Design: Reflections and a Chronological Description*

Links to videos

- See a list of talks and presentations here: www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin021.php
- See a list of videos here: www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/videos/00_lindner.php
- The videos from the 2017 Annual Conference of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies in

Indore, hosted by the Renaissance University:

www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/annualmeeting/29.php#videos

— A welcome video from 2007: <http://youtu.be/vqDYGpRcy94>.

— Evelin Lindner's Invitation to Join the World Dignity University Initiative, 2011:

<https://youtu.be/qGyPwHC5JdU>

— 'On Dignity and Humiliation', University of Oslo, Norway, 2019: <https://youtu.be/WeXH-R80zeM>

— 'From Humiliation to Dignity: For a Future of Global Solidarity — The Coronavirus Pandemic as Opportunity in the Midst of Suffering', Evelin Lindner's contribution on 30th May 2020 to the virtual conference 'The Psychology of Global Crises', convened by the American University of Paris, 20th–30th May 2020.

Please see:

a preparatory 60 minutes presentation on 29th May 2020, <https://youtu.be/cfNeg1zD8Y0>

or the final presentation of 35 minutes on 30th May 2020, <https://youtu.be/k3QtIwqTpDg>

— The 33rd Annual Conference of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies in the Brazilian Amazon:

— The Amazon Day at the Parliament of Pará State in Belém: <https://youtu.be/RWRCdvOqKpQ>

— 'Please Meet and Connect!' Lecture given at the Instituto Humana in Mosqueiro, Belém, Amazonian State of Pará: https://youtu.be/VOlbsH_5ETI

— Evelin Lindner Explains the Relevance the World Dignity University Initiative in Vila Praia Alta, Amazonian State of Pará: <https://youtu.be/2mdgYkAdUGE>

— Evelin Lindner's most recent presentation at the United Nations: 'How Dignity and Humiliation Inform Conflict, Including at the Work Place, Particularly in a Global Setting (Pdf of Powerpoint)', reflections shared with the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services (UNOMS) in New York City on November 30, 2017: <https://youtu.be/LvpSknkd3ww>

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¹ See, for instance, Lindner, 2009a, for 'how Asia can contribute to world peace psychology'.

² See my time in the Himalayas in 2017, www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin/pics17.php#shankara.

³ 'Will humans be extinct by 2026?' *Arctic News*, <http://arctic-news.blogspot.com/p/extinction.html>. See, furthermore, 'Climate collapse and near term human extinction: A speech by Guy McPherson, the global research news hour episode 70', by Michael Welch, *Global Research*, 14th June 2014, www.globalresearch.ca/guy-mcpherson-on-climate-collapse-and-near-term-human-extinction/5386102. See also 'The climate change solution that could spark global war: Superpowers will control geoengineering and all the damage that comes with it', by Alexander C. Kaufman, *OneZero*, 16th January 2019, <https://onezero.medium.com/the-climate-change-solution-that-could-spark-global-war-bd1cc9cce1a3>: In case world governments fails to halve greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, in an effort to provide some relief, global superpowers may decide to block out the sun, with the world's most powerful militaries taking the lead in deploying aircraft to go up 32 miles into the stratosphere and spray particles that reflect sunlight:

Short of worldwide consensus about how the technology should be used and who should control it — and remember now that nations can barely agree on an acceptable path toward curbing their own emissions — geoengineering would be controlled by a great power like the United States, China, or Russia. One or more of these world powers would carry out the project and enforce the rules, propelling us into a new era of climate imperialism where the very fundamentals of life in smaller nations — how much it rains, how much sunlight plants can absorb — are directly affected by the actions of a hegemon.

⁴ Lucius Anneus Seneca, *Letters to Lucilius*, pp. 91–63. See also MacKenzie, 2020, and 'Complex systems theory explains why covid crushed the world: The more complicated and efficient a system gets, the more likely it is to collapse altogether', by Debora MacKenzie, *One Zero*, 22nd July 2020, <https://onezero.medium.com/complex-systems-theory-explains-why-covid-crushed-the-world-a2cf5c0f9176>.

⁵ *Space exploration — A powerful symbol of global cooperation*, Jim Zimmerman, NASA, interviewed by Susan T. Coleman, The Peacebuilding Podcast, 13th December 2016, <http://us11.campaign-archive1.com/?u=e5c2110f5cc4fe346c79bf3d1&id=06298a46ca&e=e7c4dd8362>. I thank Judit Révész for making me aware of this interview.

⁶ White, 2014.

⁷ Anderson, 2016.

⁸ Author Andreas Weber, 2016, develops a creative ecology of the living — a *biopoetics*. This is the book description:

Meaning, feeling and expression — the experience of inwardness — matter most in human existence. The perspective of biopoetics shows that this experience is shared by all organisms. Being alive means to exist through relations that have existential concern, and to express these dimensions through the body and its gestures. All life takes place within one poetic space which is shared between all beings and which is accessible through subjective sensual experience. We take part in this through our empirical subjectivity, which arises from the experiences and needs of living beings, and which makes them open to access and sharing in a poetic objectivity. Biopoetics breaks free from the causal-mechanic paradigm which made biology unable to account for mind and meaning. Biology becomes a science of expression, connection and subjectivity which can understand all organisms including humans as feeling agents in a shared ecology of meaningful relations, embedded in a symbolical and material metabolism of the biosphere.

⁹ Researchers let students play the prisoner's dilemma game and framed the situation by telling them that this is a community game: the students cooperated. Other students were told that this is a Wall Street game, and, consequently, they cheated on each other. See, among others, Axelrod, 2006, Liberman, et al., 2004, Imhof, et al., 2007, Nowak and Highfield, 2011. See also Bernstein, 1971, 1973, 1975, 1990, 2000. I thank Vidar Vambheim for reminding me of Bernstein's work and that Bernstein introduced the concept of framing to describe how control of mental frames is used to regulate thinking and behaviour in educational contexts. Bernstein describes framing as a mental process and a technique to exclude certain aspects of reality from entering the communication. See also Chong and Druckman, 2007.

¹⁰ Eisler, 1987. Her most recent books are Eisler, 2007, and Eisler and Fry, 2019. She describes how, from the *samurai* of Japan to the Aztecs of Meso-America, people lived in very similar hierarchies of domination and under a rigidly male-dominant 'strong-man' rule, both in the family and state. Hierarchies of domination were maintained by a high degree of institutionalised and socially accepted violence, ranging from wife- and child-beating within the family to aggressive warfare at the larger tribal or national level.

¹¹ 'Was slavery the world's first human rights violation?', by Thalif Deen, *Inter Press Service*, 7th March 2019, www.ipsnews.net/2019/03/slavery-worlds-first-human-rights-violation/.

¹² Mahatma Gandhi advocated *Panchayati Raj* as the foundation of India's political system, as a decentralized form of government in which each village would be responsible for its own affairs.

¹³ While writing these lines, I see the documentary film *Ungleichland — Wie aus Reichtum Macht wird*, Das Erste, 7th May 2018, www.daserste.de/information/reportage-dokumentation/dokus/sendung/ungleichland-wie-aus-reichtum-macht-wird-folge-2-100.html. Das Erste (The First) is a television channel that is coordinated by the Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland ARD, a consortium of public broadcasters in Germany, a joint organisation of Germany's regional public-service broadcasters.

Let me offer a summary of this documentary film. Economist Joseph Stiglitz, 2012, calls for a new social contract, and Thomas Piketty, 2013/2014, explains how the post-WWII period did not represent a long-term upward trend towards more equality, but rather an exception from a larger trend towards rising inequality. Sociologist Brooke Harrington, 2016, has studied how the 'one per cent' continue getting richer despite financial crises and taxes, and she laments that the legitimate anger about this situation among the electorate is now being channelled towards scapegoats who have nothing to do with it — for instance, towards migrants, refugees, or minorities. Economist Branko Milanović, 2016, studies global inequality, and Markus Goebel and Grabka, 2011, have looked at rising inequality in Germany. Economist Raj Chetty laments the 'fading American Dream', and that children no longer can expect to earn more than their parents (www.equality-of-opportunity.org). Political theorist Yascha Mounk, 2017, has looked into 'luck, choice, and the welfare state', while Marcel Helbig, a researcher on education and social inequality in Germany, reports that private schools have increased by 30 per cent. Sociologist Jutta Allmendinger, et al., 2010, another education expert, recommends the European social model of unity in diversity as an alternative to the American form of market capitalism and its promotion of economic growth without regard for solidarity and social progress. Sociologist Michael Hartmann, 2007, has researched the sociology of elites, and Evelin Lindner, 2020

psychologist Paul Piff, et al., 2012, found that higher social class predicts increased unethical behaviour.

¹⁴ Stephan Feuchtwang in a personal communication, 14th November 2002.

¹⁵ Otten and Jonas, 2013, p. 33.

¹⁶ Kendler, et al., 2003.

¹⁷ The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACE Study) is a research study conducted by the American health maintenance organization Kaiser Permanente and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Participants were recruited to the study between 1995 and 1997 and have been in long-term follow up for health outcomes. The study has demonstrated an association of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) (aka childhood trauma) with health and social problems across the lifespan. See, among others, Felitti, 2017. See www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acestudy/index.html.

¹⁸ Cohen, et al., 2018. In this study 289 psychiatric outpatients were included, and factor analysis yielded two orthogonal factors. The factor named *interpersonal orientation* comprised *perceived burdensomeness*, *social defeat*, *humiliation*, and *thwarted belongingness*. The other factor, *goal orientation*, comprised *goal disengagement* and *goal reengagement*. The interpersonal factor correlated with both suicide crisis syndrome severity and suicidal phenomena in each time frame and the goal orientation factor with no other variable.

¹⁹ See, among others, Sarraj, 2002, Sayler, 2004, Giacaman, et al., 2007, Elison and Harter, 2007, Walker and Knauer, 2011.

²⁰ Leidner, et al., 2012.

²¹ See for research on inertia, for instance, Leidner, et al., 2012. According to anthropologist Scott Atran, humiliation is a negative predictor for terrorism, since those who feel humiliated become submissive. However, the situation is different for those who act on behalf of others' exposure to humiliation, such as the second or third generation of Muslims in Britain who believe that their parents were humiliated. See, among others, Ginges and Atran, 2008.

See for an illustration, 'Wave of indigenous suicides leaves Canadian town appealing for help', by Liam Stack, *New York Times*, 18th March 2016, www.nytimes.com/2016/03/19/world/americas/canada-youth-suicide.html. I thank Linda Hartling for making me aware of this article.

²² Galtung, 1969.

²³ 'Wave of indigenous suicides leaves Canadian town appealing for help', by Liam Stack, *New York Times*, 18th March 2016, www.nytimes.com/2016/03/19/world/americas/canada-youth-suicide.html. I thank Linda Hartling for making me aware of this article. Hartling commented in a personal communication, 21st March 2016:

Canada's indigenous populations demonstrate the deleterious effect of continuous humiliation: they are driven into waves of suicide as an outflow of 'cumulative humiliation', of a lingering trauma of colonialism and prejudice, of 'cultural genocide'.

²⁴ Hartling, 1995/1996. See also some of our recent joint publications, Chowdhury, et al., 2019, Hartling and Lindner, 2016, 2017, 2018a, b, Hartling, et al., 2020.

²⁵ Hartling and Luchetta, 1999.

²⁶ Pieterse, 2000, p. 176. I had the privilege of meeting Pieterse in Paris on 23th September 2002.

²⁷ Sachs, 1992, p. 3.

²⁸ Bull, 2015, p. 25.

²⁹ Scholar on human needs Ian Gough, 2017, draws on eudemonic psychology and its definition of three universal needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (p. 44). Katherine Trebeck, a research and policy adviser with Oxfam, offers a condensed overview over Gough's book *Heat, greed and human need*, 17th July 2019, www.opendemocracy.net/en/oureconomy/book-review-heat-greed-and-human-need/, where she summarises Gough's definition of basic needs:

...basic needs encompass physical health, autonomy of agency (mental health, cognitive understanding, opportunities to participate), and critical autonomy. They are satisfied by access to things such as

adequate food and water, protective housing, safe work environment, healthcare, and significant primary relationships, and in turn optimised by freedoms from (civic and political rights), freedoms to (rights of access to need satisfiers), and political participation.

Like me, Trebeck appreciates Gough's work as it helps those who are 'skeptical about the merit of wellbeing as individual self-reported happiness in the hedonic sense'. Preferences and wants depend on context, which means that it is not advisable to make simplistic assumptions about how people feel. In contrast, 'human needs are objective, plural, non-substitutable and satiable', see Gough, 2017, p. 3.

³⁰ 'Covid-19 has revealed a pre-existing pandemic of poverty that benefits the rich', by Philip Alston, outgoing UN special rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, *The Guardian*, 11th July 2020, www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/jul/11/covid-19-has-revealed-a-pre-existing-pandemic-of-poverty-that-benefits-the-rich. See also Hickel, 2018, and *The parlous state of poverty eradication: Report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Advance Unedited Version*, Center for Human Rights and Global Justice, NYU School of Law, 2nd July 2020, <https://chrgj.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Alston-Poverty-Report-FINAL.pdf>.

³¹ Lindner, 2006.

³² In my work, I apply the *ideal-type* approach as described by sociologist Max Weber, 1904/1949. See Coser, 1977, p. 224:

Weber's three kinds of ideal types are distinguished by their levels of abstraction. First are the ideal types rooted in historical particularities, such as the 'western city', 'the Protestant Ethic', or 'modern capitalism', which refer to phenomena that appear only in specific historical periods and in particular cultural areas. A second kind involves abstract elements of social reality — such concepts as 'bureaucracy' or 'feudalism' — that may be found in a variety of historical and cultural contexts. Finally, there is a third kind of ideal type, which Raymond Aron calls 'rationalising reconstructions of a particular kind of behaviour'. According to Weber, all propositions in economic theory, for example, fall into this category. They all refer to the ways in which men would behave were they actuated by purely economic motives, were they purely economic men.

Also Michael Karlberg explains that analytical constructs never correspond perfectly with some presumably objective reality. See Karlberg, 2013, p. 9:

Care must be taken, therefore, not to reify these frames or over-extend the metaphors that inform them. These frames can, however, serve as useful heuristic devices for organising certain forms of inquiry and guiding certain forms of practice — such as inquiry into the meaning of human dignity and the application of this concept in fields such as human rights and conflict resolution.

I very much appreciate Louise Sundararajan's comments on the book *The nature and challenges of indigenous psychologies* by Carl Martin Allwood, 2018, that she shared with her indigenous psychology task force on 3rd September 2018, based on her book chapter 'Indigenous psychologies', Sundararajan, et al., 2017. Sundararajan explains how to avoid that abstractions slide towards essentialism. In her view 'essentialism is abstraction mistaken as reality', as it is in the case of 'nation' or 'identity', 'whereas scientific theorising is abstraction treated as abstraction'. As an example she offers the model airplane, which nobody would mistake for reality, since it one can't fly in it. Also the pure form of the model does not lead to essentialism, 'because of the basic understanding that no reality exists in pure forms'. I appreciate her next example, namely that of 'dirt' and she illustrates it by two approaches to reality (X):

A: X=dirt, elements, crystals, subatomic particles

B: X=dirt (elements, crystals, subatomic particles)

Sundararajan explains that in scientific investigations, as represented by A, 'abstraction is context dependent, each level of analysis generates its own abstraction such that there are multiple abstractions (dirt, elements, crystals, subatomic particles)', none of which has a higher status of 'essence' than the other. Essentialism is represented by B, where 'the term closest to the phenomenal world (dirt) is elevated to the status of reality, the essence of which is supposed to be captured by the more abstract terms'. Sundararajan then applies the example of dirt to notions such as culture, nation, and population. If one takes the approach of B, nation or population names reality, 'the essence of which is captured by abstractions'. By contrast, in A, 'abstractions are not inextricably yoked to serve the master script of nation or population which are treated as labels of convenience like any other'.

³³ Ury, 1999.

³⁴ Archaeologist Ingrid Fuglestedt in a personal communication, 17th October 2011: 'Egalitarian hunter-gatherers, especially the animists, are the best societies this world has ever witnessed. ... This is not a reference to the Garden of Eden; it is to acknowledge that some systems are better than others in taking care of everybody's integrity, both human and animal'.

³⁵ Ury, 1999.

³⁶ See Ury, 1999.

³⁷ Christopher Boehm, 1993, 1999, 2012. See also Witt and Schwesinger, 2013, p. S38:

Dominance and submission were characteristics of the social interactions of our primate ancestors, a pattern that had been overcome by the egalitarian hunter-gatherer groups, and now re-emerged. Egalitarian sentiments still present as part of the genetic endowment of those who now found themselves in a subordinate position must, by necessity, have been frustrated. This may explain the frequent violent upheavals against the ruling hierarchy and the dominators' use of draconian, public punishment of insurgents to deter and suppress such sentiments.

³⁸ Scott, 2009.

³⁹ The Cyrus Cylinder was put on display at the Iran National Museum (INM) for the first time in 2008. See, for example, www.chnpress.com/news/?section=2&id=7423.

⁴⁰ Habermas, 1973/1975.

⁴¹ Bellah, 2011, p. 573.

⁴² Jaspers, 1949. BCE stands for Before the Common Era, and is equivalent to BC, which means Before Christ.

⁴³ Assmann, 2018.

⁴⁴ Jaspers, 1949. See also Bellah, 2011, and Bellah and Joas, 2012. Sociologists Robert Bellah and Hans Joas make the claim that intellectual sophistication itself was born across Eurasia during the critical *axial age*, that a new self-reflective attitude towards the human existence and the concept of transcendence awoke. The early works of literature, philosophy, and theology — the canonical texts of the Hebrew scriptures, the philosophical writings of Plato and Aristotle, the Analects of Confucius and the Daodejing, the Bhagavad Gita and the teachings of the Buddha — were the first classics in human history, and they all appeared in the middle centuries of the first millennium BCE.

It was a privilege for me to meet Hans Jonas in Berlin on the 10th anniversary of the German Institute for Human Rights on 12th April 2011.

⁴⁵ 'Is critique secular? The renouncers', by Robert N. Bellah, *Social Science Research Council Blog 'The Immanent Frame'*, 11th August 2008, <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2008/08/11/the-renouncers/>. The Immanent Frame was founded in October 2007 in conjunction with the U.S. Social Science Research Council's programme on Religion and the Public Sphere. It publishes interdisciplinary perspectives on religion, secularism, and the public sphere. See also Bellah, 2011, Bellah and Joas, 2012, and Bellah and Hammond, 2013, where Bellah expresses the hope that American civil religion can make an essential contribution to a 'global order of civility and justice'.

⁴⁶ Opposition to environment degradation seems to have played a role for past awakenings. Mark Whitaker, 2008, studied environmental sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, U.S.A. In his 2008 doctoral dissertation, he argues that environmental movements are not a novel feature of world politics, but a durable feature of a degradative political economy. He has analysed China, Japan, and Europe over 2,500 years and shows how religio-ecological movements arose against state-led environmental degradation:

As a result, origins of our large scale humanocentric 'axial religions' are connected to anti-systemic environmental movements. Many major religious movements of the past were 'environmentalist' by being health, ecological, and economic movements, rolled into one. Since ecological revolutions are endemic to a degradation-based political economy, they continue today.

I thank Michael Bauwens for making me aware of Whitaker's research.

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⁴⁷ Mencius, 2017.

⁴⁸ I thank Jingyi Dong for discussing with me the merits of Mencius.

⁴⁹ See *Mo Tse, the neglected rival of Confucius*, edited and translated by Mei, 1934, and *Mozi's basic writings*, by Watson, 1963. For Moist non-violent mass struggle, see *Mao Tse Tung and the Chinese Revolution, 1949–1975*, by Han, 1976. See also a list over 'core nonviolence writers in planetary history' on www.nonviolence101manual.org/core_nv_writers.htm. I thank Francisco Gomes de Matos for making me aware of this list.

⁵⁰ See, for instance, Battle, 1997.

⁵¹ Samad, 2011 .

⁵² Lindner, 2009b.

⁵³ See, among others, Katz, 2007. Some forms of monism including attributive monism and idealism are concepts similar to nondualism.

⁵⁴ Also the approach to *idealism* has traditionally been different in Asia and in the West. In Eastern thought, for example in Hindu or Buddhist idealism, idealism connotes higher consciousness (of an all-pervading God) as the basis of all phenomena. In Western thought (except for Plato and Hegel) the *ideal* relates to direct knowledge of subjective mental ideas or images (with epistemological idealists such as Kant teaching that the only things which can be directly known for certain are ideas), in contrast to *realism* that states that the *real* exists prior to and independent of our knowledge.

⁵⁵ See Yoshikawa, 1980, 1987.

⁵⁶ Martin, et al., 2001.

⁵⁷ Martin, et al., 2001.

⁵⁸ Lalonde, 1994.

⁵⁹ Bruce Schuman in his contribution to the Great Transition Network (GTN) discussion on the topic of 'Journey to Earthland: Making the great transition to planetary civilisation', 24th September 2016, in response to Raskin, 2016.

⁶⁰ The Krama Tantricism of Kashmir employed the dualistic-cum-nondualistic methods, yet, in the underlying philosophy it remains nondualistic, we read in Rastogi, 1996, p. 5.

⁶¹ See, among others, Sharma, 2007.

⁶² McDermott, 1974.

⁶³ See, for example, Goodman, 1985.

⁶⁴ Chinese tradition suggests that Lao Zi lived in the 6th century BC. However, historians disagree as to whether Lao Zi is a synthesis of multiple historical personalities, or whether he is a mythical figure, or whether he actually lived in the 4th century BC. He is being credited with writing the central Taoist work the Daodejing (Tao Te Ching).

⁶⁵ Loy, 1997.

⁶⁶ Fiske, et al., 2013, forthcoming, Fiske, et al., 2017, Schubert, et al., 2018, Zickfeld, et al., 2017. See also the Kama Muta Lab, <http://kamamutalab.org/about/kama-muta-in-other-languages/>:

Speakers of Sanskrit commonly used the word *kāma* to refer to erotic love, in particular, but we're using *kama muta* as a scientific term, defining it as a theoretical construct that doesn't correspond precisely to the original meaning of काम' or to any word or phrase in any everyday language. In fact, some languages don't have any word that is specific to our kama muta concept. However, keeping in mind that the translations are never exact, here are some terms that generally designate this emotion (although sometimes people use them loosely, to name other emotions).

⁶⁷ Zickfeld, 2015.

⁶⁸ Fiske and Haslam, 2005, p. 267:

People observe objects and persons, categorise and remember them, make inferences and plans about them. ... But people do more than cognise each other, they coordinate. They create relationships that are intrinsically motivating, that evoke emotions, and that they constantly evaluate with respect to shared models of how people should coordinate with each other. The structures and mechanisms of social relationships are distinct from the psychological structures and mechanisms of individual persons — and the characteristics of relationships are not simply combinations of the characteristics of the individuals that engage in them. Social relationships are distinct entities that must be analysed at their own level, as forms of motivated coordination.

⁶⁹ Fiske and Haslam, 2005, p. 268.

⁷⁰ Fiske, 1991, Fiske and Kintsch, 1992, Fiske, 2004, Fiske and Fiske, 2007, Rai and Fiske, 2011. See an introduction on www.sscnet.ucla.edu/anthro/faculty/fiske/reimodov.htm. See also *Why the P2P and commons movement must act trans-locally and trans-nationally*, by Michel Bauwens, P2P Foundation, 12th June 2016, <https://blog.p2pfoundation.net/p2p-commons-movement-must-act-trans-locally-trans-nationally/2016/06/16>. I thank Uli Spalthoff for making me aware of this article. Bauwens recommends Kojin Karatani, 2014. Similar to Alan Page Fiske, 2004. in *Structures of social life*, Karatani recognises four basic modes of social life, and these modes exist at all times and in all places.

⁷¹ Psychologist Stanley Smith Stevens, 1946, has developed the best known classification of measurement with four levels, or scales: *nominal*, *ordinal*, *interval*, and *ratio*.

⁷² See, among others, *Indigenous peoples and climate change: Emerging research on traditional knowledge and livelihoods*, edited Ariell Ahearn, Martin Oelz and Rishabh Kumar Dhir, International Labour Organization (ILO), 16 April 2019, www.ilo.org/global/topics/indigenous-tribal/publications/WCMS_686780/lang--en/index.htm.

⁷³ See, among others, ‘The key to a sustainable economy is 5,000 years old’, by Ellen Brown, *Web of Debt & TRANSCEND Media Service*, 2nd September 2019, <https://ellenbrown.com/2019/08/30/the-key-to-a-sustainable-economy-is-5000-years-old/>, and www.transcend.org/tms/2019/09/the-key-to-a-sustainable-economy-is-5000-years-old/.

⁷⁴ Hawryluck, et al., 2004.

⁷⁵ ‘Mental health in a time of pandemic: The psychological effects of an outbreak’, by Sandro Galea, *Psychology Today*, 14th March 2020, www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/talking-about-health/202003/mental-health-in-time-pandemic. Sandro Galea, M.D., is the Robert A. Knox professor and dean of the Boston University School of Public Health.

⁷⁶ Patel, et al., 2018.

⁷⁷ ‘Mental health in a time of pandemic: The psychological effects of an outbreak’, Sandro Galea, *Psychology Today*, 14th March 2020, www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/talking-about-health/202003/mental-health-in-time-pandemic. Sandro Galea, M.D., is the Robert A. Knox professor and dean of the Boston University School of Public Health.

⁷⁸ ‘The world’s broken workplace’, by Jim Clifton, *Gallup*, June 13, 2017, <https://news.gallup.com/opinion/chairman/212045/world-broken-workplace.aspx>: 85 per cent of people worldwide ‘hate their jobs’: ‘I hate that which I can’t live without’. See also Graeber, 2019, *Bullshit jobs*. See, furthermore, ‘The riddle of the well-paying, pointless job: This baffling paradox is the leading cause for today’s restless workplace’, *Medium*, by More to That, 5th November 2019, <https://humanparts.medium.com/the-riddle-of-the-well-paying-pointless-job-b7ae4d1d95d9>. This article offers an easily accessible summary of the *principal-agent theory* or *incentives theory*, which forms the foundational structure for most corporations today and is based on a paper published by economists Michael Jensen and William Meckling in 1976, saying, in short: ‘Pay people more, and motivation should naturally follow’. As a result, ‘a companywide charade is being played, with everyone pretending that not only are they busy and driven, but that everyone else is too’. The article also presents the *motivation theory* or *two-factor theory* by psychologist Frederick Herzberg, who published a Harvard Business Review article in 1968 that distinguishes between *hygiene* factors and *motivation* factors. Financial compensation is not part of motivation but part of hygiene, accompanied by things such as job security, work conditions, relationships

with colleagues, supervisory practices, or company policies. Motivation, however, comes from intrinsic conditions of the work itself and provides a sense that one makes a meaningful contribution.

⁷⁹ When I lived in Japan (2004–2007), I was able to gain deep insights into the *hikikomori* phenomenon. At that time I thought it was something specific for Japan. However, now it is clear that it is not. See well-written reflections, for instance, in ‘4chan: The skeleton key to the rise of Trump’, by Dale Beran, *Medium*, 14th February 2018, <https://medium.com/@DaleBeran/4chan-the-skeleton-key-to-the-rise-of-trump-624e7cb798cb>. See also ‘A small but significant number of men have dropped out of the workforce entirely to play video games’, by Jim Edwards, *Reuters*, 17th March 2017, www.businessinsider.com/statistics-unemployed-men-drop-out-workforce-video-games-2017-3?r=US&IR=T:

Twenty-two per cent of American men without college degrees have not worked at all in the last 12 months, according to *The Economist*, and a small but significant number may have dropped out of the workforce entirely and now spend their days playing video games. That’s about 20 million unemployed US men, of which 7 million aren’t even looking for work. ... Disease and death claim many of these men. Including black men in disproportionate numbers.

⁸⁰ ‘35 employees committed suicide. Will their bosses go to jail?’ by Adam Nossiter, *New York Times*, 9th July 2019, www.nytimes.com/2019/07/09/world/europe/france-telecom-trial.html?login=email&auth=login-email.

⁸¹ ‘World Mental Health Day: PM appoints suicide prevention minister’, *BBC News*, 10th October 2018, www.bbc.com/news/health-45804225. See also ‘Brexit is just the latest way the UK government is inflicting “unnecessary misery” on the poor’, by Eshe Nelson, *Quartz Media*, 10th November 2018, <https://qz.com/1468271/brexit-is-just-the-latest-way-the-uk-is-inflicting-unnecessary-misery-on-the-poor/>. See also the book *Loneliness: Human nature and the need for social connection* by Cacioppo and Patrick, 2008.

⁸² ‘Britain appoints minister for loneliness amid growing isolation’, by Lee Mannion, *Reuters*, 17th January 2018, www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-politics-health/britain-appoints-minister-for-loneliness-amid-growing-isolation-idUSKBN1F61I6. See also ‘Press release: PM commits to government-wide drive to tackle loneliness. Theresa May will host a reception and set out the government's plans to tackle loneliness’, Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street, Office for Civil Society, and The Rt Hon Theresa May MP, 17th January 2018, www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-commits-to-government-wide-drive-to-tackle-loneliness.

⁸³ ‘Why are young people having so little sex? Despite the easing of taboos and the rise of hook-up apps, Americans are in the midst of a sex recession’, by Kate Julian, *The Atlantic*, December 2018, www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/12/the-sex-recession/573949/.

⁸⁴ Many wonder why the religious right in the United States is so committed to the free market and so infuriated by welfare, and why, on the other side, neo-liberal thinkers praise marriage and the family even in the absence of religious underpinnings. Political scientist Melinda Cooper, 2017, explains what happened. We can start by looking at sociologist Gøsta Esping-Andersen, 1990, and his *Three worlds of welfare capitalism*, where we find a classic categorisation for national regimes of social welfare programs: we all are dependent upon (1) the state, (2) the market, and (3) our families. In her work, Cooper reports that there was a period in American history where spending on public goods such as higher education and housing was more prominent, where this was regarded as something to be financed by public spending. However, then came a pivotal turning point and all this was rolled back to family obligations financed by private debt. This happened when 1960s radicalism challenged accepted notions of family and sexuality and both neo-liberals and social conservatives experienced this as deeply threatening. They identified public spending as a moral hazard — students had time to pursue unbecoming ideas because they or their families were not paying for their education themselves. The result, nowadays, is a student body — including their families — mired in debt. Another moral hazard feared was that public spending on welfare would subsidise and even cause feminism and the breakdown of the family as it made women too independent of presumptive husbands and fathers. Cooper suggests that despite the completely different views on the meaning of the concept ‘family’ — neo-liberals see the family as a cluster of rational actors, while social conservatives see it as a sacred institution and a buffer against the market — both are satisfied with the neo-liberal family and the privatisation of risk and deficit spending as it serves neo-liberal opposition to the New Dealers’ visions of a family supported by social insurance on one side, while at the same time attending to conservative opposition to trends such as feminism and gay rights advocacy on the other side. This is how Cooper explains the

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current working relationship between free-market liberals and social conservatives in the United States, as neo-liberalism does not privilege atomised individualism over familial solidarities and contractual freedom over inherited status, what it does is privileging atomised families over societal solidarities. The result is a return of inherited status by way of contractual family bondage.

⁸⁵ *The book of life*, chapter 1: Capitalism: good capitalism: How the modern world makes us mentally ill, www.theschooloflife.com/thebookoflife/what-is-the-book-of-life/. Headquartered in London, The School of Life operates around the globe. See www.theschooloflife.com/about-us. I thank Kamran Mofid for making me aware of this school, in his article ‘Goodness gracious me, What is going on? What is this ‘Modern World’ doing to us all?’, *Globalisation for the Common Good Initiative (GCGI)*, 12th August 2018, www.gcgi.info/blog/949-goodness-gracious-me-what-is-going-on-what-is-this-modern-world-doing-to-us-all.

⁸⁶ It was an honour to have Ishac Diwan, 2016, come to the pre-launch of this book at Columbia University in New York City on 5th December 2018, and comment on the advantages and disadvantages of collectivist settings.

⁸⁷ Morais, 1979.

⁸⁸ See among others, van Hoorn, 2015.

⁸⁹ Sociologist Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) formulated the concept of *anomie* to help describe the new relationship between the individual and economic society during the nineteenth century Industrial Revolution. Now, it describes the general alienation of individuals on the road to the ‘new way’. We saw the rise of this feeling in turn-of-the-century films *Office space* (1999), *American psycho* (2000), and *Fight club* (1999).

⁹⁰ Since I wrote the book *A dignity economy* (Lindner, 2012), the topic of inequality has become ever more prominent. See a longer overview in endnote 1 of chapter 11 in my 2017 book *Honor, humiliation, and terror*.

When I wrote the book, everybody told me about Richard Wilkinson’s and Kate Pickett’s work. See, among others, Wilkinson, 2005, and Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009. See also <https://youtu.be/zYDzA9hKCNQ>. See, furthermore, the Equality Trust at www.equalitytrust.org.uk. Since then, more authors have become household names, such as Stiglitz, 2012, Thomas Piketty, 2013/2014, Atkinson, 2015, or Frank, 2016. See also a publication by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2015, for why all benefit from more equality.

Evidence has accumulated that ‘inequality damages family life by higher rates of child abuse, and increased status competition is likely to explain the higher rates of bullying confirmed in schools in more unequal countries’.

See ‘The *Spirit Level* authors: Why society is more unequal than ever: Five years after the spirit level’, by Kate Pickett and Richard Wilkinson, *The Guardian*, 9th March 2014, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/mar/09/society-unequal-the-spirit-level. I thank Rigmor Johnsen for drawing my attention to this article where Kate Pickett and Richard Wilkinson look back on their pathbreaking publication from 2009 and report on recent research that backs up their views on the iniquity of inequality. Wilkinson and Pickett write: ‘...human beings have deep-seated psychological responses to inequality and social hierarchy. The tendency to equate outward wealth with inner worth means that inequality colours our social perceptions. It invokes feelings of superiority and inferiority, dominance and subordination — which affect the way we relate to and treat each other’. See also Due, et al., 2009, Eckenrode, et al., 2014, Johnson, et al., 2012, and Zucman and Saez, 2019.

⁹¹ See also Tamler Sommers, 2018, who makes a similar argument. I thank Bonnie Selterman for making me aware of this book.

⁹² ‘Cigna study reveals loneliness at epidemic levels in America’, www.cigna.com/newsroom/news-releases/2018/pdf/new-cigna-study-reveals-loneliness-at-epidemic-levels-in-america.pdf. In the 1980s, 20 per cent of Americans said they were ‘often lonely’, and this figure has doubled 2018. Suicide rates are at a 30-year high in America, and depression rates have increased tenfold since 1960, not only as a result of greater reporting.

⁹³ Kuang-Hui Yeh, professor at the Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica in Taipei, and at the department of psychology, National Taiwan University, in a personal message to Louise Sundararajan’s Special Interest Group for Indigenous Psychology, 16th August 2018:

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Based upon the dual filial piety model, there are at least two intertwined but distinct aspects, reciprocal and authoritarian, of filial piety. The latter (authoritarian) aspect of filial piety might be gradually decayed in many modern countries, but the front (reciprocal) aspect of filial piety is still strong in most of countries.

See also Yeh, et al., 2013.

⁹⁴ Hegland, 2006, p. 210.

⁹⁵ See Lalwani, et al., 2006, Singelis, et al., 1995, Vargas and Kemmelmeier, 2013.

⁹⁶ Walzer, 1983, Taylor, 1989.

⁹⁷ ‘Mental health in a time of pandemic: The psychological effects of an outbreak’, by Sandro Galea, *Psychology Today*, 14th March 2020, www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/talking-about-health/202003/mental-health-in-time-pandemic. Sandro Galea, M.D., is the Robert A. Knox professor and dean of the Boston University School of Public Health.

⁹⁸ Fiske, et al., 2013, forthcoming, Fiske, et al., 2017, Schubert, et al., 2018, Zickfeld, et al., 2017. See also the Kama Muta Lab, <http://kamamutalab.org/about/kama-muta-in-other-languages/>:

Speakers of Sanskrit commonly used the word *kāma* to refer to erotic love, in particular, but we’re using *kama muta* as a scientific term, defining it as a theoretical construct that doesn’t correspond precisely to the original meaning of काममूत or to any word or phrase in any everyday language. In fact, some languages don’t have any word that is specific to our kama muta concept. However, keeping in mind that the translations are never exact, here are some terms that generally designate this emotion (although sometimes people use them loosely, to name other emotions).

⁹⁹ *Wildlife — not money — makes the world go round*, by Jon Hall, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 28th February 2019, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/wildlife-%E2%80%93-not-money-%E2%80%93-makes-world-go-round>.

¹⁰⁰ Linda Hartling in a personal communication, 28th July 2020.

¹⁰¹ I resonate with the argument in this article, ‘What does it mean to be spiritual? A rational answer’, by Zat Rana, *Medium*, 6th January 2019, <https://medium.com/personal-growth/what-does-it-mean-to-be-spiritual-a-rational-answer-857380fda855>.

¹⁰² See, among others, Axelrod, 2006, Liberman, et al., 2004, Imhof, et al., 2007, Nowak and Highfield, 2011. See also Bernstein, 1971, 1973, 1975, 1990, 2000. I thank Vidar Vambheim for reminding me of Bernstein’s work and that Bernstein introduced the concept of framing to describe how control of mental frames is used to regulate thinking and behaviour in educational contexts. Bernstein describes framing as a mental process and a technique to exclude certain aspects of reality from entering the communication. See also Chong and Druckman, 2007.

¹⁰³ Liberman, et al., 2004, Abstract:

Two experiments, one conducted with American college students and one with Israeli pilots and their instructors, explored the predictive power of reputation-based assessments versus the stated ‘name of the game’ (Wall Street Game vs. Community Game) in determining players’ responses in an N-move Prisoner’s Dilemma. The results of these studies showed that the relevant labelling manipulations exerted far greater impact on the players’ choice to cooperate versus defect — both in the first round and overall — than anticipated by the individuals who had predicted their behaviour. Reputation-based prediction, by contrast, failed to discriminate co-operators from defectors. A supplementary questionnaire study showed the generality of the relevant short-coming in naïve psychology. The implications of these findings, and the potential contribution of the present methodology to the classic pedagogical strategy of the demonstration experiment, are discussed.

¹⁰⁴ Piketty, 2013/2014.

¹⁰⁵ ‘Another bank bailout under cover of a virus’, by Ellen Brown, 18th May 2020, <https://ellenbrown.com/2020/05/18/another-bank-bailout-under-cover-of-a-virus/>.

¹⁰⁶ Lane, 2000. See also ‘Global study finds mental illness widespread: Anxiety, depression are common and
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often go untreated', *NBC News*, 7th July 2004, www.nbcnews.com/id/5111202/ns/health-mental_health/t/global-study-finds-mental-illness-widespread/#.W3AC3sIyUkI.

¹⁰⁷ 'Overwhelmed by these social services, the spirit of community falters: families collapse, schools fail, violence spreads, and medical systems spiral out of control. Instead of more or better services, the basis for resolving many of America's social problems is the community capacity of the local citizens', McKnight, 1995, book description. I thank Howard Richards for making me aware of the book by John McKnight, see also McKnight and Block, 2010. The Community Development Program at the Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, has established the Asset-Based Community Development Institute based on three decades of research and community work by John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight.

¹⁰⁸ *World drug report 2016*, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), www.unodc.org/doc/wdr2016/WORLD_DRUG_REPORT_2016_web.pdf. Heroin use and related overdose deaths have increased sharply over the last two years in some countries in North America and Western and Central Europe, with new psychoactive substances remaining a serious concern: 'heroin continues to be the drug that kills the most people and this resurgence must be addressed urgently'.

¹⁰⁹ Linda Hartling in a personal communication, 30th May 2016.

¹¹⁰ Sveaass and Wessells, 2020, summary:

Although psychology and human rights are usually discussed as separate fields, we will argue that human rights are at the core of the profession of psychology. Reviewing what may be considered as some of the basic ambitions, developments and focus areas in psychology, including ethical platforms for psychologists, we see that the obligations entailed in the international human rights conventions and declarations not only converge with what psychologists do and engage in, but also offer meaningful, ethical guidance for our profession. In addition, of course, the human rights obligations specified in the conventions to which states are parties imply that these are reflected in national law, and as such, these are legally binding for us as a profession. We argue that our psychological practice ought to be informed not only by our theoretical and practical knowledge, background and professional ethics, but also by the principles of human rights, as set forth in fundamental instruments...

¹¹¹ Haslam, 2016.

¹¹² Haslam, 2016.

¹¹³ 'When healing looks like justice: an interview with Harvard psychologist Joseph Gone', by Ayurdhi Dhar, *Mad in America*, 18th October 2019, www.madinamerica.com/2019/10/healing-looks-like-justice-interview-harvard-psychologist-joseph-gone/.

¹¹⁴ 'When healing looks like justice: an interview with Harvard psychologist Joseph Gone', by Ayurdhi Dhar, *Mad in America*, 18th October 2019, www.madinamerica.com/2019/10/healing-looks-like-justice-interview-harvard-psychologist-joseph-gone/:

For example, once you tell people about PTSD and you show them the symptoms and explain what they're experiencing, then some symptoms probably fade away, whereas others might come online, which validates or legitimates our concept of PTSD. That feeds back into the research we do on those patients whose experience has been molded by us. You wed it to the capitalist endeavor of marketing, especially for pharmaceuticals, and then you have something that might be dangerous.

¹¹⁵ Johnstone, et al., 2018. The approach of the Power Threat Meaning Framework can be used by individuals, families, and social groups, and it is summarised in four questions:

- What has happened to you? (How is power operating in your life?)
- How did it affect you? (What kind of threats does this pose?)
- What sense did you make of it? (What is the meaning of these situations and experiences to you?)
- What did you have to do to survive? (What kinds of threat response are you using?)

Two further questions help think about what skills and resources might be available:

- What are your strengths? (What access to Power resources do you have?)
- What is your story? (How does all this fit together?)

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¹¹⁶ The lead author is Consultant Clinical Psychologist Lucy Johnstone, along with professor Mary Boyle. See 'Introducing the Power Threat Meaning Framework', *The British Psychological Society (BPS) News*, 1st February 2018, www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/introducing-power-threat-meaning-framework.

¹¹⁷ See, among others, Eisenberger, 2012, Eisenberger, 2015. See also 'Social pain: A conversation with Naomi Eisenberger', *Edge*, September 10, 2014, www.edge.org/conversation/naomi_eisenberger-social-pain. Woo, et al., 2014, found that despite common fMRI activity for physical pain and social rejection at the gross anatomical level, there are separate neural representations.

¹¹⁸ Vaillant, 2012. See also www.adultdevelopmentstudy.org.

¹¹⁹ The third Sustainability Development Goal states: 'Ensure healthy lives and wellbeing for all at all ages', with target 3.4 saying: 'By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non- communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being. See the Sustainable Development Goals knowledge platform, 2019, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg3>.

¹²⁰ Eaton, 2019, p. 1.

¹²¹ Systemic therapy is now recognised in terms of its benefits and effectiveness in Germany since 2020 in addition to behavioral therapy, psychoanalytic therapy and psychology-based psychotherapy, it is the fourth so-called guideline procedure in health insurance funded care in Germany (for Adults). See, for instance, www.dgsf.org/aktuell/news/anerkennung-der-systemischen-therapie.

¹²² See more in Lindner, 2006, Lindner, 2009c, Lindner and Desmond Tutu (Foreword), 2010, Lindner, 2012, or Lindner, 2017. There has been a long-standing debate whether emergency situations are best looked at through a trauma lens or a psycho-social lens, see, among others, Tol, et al., 2015. Both approaches are bridged in the term *mental health and psychosocial support* (MHPSS) pointing at 'any type of local or outside support that aims to protect or promote psycho-social well-being and/or prevent or treat mental disorder', in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) guidelines on mental health and psychosocial support in emergency settings, Geneva, 2007, www.who.int/mental_health/emergencies/guidelines_iasc_mental_health_psychosocial_june_2007.pdf, p. 1.

¹²³ Lindner, 2012.