THE RELEVANCE OF HUMILIATION STUDIES FOR THE PREVENTION OF TERRORISM

Abstract

Why do young people who grew up in Europe kill innocent citizens in suicide attacks? In her paper, the author makes a link between the deep structure of terrorism and genocide, and offers humiliation as an explanation for both – feelings of humiliation, which carry the potential to lead to acts of humiliation and cycles of humiliation.

Current historic times are characterised by two historically novel trends, first, rapidly increasing global interdependence, and second, a growing impact of the human rights message. Furthermore, new research indicates that one can feel as humiliated on behalf of victims one identifies with, as if one were to suffer this pain oneself, a phenomenon that is magnified when media give access to the suffering of people in far-flung places. Human rights ideals also compound this effect because humiliation represents the core violation of the human rights ideal of equality in dignity for all human beings. In the context of globalisation and human rights, therefore, humiliating people no longer produces humble underlings but risks fostering angry 'terrorists,' who have yet to realise that equal rights and dignity for all can only be attained by non-humiliating means. The Nelson-Mandela path out of humiliation, namely his strategy of embarking on proactive constructive social change instead of re-active cycles of humiliation, requires the nurturing, locally and globally, of a social and societal climate of mature differentiation, embedded into respect for the equality in dignity of all.

Keywords

Humiliation, Dignity, Terrorism, Globalisation, Egalisation, Social Control, Satyagraha

Contents

Introduction[1]

The 2005 bombings in London shook the world. They reminded everybody of the Madrid bombings of 11th March 2004, the Bali night club attacks of 12th October 2002, and what has become known as 'Nine Eleven,' to name only three of the tragedies that recently unsettled the world. Innocent civilians live in fear – not only in the Europe and America, but also in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Middle East, in African countries and other world regions.

Why do young people kill innocent citizens in suicide attacks? Not least the 2005 attacks in London show that poverty is as unsatisfactory an explanation as is 'pure evil.' In London, young men, who could have built a promising future for themselves, perpetrated mayhem that paralyzed an entire city and cost many lives.

Many people reject the search for 'root causes' for terrorism, because they fear that such endeavours amount to nothing but the condoning of terrorism. Many equate *understanding* with *condoning*, and *de-scribing* with *pre-scribing*, and believe that we excuse terrorism when we conceptualise perpetrators as 'human beings' rather than 'mad monsters' or 'THE ENEMY.' In this chapter, it is argued that this equation must be overcome if we wish to reach for constructive solutions to the terrorist threat, not least because the nature of terrorism indicates that only inclusive change will work. What is needed is Mandela-like maturity and ability for nuanced bridge-building. Admittedly, Mandela is extraordinarily gifted and it might be impossible to attain his maturity by copying him. Still, lessons can be learned from his experience, for terrorism, for genocide, and for world peace in general. (In my work, I treat Nelson Mandela in an ideal-type fashion and focus on his constructive strategies, which, I feel, are not minimized by various criticisms that people may be directing at him as a person.)

This chapter argues that the root of terrorism – and genocide – does not lie in clashes of civilisations or religions, nor in ethnic fault lines or 'rational' conflicts of interest or any general 'evil' of human nature or modernity, but rather in complex psychological mindsets and behavioural clusters that exhibit their own homicidal – and also often suicidal – 'rationality.' History offers many examples of cultural, religious, or ethnic diversity having stimulating and enriching effects; 'rational' conflicts can be solved by mutually beneficial negotiation. However, all of these contexts may turn sour, acquire a greater emotional intensity, and become essentialised because of another, underlying dynamic: that of humiliation.

Humiliation is related in complex ways to shame, scapegoating, exclusion, and the depiction of other humans as 'beyond the pale.' Terrorism as well as genocide typically involve acts of humiliation carried out in response to fear of humiliation – more precisely, to fear of *future* humiliation, based on an experience of past humiliations – which often are part of the habitual submission practiced in traditional societies. Partly for this reason, perpetrators of homicidal suicide are not drawn from long-established elites; rather, they are often recently-risen subaltern actors. These dynamics link the study of terrorism to genocide (especially subaltern genocide, genocide perpetrated by recently risen underlings as, for example, in Rwanda). They represent an important field of inquiry for all students of human security.

At the outset, we need to raise a number of puzzling questions and observations. For example: What is terrorism? Few words are as politically or emotionally charged as 'terrorism,' and there are more than one hundred definitions around. The key point, on which almost everyone agrees, is that it is politically motivated, which distinguishes it from, for example, murder or football

hooliganism. Webster's University Dictionary defines terrorism as the 'systematic use of violence, terror, and intimidation to achieve an end.'

What is this 'end' about? Is it the same end that national warfare typically states, namely 'rational' self-interest (for example, 'liberation'), only pushed into illegitimacy by contexts of asymmetric power balance? Is terrorism effective in reaching political goals? Or is terrorism as inherently self-defeating as genocide (see the related analysis further down)? Or is it simply reflecting 'irrational' evil that takes political ends as cover?

Consider the fact that terrorism – as genocide – often seems to be less about 'mere' killing, and more about humiliating the targeted victim population. Bringing down the Twin Towers on 9/11, for example, was perhaps not so much about killing. Hitting a nuclear power plant, for example, would have produced more mayhem. The September 11, 2001 attack on the World Trade Center Towers in New York City and The Pentagon in Washington was about bringing down symbols of power, about humiliating the powerful. A 'lesson' of humiliation was meted out, 'you are not as invulnerable and powerful as you think! Watch it!' In genocide, victims often are killed only after elaborate humiliation rituals; they are not killed as honourable 'enemies,' but are dehumanised, degraded to the level of 'pollution,' 'rats,' or (as in Rwanda), *inyenzi*, 'cockroaches.' Is it conceivable, then, that both terrorism and genocide are more about humiliation than about mere terror or killing? Perhaps terror and killing are part of the humiliation process, rather than vice-versa?

Or, is Homo sapiens hopelessly evil by nature, imbued with lurking destructive instincts that threat to burst through the thin veneer of civilisation at any moment, using political agendas as cover? Or is it, in fact, the other way round? Are humans peaceable by nature, and corrupted by a modernity that spurs them to mayhem? This paper argues that the dichotomy of human 'nature' versus 'culture' is misleading. Human nature is neither savage nor noble, because human nature *is* culture. And culture is no automaton. It mediates the environment that humans inhabit in a variety of ways, both driving emotions and being driven by them. Humiliation is perhaps the strongest force in this dynamic. Feelings of humiliation, and fear of humiliation, are 'the nuclear bomb of the emotions' (term coined by Lindner). As with other emotions, humiliation is a historical-cultural-social-emotional construct: one that changes over time, wields considerable force, and can be directed to destructive ends.

As we stand at the beginning of the 21st century in historical time, the world faces two strong forces that generate deep change and undermine old familiar values and structures. The first of these forces is the increasing intercultural connectedness of the world (part of what we call 'globalisation,' or what anthropologists call the *ingathering* of humankind). The other significant influence is the human rights revolution. Both trends are facilitated by modern technology. Airplanes, television, and the internet – the list of modern technology that facilitates communication and mobility is long – bring the globe's inhabitants closer to each other than ever before and at the same time inform everybody that poverty and deprivation are no longer divinely ordained or part of nature's order but a human rights violation. A new world is rendered – a relational world with expectations of equal dignity for all, for which adequate cultural-social scripts are still lacking. The way emotions are processed is deeply affected and new kinds of conflicts materialise. Feelings of humiliation are prone to emerge when ever closer global relationships raise expectations only to be disappointed, and when respect for equal dignity is seen to be preached but not practiced. And feelings of humiliation have the potential to lead to rifts that hinder the cooperation essential for the successful building of peace and justice, globally and locally.

The coming-together of humankind means that no longer do a handful of diplomats attend to *international relations*. Millions of people engage now in *global relations* that make nations and borders fade in significance. No head of state, no diplomat had declared war between nations when an Egyptian national went to America, made use of his host's equipment and destroyed some of his host's most important symbols of pride, the Twin Towers. Here international relations – more precisely, internal relations in the global village – are acted out by ordinary citizens. Old solutions no longer work – no army can stem this phenomenon. Dialogue is needed. Hearts and minds have to be won. Dichotomies such as 'your terrorist is my freedom fighter' must be transcended for us to achieve world peace.

Poorly managed conflict renders pain and mayhem. Only 'waging good conflict' – a term coined by Jean B. Miller (1986) – in a Mandela-like fashion brings productive advancement. Conflict harbours a great potential to stimulate creativity and foster growth and maturity if approached constructively. These insights must be learned by everyone. Ervin Staub (1989) explains the significance of the role of bystanders for peace or mayhem to occur. It is not sufficient that some diplomats learn new conflict resolution techniques. Every citizen of the world, every 'bystander,' needs to contribute to this learning process and has to participate in forging a new culture – globally and at home – of a more mature and nuanced processing of emotions and conflict. Morton Deutsch, Peter T. Coleman, & Eric C. Marcus (Eds.) (2006), in their *Handbook of Conflict Resolution*, offer ample learning opportunities.

As part of this new culture, new paradigms have to be forged. In response to new circumstances, a new *Realpolitik* has to be envisioned. The old Realpolitik of 'black and white,' of 'evil and good,' of 'enemies and friends' was embedded into the past ten thousand years of complex agriculture, the time when land represented humankind's resources and the 'security dilemma' reigned (see more details further down). The old Realpolitik proves destructive in the new circumstances of on incipient global knowledge society.

The new Realpolitik has to be more inclusive and more preventive than the old one. Concepts such as 'enemies and friends' are not feasible for a global knowledge society. The only viable concept for a global knowledge society is a world of 'neighbours,' who, while 'good' or 'bad,' always need to coexist without mayhem. Couples, when they divorce, can move away from each other, yet, there is no empty continent or other planet to which communities can move when they dislike each other. Huge prisons cannot be the solution. We are stuck together on this planet. We need to learn to be more inclusive. Humankind needs to learn, at a minimum, what divorced couples with joint custody for their children learn, namely cooperation even if they do not love each other. Loving each other is the maximum ambition, yet it is not necessary for the success of humankind's shared custody for our joint home planet. And we need to become aware of the significance of prevention. In medicine, there is prevention and treatment. When prevention was neglected and treatment fails, the patient might die. We do not want to risk a dead 'patient' with humankind. Therefore preventing deadly conflict must take priority over post-hoc 'treatment' of mayhem, because otherwise it might be too late. And prevention means getting out of short-term reactionism toward long-term construction of a better world.

I recently travelled in two neighbouring countries. In one country, people waited outside subway train doors, stepping a bit aside, keeping the aperture unimpeded, until all those who wished to leave the train had done so. Only then the newcomers entered the subway coach. This was smooth and effective. In the neighbouring country, those who wanted to get on the subway positioned themselves in front of the opening doors, throwing themselves into the aperture as soon as the doors divided. They pushed those who wanted to get out in again. Getting on or off

the train resembled a fight for life. Often people were engaged in deadlocks, one pushing in direct opposition to another, both being hit by the closing doors, hanging half in and half out of the train. In both countries, everybody's aim was to get off or on the train; however, in the second country, where the subway system was a relatively new technology and cultural scripts had not yet matured, the intention to get off or on the train was translated into utterly short-sighted and ineffective strategies of sheer pushing power, everybody against everybody. This is how the world functions today. Our cultural-social scripts are not yet adapted to a new situation. We use short-sighted ways of conceptualising problems and ineffective cultural scripts for responding to them.

I begin this paper by sketching the background of research on humiliation. I then take a step back and examine the human condition through a historical lens, discussing the transition in human affairs from societies based on 'ranked honour' to those proclaiming an 'equal dignity,' and the relevance of this framing for genocide studies. I then turn to consider terrorism specifically, and relate it to subaltern genocide. How does humiliation lend its own 'rationality' to terrorism and genocide? How does terrorism and genocide represent a terrible means of purging feelings of inferiority and shame, derived from concepts of elite admiration? I end with looking into the future, spelling out the global policy challenges that require to be addressed by concerted international action.

The other papers presented by the participants in the NATO Advanced Research Workshop are all relevant also to this text. Many contributors have written about genocide and terrorism already prior to this conference, in ways that relate to this paper. I would like to mention, particularly, Laila Bokhari (2006), Robert Lambert (2008), David R. Mandel (2002), Elena Mustakova-Possardt (2004), and Thomas A. Pyszczynski, Jeff Greenberg, & Sheldon Solomon (2003).

The Background of Humiliation Research

Introductory case studies

Julius Paltiel, a Norwegian Jew, was imprisoned in the 'SS Strafgefangenenlager Falstad' during World War II. Falstad is situated in the midst of a breathtakingly beautiful landscape, in the middle of Norway, not far away from Trondheim (something like the latitude of Anchorage, albeit much milder, because of the Gulf Stream). Falstad is a large building almost forlorn in this lovely nature, wrapped around a rectangular courtyard; it was once a special school for handicapped boys. However, in 1941, it was taken over by the German occupying power and turned into the 'SS Strafgefangenenlager Falstad,' a detention camp for political prisoners. I met Julius Paltiel in October 2002. He lived through a deeply gripping and thought-provoking episode that I would like to narrate to you here.

Paltiel's story illustrates the malignancy of the old order of ranked worthiness, of the humiliation of humanity that is entailed in ranking people into higher and lesser beings, and how the humility called for by human rights ideals entails the potential to liberate and legitimise the fullness of humanity.

Once, one of the prisoners was asked to sing. SS officers and prisoners, including Julius Paltiel himself, stood in the courtyard, listening. The prisoner who was to sing was very

knowledgeable and had an extremely beautiful voice. He was able to recite several deeply reflective songs from the German cultural heritage, in German. He sang these songs so wonderfully and touchingly that the SS officers were taken in to a degree that they stood still and listened in silence; in complete silence. Julius Paltiel explained that this had never happened before; the SS officers never used to be silent, on the contrary, they continuously shouted insults and orders.

After about a quarter of an hour of beautiful sounds filling the air, a dog began to howl, trying to 'accompany' the song. This 'woke up' the SS officers. They immediately set out to 'cover up' for their vulnerability by engaging in humiliating acts. They ordered the prisoners to go to the tree in the middle of the courtyard and shake off its leaves; it was autumn. Then they ordered the prisoners to lie down on their stomachs and crawl to the leaves, take them up one by one with their mouths and bring them to one of the corners of the courtyard, all this while dragging themselves ahead on their stomachs. Thus the prisoners had to lie on the ground and use their mouths to 'clean' the courtyard from the leaves that they first had been ordered to shake off the tree!

It seems fair to say that the beautiful songs and their touching appeal had undermined the hierarchy of 'Übermensch' und 'Untermensch' that the SS officers otherwise attempted to maintain. In their minds they were not 'supposed' to feel and be touched in the same way as other people. Being merely human beings among other human beings, this was not their world; they believed to be 'higher' beings. However, the songs confronted them with a truth they did not want to know, namely that they, indeed, were mere human beings like anybody else, and no more. When they 'woke up,' they remembered the ideological frame they had subscribed to, namely a hierarchy of lesser and higher beings where they were supposed to occupy the seat of the master. Interestingly, they did not beat the prisoners 'mindlessly' or treat them with mere physical brutality, no, they perpetrated a highly symbolic and intelligent 'message' to both prisoners and themselves: they reinstated physically, mentally and emotionally the hierarchy of 'Übermensch/Untermensch' by sending the prisoners literally 'down,' down to the ground and let them carry out 'services' that were so 'low' that there could be no doubt as to who was their master!

What do we learn from this story? We could conclude that the beauty of the songs performed by the prisoner elicited humility in the SS officers, at least for a few minutes, a humility that is at the core of the human rights message of equal dignity for every human being. Humiliation, on the contrary, characterises a world of inhuman inequalities and brutal rankings of human worth and value in 'higher' and 'lower' beings.

Let us look at another case that illustrates how some people may identify with other people's suffering, and how this identification can be as powerful as being victimized oneself. In Egypt, where I worked as a psychological counsellor from 1984-1991, I had Palestinian clients, who came to me with depression because they felt they should help their suffering families in Palestine, instead of studying in Cairo and preparing for a happy life. In the wake of the 11th September I try to recall some of the cases (I do not reveal names and will protect individuals by making their biographies indiscernible).

A young woman, not yet 20 years old, came to me, let me call her Farida. I try to capture the essence of her message, and will use, as much as possible, her way of speaking English: 'My father wants me to study, get married, and have a life. But I cannot smile and laugh and think of a happy life, when at the same time my aunts and uncles, my nieces and other family members face suffering in Palestine. This suffering is like a heavy burden on me. I cannot smile and laugh.

I feel their suffering in my body. Sometimes I cannot sleep. I know some Palestinians of my age who do not care. They go to the discotheque and dance and do all kinds of wrong things; they even drink alcohol. I think this is disgusting. Our people are suffering and we should stand by them. If we cannot help them directly, we should at least not make fun of them by living immoral lives, or be heartless and forget them altogether. I feel that I do not have any right to enjoy life as long as my people suffer. All right, I obey my father and try to concentrate on my studies. But I do this only because I respect my father. If he were not there, I would go to my homeland, get married and have as many sons as I could have, and educate them in the right spirit. I would be overjoyed to have a martyr as a son, a son who sacrifices his life for his people. I feel that suicide bombers are heroes, because it is hard to give your life. I want to give my life. I want to do something. I cannot just sit here in Cairo and watch my people suffer. Their suffering eats me up. I feel so powerless, so heavy; sometimes I can hardly walk. The burden crushes me. What shall I do?'

What would you, the reader, advise this young woman to do? I tried to give her strength and discussed with her how she could contribute to a more just world after her studies, in a peaceful way, and how this would be more beneficial to her people and the entire world than giving birth to suicide bombers.

Her involvement and sincerity were intense, pure, deep and selfless. I was reminded of the sincere young students who had been my clients in Germany. I remember a young German woman – she was 19 years old and had bulimia, let me call her Rita. Her words were the following (I try to translate from German): 'I am appalled by the violence in the world, the destruction of the environment, and the lack of sincerity around me. I am a good student, a very good one. And I cannot live in a world where men play around with the world, with women, and nature, and bring suffering about all of us. Men want to show off their muscles and virility, that is all they want, and the rest of the world is their victim. This world makes me choke. I am so nauseated that I do not want to eat. And sometimes I do not eat for a long time. As long as I manage to refrain from eating, I feel pure, ascetic, as if I can escape the pollution around me by saying 'no.' But then I get very hungry, and I start eating, and because I eat too much, I have to force myself to vomit. This in turn makes me feel extremely guilty, because I waste valuable resources. Here I am, I say to myself, eating too much and vomiting, while millions of people do not have enough to eat. I am caught in this cycle. What can I do? I want to do something, but I don't know what! I feel so powerless and heavy!'

These two young women resembled each other. Both were highly intelligent, with an IQ considerably above average, with a bright future ahead, and they did not know how to digest the violence, neglect, and thoughtlessness they perceived around them. They were strong women, with an acute awareness of justice, whose strength was wasted because they saw no constructive way out. They felt caught in a hopeless situation, where they were straightjacketed. The Palestinian woman found solace in dreaming about sacrificing her life, as the mother of sons who would give their lives to defend their people. The German woman did not have any such vision, however, she thought that asceticism was a solution, an asceticism that went too far for her own abilities. (Other young women, like Rita intelligent and promising young pupils and students, manage to kill themselves by not eating – we call that anorexia nervosa – while others, those who do not induce vomiting, oscillate between asceticism and obesity. My field of psychological counselling from 1980-1984 was 'eating disorders,' and I led therapeutic groups with women with such disorders.)

I had some male Palestinian students as clients in Egypt as well, and they dreamt of giving their lives in Palestine in violent resistance and condemned, as Farida did, some of their male friends who chose to 'forget' their people's suffering and instead went about their own business, even enjoying life by feasting and drinking. None of these young clients was driven by any 'will to power' or inherent 'hatred.' They were driven by despair about the sufferings they perceived around them. They suffered from empathy, so to speak; perhaps to be called a 'noble' suffering. However, they suffered also from short-sighted, impatient and counterproductive strategies to provide their empathy with relief, similar to the alcoholic who believes that alcohol solves problems. In other words, the starting point, empathy for others' sufferings – a 'noble,' 'sincere,' and 'valuable' suffering – contrasted starkly with 'destructive' strategies for action, destructive for the bearers of these strategies as well as for the social fabric of a world which currently tries to build a global community that is based on justice that is brought about by non-violence. Whenever I counselled these young and bright people I was aware that they were vulnerable to being recruited by leaders who could exploit their ability for empathy and use them for acts of destruction – recently, Jürgen Todenhöfer (2008) interviewed members of the Iraqi resistance, shedding light on similar dynamics.

The core of their problem is – this is my evaluation after more than twenty years of work – the phenomenon of humiliation. As discussed earlier, many scholars and experts identify deprivation as the main culprit of problems such as 'grievances,' 'resentment,' 'embitterment,' or 'backlash'; however, I believe that this is too superficial an analysis. Victims of deprivation or exclusion do not automatically perceive this as a form of suffering that calls for action. It is only deprivation that is perceived as an illegitimate violation of ideals of equality and dignity, in short, which is perceived as a humiliation, which has the potential to elicit the 'nuclear bomb of the emotions' and its potentially devastating consequences.

Overview of the current state-of-the-art

My scholarly research has focused on the phenomenon of humiliation for the past decade. A doctoral project explored *The Feeling of Being Humiliated: A Central Theme in Armed Conflicts*, focusing on the African cases of Somalia and Rwanda, and the European one of Germany – Evelin G. Lindner (2000a). These investigations included 216 qualitative interviews in the three countries, focusing on their history of genocidal killing. Further interviews, some of them filmed, were carried out in Africa and Europe in 1998-99.

As the title of the project indicates, I focused on conflictive parties in Somalia and Rwanda, and on those who sought to intervene. The results confirmed my hypothesis that, indeed, humiliation played a key role in war and genocide – not only in the distant past, but at present. In all cases, a fear of imagined future destitution, and of humiliating subjugation at another's hands, figured as a core justification for genocidal killing. In the German case, this fear took the form of a future *Weltherrschaft des Judentums* – a world dominated by Jews. In Rwanda, the fear was of democratic power-sharing with Tutsis, interpreted as meaning a return to Tutsi domination. Somalia's future was also regarded as threatened by the 'arrogant' Isaaq tribe – see a deeper discussion in Evelin G. Lindner (2000b) and Evelin G. Lindner (2006b).

Since the conclusion of the doctoral research in 2001, I have expanded my studies, among others in Europe, South East Asia, and the United States. I am currently building a *theory of humiliation* that is transdisciplinary and entails elements from anthropology, history, social

philosophy, social psychology, sociology, and political science – see, for example, Evelin G. Lindner (2007a), Evelin G. Lindner (2007c), Evelin G. Lindner (2006a), Evelin G. Lindner (2006c). I am the Founding Manager of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (HumanDHS, http://www.humiliationstudies.org) and develop this network of academics and practitioners globally since 2001.

I see humiliation not as an ahistorical phenomenon rooted in human 'nature,' but as a historical, cultural, social, and emotional construct which changes over time. I contend that present generations occupy a transitional world-historical juncture, between an 'honour world' grounded in conceptions of ranked honour (with a concomitant experience of honour-humiliation), and a future world of equal dignity (with a quite distinct experience of dignity-humiliation).

Humiliation in general can be described as follows. Typically, the term 'humiliation' is employed in a threefold sense, pointing simultaneously to an act, a feeling, and a process. Humiliation means the enforced lowering of a person or group: a process of subjugation that damages or strips away pride, honour, and dignity. To be humiliated is to be placed, against one's will (or occasionally by consent – for example, in cases of religious self-abnegation or sadomasochism), and often in a deeply hurtful way, in a situation that is markedly at odds with one's sense of entitlement. Humiliation may involve acts of force, including violence. At its heart is the idea of pinning or putting down, of holding to the ground. Indeed, one of the defining characteristics of the process of humiliation is forcing the victim into passivity – a state of being acted upon and made helpless.

People react in different ways when they feel unduly humiliated. Some simply become depressed: anger turned inward against oneself. Others become enraged; still others hide their anger, and carefully plot revenge. The person motivated by revenge may rise to become leader of a movement that instigates mass violence – by forging narratives of humiliation, and inviting the masses to invest their grievances in those narratives. Feelings of humiliation and fear of humiliation, if instigated and harnessed in malign ways by 'humiliation entrepreneurs,' may fuel mass atrocities in an enormously powerful and highly efficient manner.

The most potent weapon of mass destruction is thus the humiliated mind (whether the feeling of humiliation pre-exists or is manipulated). That mind may be ready to transgress all 'normal' calculations of self-interest in response. A relatively small number of people so inclined can humble large armies – not least because cycles of humiliation, if kept in motion, may pre-empt the need for sophisticated weapons. Or, the destruction of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 was achieved without access to high-tech bombs or missiles. Modern technology may serve as a magnifier of the humiliated mind – as in the Nazi Holocaust, where it enabled mass killing on an industrial scale. In Rwanda, household tools such as machetes sufficed; many victims paid to be shot instead of hacked to death. Modern technology serves as a magnifier, in the Holocaust it enabled industrial mass killing, in Rwanda, Radio Mille Collines disseminated propaganda, and 9/11 was possible through the victim's civil airplanes turned into missiles.

In traditional hierarchical societies, elites were socialised to translate feelings of humiliation into an urge to react violently. They defended their honour against humiliation – whether with a sword, in duel-like conflicts, or in duel-like wars employing increasingly lethal weaponry. Subaltern actors, namely women and male underlings, were expected to accept their subjugation humbly, subserviently, and obediently, without invoking or expressing feelings of humiliation. This conceptualisation first arose around ten thousand years ago, when hierarchical societal systems emerged alongside complex agricultural societies evolved – see William Ury (1999) for

a comprehensive description. Until recently, such hierarchical societal systems were regarded as legitimate, even divinely ordained. Even today, in many parts of the world, populations still subscribe to these concepts.

Many elements of this equation merit attention I must unfortunately deny them here, for space reasons. To take one example: what is the difference between a humiliation felt 'innately,' and such a feeling when culturally prescribed or instigated by means of propaganda? If humiliation is felt at the individual level, how is it transmitted to the group, if indeed it is? Those interested in pursuing these themes further may consult the author's extensive writings at http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin02.php.

Apart from myself, only very few scholars focused on the role of humiliation per se. for example, Donald C. Klein (1991) edited two special issues of the *Journal of Primary Prevention*, in 1991 and 1992, that were devoted to the topic of humiliation. Linda M. Hartling & Tracy Luchetta (1999) pioneered a quantitative questionnaire on humiliation (Humiliation Inventory), whose questions probe the extent to which respondents feel harmed by such incidents throughout life, and how much they fear them with a rating from 1 to 5 measuring items such as 'being teased, bullied, scorned, excluded, laughed at, or, harassed.' Linda Hartling wrote (in a personal note on May 12, 2007): 'Few people have engaged in any empirical analysis of the impact of humiliating experiences. My research convinced me that humiliation has a cumulative impact. Unless there is a healing, relational intervention – unless the individual is connected to family, friends, therapy, community connections, etc., to strengthen his/her resistance and resilience – I believe cumulative experiences of humiliation can suck individuals into a downward spiral of disconnection, depression, isolation, and, sadly, sometimes violence.'

The view that humiliation may be a particularly forceful phenomenon is supported by the research of Thomas J. Scheff & Suzanne M. Retzinger (1991), who studied shame and humiliation in marital quarrels. They showed that suffering caused by humiliation is highly significant and that the bitterest divisions have their roots in shame and humiliation. Jan Smedslund (1998) developed *Psycho-Logic*, within which he describes anger, forgiveness and humiliation. William Vogel & Aaron Lazare (1990) document unforgivable humiliation as a very serious obstacle in couples' treatment. In his recent book *On Apology*, Aaron Lazare (2004) writes, 'I believe that humiliation is one of the most important emotions we must understand and manage, both in ourselves and in others, and on an individual and national level' (262). Lazare's claim is supported, for example, by Robert J. Lifton (2003). Robert L. Hale (1994), furthermore, explored the subject in his book *The Role of Humiliation and Embarrassment in Serial Murder*. Humiliation has been studied in such fields as love, sex and social attractiveness, depression, society and identity formation, sports, history, literature, and film.

Scheff and Retzinger extended their work on violence and the Holocaust, studying the part played by 'humiliated fury' – a term coined by Helen B. Lewis (1971) – in escalating conflicts between individuals and nations – see Thomas J. Scheff (1997). Dennis Smith (2006), was introduced to the notion of humiliation through my research and incorporates the notion into his work. Vamik D. Volkan, Demetrios A. Julius, & Joseph V. Montville (Eds.) (1991) carried out important work on psychopolitical analysis of intergroup conflict and its traumatic effects. In his book *Blind Trust*, Vamik D. Volkan (2004) explains that a *chosen trauma* that is experienced as *humiliation* is *not mourned*, leading to the feeling of *entitlement to revenge* and, under the pressure of *fear/anxiety*, to *collective regression*. Indeed, chosen traumata are often connected with myths that are kept alive over generations. In his paper 'The Myth of the Trauma / The Trauma of the Myth,' Thomas M. Pick (2001) analyses four historic battles, of which two had

disastrous effects that lasted for many centuries, while the other two did not. He suggests that the devastation in the first two cases can be ascribed to precisely those myths.

In the realm of psychology, sociology and trauma, Ervin Staub's work continues to be highly significant – see, among others, Ervin Staub (2003), Ervin Staub (1999), and Ervin Staub (2007) for his recent work on terrorism. See also the special issue of the journal *Social Research* in 1997 that was stimulated by the book *Decent Society* by Avishai Margalit (1996). Staub makes the point that bystanders need to stand *up* – and not *by* – when humiliation is being perpetrated on their neighbours, while Margalit draws our attention to the fact that we need to stand up not just against singular acts of humiliation but that we have to build societies with institutions that do not humiliate their citizens.

The notion of honour and humiliation is addressed, for example, by Richard E. Nisbett & Dov Cohen (1996). They refer to the form of honour that operates in more traditional branches of the Mafia or, more generally, in blood feuds. Bertram Wyatt-Brown (1982) studied the history of American *Southern Honour* and humiliation, while William I. Miller (1993) wrote a book entitled *Humiliation and Other Essays on Honour, Social Discomfort, and Violence*, where he linked humiliation to honour as understood in historical and literary classics like *The Iliad* or Icelandic sagas.

There is a significant literature in philosophy on *the politics of recognition* – see Axel Honneth (1997) on related themes. German philosopher Max Scheler (1912) set out these issues in his classic book *Ressentiment*. Max Scheler (1913) stated that a person at her core is a loving being, *ens amans,* who may feel *ressentiment* (comparable to resentment) when not recognised. The philosophy on *the politics of recognition*, building on Scheler, supposes that it may lead to violence when people suffer humiliation as a result of non-recognition.

The human need for recognition has been explored by a number of scholars. Erich Fromm (1941), wrote *Escape from Freedom*, where he pointed out how emotional distress makes people vulnerable to charismatic leaders. The one emotional distress that nobody of a clear mind can escape is awareness of death. It may be so strong that we may want to escape from it or even deny it – read, for example, *The Denial of Death* by Ernest Becker (1973). *Terror management theory* (TMT), first developed by Jeff Greenberg, Sheldon Solomon, & Thomas A. Pyszczynski (1997), analyzes human behavior when life is threatened. Humans are terrorized by their awareness of their mortality, they say, and as a "remedy" they connect their self-esteem with their investment in cultural belief systems.

This overview only reflects my awareness of relevant literature. To my knowledge, only Miller, Hartling, and the two above-mentioned journals explicitly use the word and concept of *humiliation* at the center of their work and in the title, prior to my book *Making Enemies: Humiliation and International Conflict*, Evelin G. Lindner (2006c). However, more research is certainly available that is not considered here, particularly if one draws the boundaries wider. As soon as we turn to issues related to humiliation, then a wide field of research opens up: Research on mobbing and bullying touches upon the phenomenon of humiliation, which in turn leads to the field of prejudice and stigmatisation, which draws on research in trauma and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), aggression, power and conflict, stress, and finally research on emotions. In cases where humiliation is studied in cross-cultural settings, cross-cultural psychology must be included, and the anthropological, sociological, and philosophical embeddedness of humiliation processes in different cultural contexts addressed. If humiliation among groups or nations is studied then history and political science plays a central role.

Just in the past years, research has uncovered to what extent Homo sapiens is a social animal that thrives on connection and cooperation rather than isolation and confrontation – see, for example, Amy Banks & Judith V. Jordan (2007), and their article 'The Human Brain: Hardwired for Connections' – even rats are capable of generalized reciprocity, not just direct reciprocity, see Thomas Pfeiffer et al. (2005). Mark Ames (2005) contends that the common myth of an 'isolated case of madness' is no sufficient explanation for violence at the workplace and in schools. He identifies a long process of recognition being withdrawn and the need for connection being frustrated, during which violent aggressors become lonely individuals.

Having friends (rather than money) is at the core of happiness. Naomi I. Eisenberger & Matthew D. Lieberman (2005), wrote the chapter, 'Why It Hurts to Be Left Out: The Neurocognitive Overlap Between Physical Pain and Social Pain' where they state, 'Social connection is a need as basic as air, water, or food and that like these more basic needs, the absence of social connections causes pain. Indeed, we propose that the pain of social separation or rejection may not be very different from some kinds of physical pain' (Eisenberger & Lieberman, 2005, p. 110).

Rediscovering the truth of 'human nature,' as it evolved during the first ninety percent of its history (I will explain this in more detail further down), has catapulted positive psychology into the limelight – see the work of Nobel Laureate Daniel Kahneman (2002), Martin E. P. Seligman (2002), or Norbert Schwarz, Daniel Kahneman, & Ed Diener (Eds.) (1999), who all spell out the make-up of happiness. *Stumbling on Happiness* by Daniel T. Gilbert (2006) is a telling book title; it won the 2007 Royal Society Prize for Science Books.

What the new research teaches us is the central role of so-called mirror neurons. Learning about mirror neurons illuminates not only the case of humiliation in itself, but also how humiliation can 'spread' through identifying with victims of humiliation. Humiliation appears to be mapped in the brain by the same mechanisms that encode real physical pain. More precisely, the human brain has multiple mirror neuron systems in a part of the brain called the insula, which understand not just the actions of others but their intentions, the social meaning of their behaviour and their emotions. 'Social emotions like guilt, shame, pride, embarrassment, disgust and lust are based on a uniquely human mirror neuron system found in a part of the brain called the insula, Dr. Keysers said' – reports Sandra Blakeslee (2006), p. 3. And rejection hurts like physical pain, as does observing the rejection of other people I identify with. These discoveries shift our understanding of a vast array of fields, from philosophy, linguistics, and culture, to empathy, imitation, or autism psychotherapy.

Social pain - including social pain inflicted by humiliation – can endure throughout one's life span – see Linda M. Hartling (2005). And it can lead to violence, not least because social pain diminishes self-regulation. Diminished self-regulation, in turn, increases the risk of self-defeating behaviour, including violence.

Let me intersect a passage from Linda M. Hartling (2005):

In an effort to illuminate the factors that make humiliating experiences enduring and an impetus for violence, I propose that we stretch our conceptual maps by exploring the neurobiology of humiliation. Recent research on social pain—'the distressing experience arising from the perception of psychological distance from close others or from the social group' (Eisenberger & Lieberman, in press, p. 6) – may help to explain both the acuteness and the enduring nature of humiliating experiences. Most of us would agree that humiliation provokes social pain. Eisenberg and Lieberman reviewed studies of animal and human

behavior and conducted neuropsychological and neuroimaging research, to formulate a theory about how the brain processes social pain – and, presumably, the pain of humiliation: Social Pain/Physical Pain Overlap Theory (SPOT)…proposes that social pain, the pain that we experience when social relationships are damaged or lost, and physical pain, the pain that we experience upon physical injury, share parts of the same underlying processing system. This system is responsible for detecting the presence or possibility of physical or social damage and recruiting attention once something has gone wrong in order to fix it… Based on mammalian infants' lengthy period of immaturity and their critical need for substantial maternal contact and care, it is possible that the social attachment system, the system that keeps us near close others, may have piggybacked onto the pre-existing pain system, borrowing the pain signal to signify and prevent the danger of social separation. (p. 4) Eisenberg and Lieberman observe that social pain triggers some of the same mechanisms and responses in the brain as physical pain. Could this be one of the reasons the pain of humiliation is so enduring? (Hartling, 2005, pp. 2-3).

With these framings in mind, let us consider humiliation in historical context, with reference to the transition from ranked honour to equal dignity, or from honour-humiliation societies to dignity-humiliation societies.

The Historic Transition from Ranked Honour to Equal Dignity

According to William Ury (1999), most of human history passed relatively peacefully, with small bands of hunter-gatherers cooperating in noticeably egalitarian societal structures, amidst abundant resources.

Roughly ten thousand years ago, Homo sapiens had populated the entire globe – at least its more easily accessible regions – and uninhabited land became scarce. No longer could people just wander off to the next virgin valley; it was likely to be populated already (the anthropological term is *circumscription*). Increasingly, people had to stay in place, become more sedentary, and make do with the resources immediately available, primarily through a process of agriculture (*intensification* is the anthropological term).

Agriculture introduced a profoundly new way of life: much more malign than previously, because land belongs either to oneself or to another. This win-lose logic, in turn, fuels war. International relations theory uses concepts like the 'security dilemma' to describe how arms races and war were all but inevitable in this atmosphere of fear of attack from outside one's community – see, among others, the work done by Barry Posen (1993), and Russell Hardin (1995). In response to these novel circumstances, hierarchical societies evolved, with masters at the top and lesser beings at the bottom. Human worthiness became ranked, with different degrees of honour attached to each stratum.

Ranked honour is a cultural-social adaptation to the situation during roughly the past ten thousand years of hierarchal societies of complex agriculture. It is deeply embedded into the security dilemma. The security dilemma as described in international relations theory has been expanded upon by many authors. The threat of pre-emption and actual pre-emption are the ultimate and seemingly inevitable outcome of the traditional security dilemma. The security dilemma forces bloody competition to emerge out of mutual distrust, even though nobody is interested in going to war in the first place. States that have no intention to harm one another

may still end up in competition and war. Its very essence is one of tragedy. It plays out when states (or social units) are too close to each other to be unaware that the other represents a potential threat, and too far away to be intimately familiar enough with the other to be able to safely gauge the other's objectives and intentions. When we use the word 'global village' as a blueprint, then the security dilemma characterises a world of 'many villages,' each connected to a specific territory and pitted against the other in the security dilemma.

Under conditions of the security dilemma, fear reigns. Hobbesian fear of a surprise attack from outside one's borders is all-pervasive. Continuous preparations for war drain societal resources. Everybody has to be continually on the alert and willing to be led by their leaders and governmental institutions. Stereotyped fear of out-groups (for example, of other nations) permeates in-groups. For millennia, this fear became manifest in societal, social and cultural institutions, from manifest expressions such as 'Ministries of War' or 'Defense' to less tangible identity constructs such as masculinity or honour norms.

It seems evident that most individuals feel intense pain when something they value is debased, especially when it defines their inner-most being, for example their honour or dignity. However, during the past millennia, this was not the case for subaltern underlings. Humiliation was a privilege for 'honourable' elites. The concept of masculinity in particular is a concept of honour to be defended against humiliation. There is a Somali proverb: 'A man deserves to be killed, not humiliated.' Aristocrats were entitled to fight duels to defend their humiliated honour. In Japan, the Samurai, upper-class warriors in the Tokugawa Shogunate (1603-1868), were entitled to commit suicide – Sepukku (harakiri) – in a highly aestheticized ritual act to protect their honour during peace time. Young and low-ranking warriors, in contrast, seldom were required to follow their superior's example and defend their honour, simply because they had so little of it. An underling's honour typically did not count for much. Therefore underlings had to swallow debasement quietly. In other words, honour is ranked. In an honour context, elites are regarded as higher beings, while underlings are counted as lower beings, with many graded layers between the top and bottom. The right to invoke humiliation is linked to this ranking. Usually honour is a male concept in a collectivist setting. Particularly, elite males possess honour, and are actors, while most women, children, and to a certain degree lowly men, represent the substratum to be acted upon by their superiors. Vendetta, blood feud, and duel - women and lowly men are no 'honourable' actors, not worth killing. Women, for example, can move freely when blood feuds are rife, precisely because they do not merit such 'honourable' treatment.

Since very recently, however – beginning just a few hundred years ago – humankind faces a second deep transition, as profound as the one that occurred millennia ago. Technological innovations allow humans to relate to their home, the planet Earth, and to their fellow humans, in new ways. Increasingly, knowledge and not land is the essential resource for sustainable livelihoods. Ury suggests that humankind is on the verge of creating a global knowledge society, thus returning to the win-win frame of the hunter-gatherers (since knowledge, unlike land, is an expandable resource). Human beings may thereby regain the potential for relatively peaceful and egalitarian societal structures.

Some of the predicted changes may already be seen in the growing acceptance of human-rights ideals, which have wrought a profound shift in the hierarchical order. In the course of this process, the notion of humiliation has changed its point of attachment. The change is marked by the emergence of the modern meaning of the word 'humiliation,' in 1757. William I. Miller (1993) informs us that 'the earliest recorded use of to humiliate, meaning to mortify or to lower or to depress the dignity or self-respect of someone, does not occur until 1757' (p. 175, italics in

original). Under this new framework, the downtrodden and the subaltern *gain the right to feel humiliated*. Humiliation moves from being the privilege of the elite to becoming the right of the disadvantaged at the bottom of the ladder. Subaltern actors around the world today are socialised to feel humiliated by their lowliness – now defined as an illegitimate affront to their dignity, rather than a legitimate humbling. The elites, by contrast, are called on to regain humility, and are no longer permitted to resist such demands by labelling them as humiliating.

The human rights revolution could be described as an attempt to collapse the master-slave dynamic of the past ten thousand years to a midpoint of equal dignity and humility (see Figure 1).
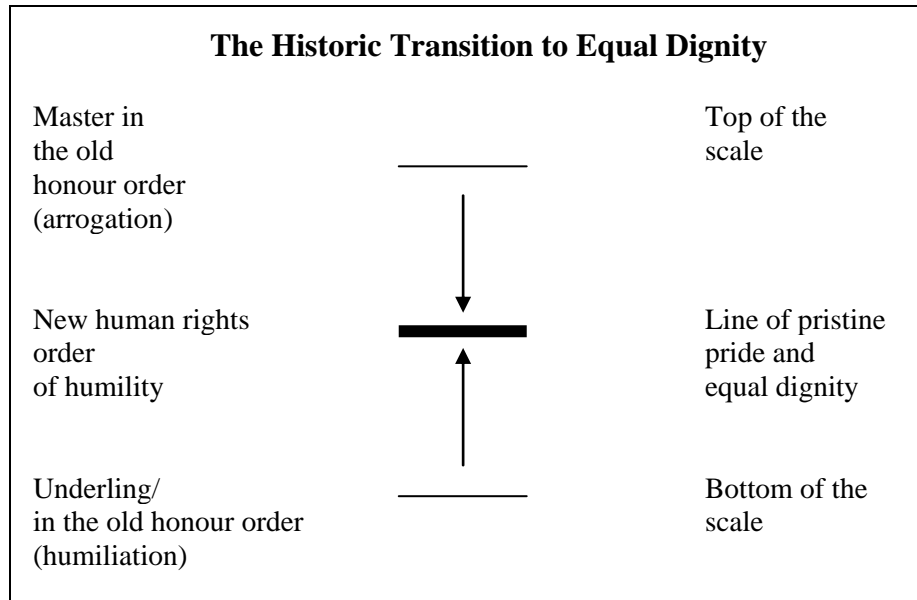

The Historic Transition to Equal Dignity

Master in
the old
honour order
(arrogation)   Top of the
                                                                      scale

New human rights
order
of humility   Line of pristine
                                                                      pride and
                                                                      equal dignity

Underling/
in the old honour order
(humiliation)   Bottom of the
                                                                      scale

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Figure 1: The Historic Transition to Equal Dignity

With the advent of human rights ideals, the notion of humiliation changes. Human rights 'democratise' humiliation. Human rights endow every single human being with an inner core of equal dignity that ought not to be debased. The notion of humiliation changes its attachment point. It moves from the top to the bottom of the pyramid of power, from the privileged to the disadvantaged. Feelings of humiliation among the downtrodden are no less than the very 'fuel' of the human rights revolution. In a human rights framework the downtrodden secure the right to feel humiliated. The human rights revolution turns the formerly legitimate humbling of underlings into illegitimate humiliation. The beaten wife and the girl who demands the right to make her own life decisions are informed by human rights defenders that 'domestic chastisement' as it was enshrined in law (until 1868, for example, in Norway) is no longer legitimate, but has turned into illegitimate 'domestic violence.' The beaten wife and the subjugated girl are encouraged to invoke humiliation. The masters, the elites, the husband, the father, on the other hand, are called upon to humble themselves. They are no longer given permission to resist this call by claiming superiority and designating their underlings' protests as humiliation.

Humiliation is at the core of the current human rights revolution and the related transition from ranked honour to equal dignity. Today, in the aftermath of the shift in meaning of the word

to humiliate, the practice of humiliating people can no longer serve prosocial purposes. The overall normative frame no longer allows for that. Only shaming and humbling can still be applied in such ways; and indeed, human rights activists around the world busily confront companies and countries in the attempt to shame them into keeping their promises as protectors of the environment and human rights. While humbling and shaming still work prosocially, humiliation does no longer. We do not wish to have shameless people as neighbours; indeed, we wish to be surrounded by humble people who respect the law, yet, we do not endorse societies filled with humiliated underlings. Applying humiliation has turned obscene. The worldwide reaction to practices of humiliation at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq represents a case in point. Bringing down dictators and their followers, if done with humiliation, does not lead to the intended peace. On the contrary, Mandela did not humiliate the white elite in South Africa; he humbled them. This new illegitimacy of the practice of humiliation marks a profoundly significant shift, and it has to do with the human rights revolution, which renders the ranking of human worthiness illicit.

Historians are the ones to describe the transition that began around three hundred years ago, particularly in the Western world from where it has permeated the rest of the world; this text is not the place. In Ury's account, we slowly enter the global knowledge society. From whatever angle we look, we begin to understand that we live in the midst of a transition. Old honour codes in traditional hierarchical collectivist settings – honour understood as ranked human worthiness – are confronted with new human rights codes based on equal dignity for all on the background of more individualistic cultural ideals. The transformation of the meaning of the verb *to humiliate* indicates that humiliation's role changes alongside the larger transition.

Clearly, humankind is far from having arrived in a world where everybody enjoys equal dignity. The human rights revolution has not yet been 'won.' Old honour norms and related feelings of humiliation are still alive and thriving. Many elites still feel entitled to superiority and do not enter into the cooperation that is necessary to make the world a more even playing field. They still invoke humiliation when asked to humble themselves. Sometimes people resort to the old strategies of defending honour in one context, as honourable elites, while invoking the debasement of dignity in another context, as the victims of dignity humiliation. For example, a man from the non-West might demand from the elites of the world that they fulfil the human-rights promise and treat him as an equal, while overlooking that he is not treating his own wife and daughters as equals. In other words, we live in a confused world where old honour norms linger on, even though they stand in stark contradiction to new equal dignity norms. While the two moral universes are diametrically opposed – one condones ranked worthiness, the other equal worthiness for all – they are sometimes intertwined without people being aware that they are incompatible. On other occasions their representatives will be confronting each other head-on. In all cases, this provides fertile soil for violent conflict. Therefore it is important to understand both normative universes: the one of collectivist ranked honour, and the one of equal dignity for all human beings qua being born as human being.

The phenomenon of so-called 'honour killings' might serve as an example of the numerous layers of humiliation and how they may be defined in honour contexts as opposed to an environment that is characterised by ideals of equal dignity for all. In an immigrant family to Britain, for example, a girl who tries to live according to Western customs might risk being killed by her family who wish to prevent family honour from being humiliated. However, the British police will define such killings as crimes, not as prosocial cures for humiliation. Human rights defenders will stipulate that killing such a girl is equivalent to compounding humiliation,

not remedying it. The immigrant family, in turn, might regard Western attitudes towards them as condescending, as humiliating their cultural beliefs. This example is particularly stark; however, currently the world is riddled with such 'clashes of humiliation.'

The previous paragraph in itself (in former drafts of this paper) has triggered hot feelings of humiliation and conflict. During my own international life, I have faced such outrage. Using the above example was seen as attesting to my Western arrogance. However, I am taking a stand for human rights, not from the perspective of an arrogant Westerner who humiliates the non-West by denigrating their honour codes of ranked human worthiness. On the contrary, in my view, people who endorse honour codes should not be looked down upon; my conceptualisation is that honour codes had their respected place in a world that did not yet experience the coming together of humankind into one single family. And ranked honour is not only subscribed to in some segments of the Arab world, also in certain segments of Western societies – see, for example, Bertram Wyatt-Brown (1982) and his study of the history of American *Southern Honour*. Nowadays, we live with a new paradigm – the vision and emerging reality of a 'global village' – and this new reality, as I see it, can best be tackled with human rights norms. I believe that human rights represent a normative framework that is better adapted to an emerging global knowledge society where diversity is celebrated because it is embedded into respect for equal dignity for all.

Yet, not only honour codes may need to be overcome in exchange for more humanising practices. In some Western cultures ideals of ruthless individualism, which ironically have been forced upon fellow citizens with astonishingly collectivist fervour, have yet to mature into ideals of true equal dignity for all. The myth of autonomy in Western culture misconceives the human condition as a societal vacuum and stigmatises and punishes those labelled dependent. Linda Hartling identifies this practice as one of the root source of destructive humiliation in such social contexts (personal communication, September, 9, 2005). Ruthless individualism could be described as simply another way of preserving the old order of ranking human worthiness, only with everybody trying to be a master.

The following section investigates the relevance of this historic transformation for the study of terrorism and genocide (particularly subaltern genocide).

Terrorism, Genocide, and the Historic Transition

In periods of transition, trends and tendencies are typically blurred and indistinct. So it is with the transition now underway from the traditional paradigm of ranked honour, to a novel paradigm of equal dignity. Therefore, when we speak of 'human rights based societies' in this discussion, we do so in the spirit of a Weberian ideal-type approach – see for details Lewis A. Coser (1977). Perhaps genuinely human-rights based societies will emerge in a century or two. So far, we see only seedlings – however, which require our attention if we wish to nurture further growth.

An important trend is that the more concepts of human rights permeate a society, the more humiliation becomes hurtful; the more important it becomes as a topic for research; and the more relevance it gains for policy planning. This is because the four basic kinds of subjugation known to honour cultures become conflated in a single kind of humiliation, when viewed through a human rights lens.

Subjugation in honour societies can be categorised in four variants – see Dennis Smith (2001), and Evelin G. Lindner (2006c). A master uses *conquest subjugation* to drive formerly equal neighbours into a position of inferiority. When the hierarchy is established, the master uses *reinforcement subjugation* to keep it in place. This may range from rituals such as seating orders and bowing rules, to brutal measures such as customary beatings and killings. A third form of humiliation, *relegation subjugation*, is used to push an already subaltern individual still further down. *Exclusion subjugation* anathematises its targets altogether – by exiling or even killing them.

In honour societies, all these variants are regarded as legitimate tools. The hint of violation that the word 'humiliation' carries in contemporary parlance is present solely in relationships among equal aristocrats, not in the attempt to subjugate subaltern others. Attempting to debase others is always legitimate in a ranked society, since it follows the motto 'might is right.' Equals, however, will often oppose such debasement – we may label it 'honour-humiliation' – and respond, for instance by a challenge to a duel.

Human rights frameworks turn all four types of subjugation into utterly illegitimate *exclusion humiliation*. Attempts at subjugation of whatever kind are now regarded as a human-rights violation that excludes the victims from humanity. This situation produces intense pain and suffering, because losing one's dignity means being excluded from the human family altogether. In the absence of moderating forces – a Nelson Mandela, for example (see the Conclusion) – this pain may provoke violence, up to and including terrorism and genocide.

Table 1: 'The Historic Transition of Human History and Its Relevance for Terrorism and Genocide,' seeks to summarise this argument, and to explore its relevance to genocide.

The Historic Transition and Its Relevance for Terrorism and Genocide		
	Options for dissatisfied members of a group	**Relevance for terrorism and genocide**
Prior to ten thousand years ago: Pristine, egalitarian hunter-gathering context	Dissatisfied members of a group had the option to wander off and find unoccupied land with abundant resources, while maintaining egalitarian societal structures.	There is no archaeological evidence that systematic killing occurred prior to ten thousand years ago (see, for example, Jonathan Haas (1998), or William Ury, 1999).
During the past ten thousand years: Agricultural context of ranked honour	Since unoccupied land was no longer easily accessible, the option of wandering was foreclosed. The remaining options were *acquiescence* to a master's domination, or attempting to replace the master. Dissatisfied masters, for their part, could force subaltern ingroup actors into societal structures of their choice, and do the same to conquered neighbouring groups.	There is ample archaeological evidence of systematic war during the past ten thousand years, much of it taking the form of conquest of neighbouring territory. Masters reinforced their domination of subaltern actors, but usually without excluding them entirely – e.g., to retain them as part of a workforce. Subalterns who succeeded in replacing masters tended to adopt their ways.
Vision for the future: Global knowledge society with equal dignity for every global citizen	Human rights frameworks call on societies to transform themselves in order to provide adequate subsistence to all citizens, so that they may enjoy equal rights and dignity. Humankind is depicted as a single family of equals. The traditional system of ranked honour is delegitimised.	1. Human rights transforms the lowly position of subalterns into utterly illegitimate *exclusion humiliation*; the resulting 'nuclear bomb of the emotions' may be translated into terrorism and genocide. 2. Subalterns (former or present) may feel inferiority to masters as *shameful*, as something to be 'cleansed' through killing and genocide. In sum, the delegitimisation of traditional rank transforms old emotional scripts of submission into new shameful scripts of humiliation. Formerly obedient underlings become angry victims of humiliation. Strong feelings of humiliation may be translated into a call for terrorism and genocide (depending on the resources of the perpetrators) as 'cleansing acts.'

Table 1: The Historic Transition of Human History and Its Relevance for Terrorism and Genocide

As sketched in Table 1, the more societies are influenced by ideals of human rights, the more salient feelings of humiliation become – in a threefold fashion. First, subalterns feel more

humiliated in a system where elites are no longer accepted as benevolent patrons, but come to be viewed as evil oppressors. Second, feelings of inferiority may provoke feelings of *shame* at such inferiority. Third, subalterns may feel *retrospective* shame – that is, shame that they ever admired elites, and bowed before them. All three elements may be translated, in the absence of countervailing influences, into an urge to purge and 'cleanse' shame and humiliation, along with the people who are seen as triggering these emotions.

Rwanda provides an excellent example of this dynamic in action. My research there made it clear that the country does not agree on its history. Rather, it has two core historical narratives. My friends of Tutsi background tend to emphasize the ethnic homogeneity of all Rwandans, the benevolent patronage of their Tutsi forefathers over the centuries, and how happily Hutu clients accepted such patronage. Friends with a Hutu background, in contrast, have a tendency to de-emphasize ethnic homogeneity, and deny that their forefathers ever acquiesced to Tutsi domination – which, they suggest, was not benevolent at all.

There might be a problem with both of these views: one that helps to explain a genocidal outcome. Perhaps both perspectives are correct, at least in part. Might Tutsi rule in the past have been less benevolent than today's defenders wish to portray it? Might Hutus have acquiesced, even admired their patrons/oppressors more than they later chose to admit? Tutsi women, for example, were still highly sought-after trophies for wealthy Hutu men. In field research in 1999, I frequently heard it said that a Hutu man who gets rich 'buys a house, gets a Mercedes, and marries a Tutsi woman' – see Evelin G. Lindner (2000a) (p. 351). In other words, a degree of habitual Hutu admiration for Tutsi superiority lived on after the Tutsis had been deposed from formal power, suggesting that voluntary submission to, and admiration for, a Tutsi elite might well have existed earlier as well.

Why was the Hutu revolution of 1959, which overturned the traditional order, not sufficient to transform the Hutu-Tutsi relationship at an existential level? How could the enthusiastic sense of liberation and dignification among Hutus after the revolution of 1959, which deposed the Tutsi rule in favour of the majority population, be transformed into one of the most extreme genocides on the historical record? What is it about a liberation movement that can go too far? How can noble aspirations to gain more dignity ever transform into motives for murder? Tutsis, over centuries, at least those who were part of the ruling elite, had accumulated skills and built a high culture of proficiency that could have been very useful for a Hutu-led Rwanda. Why could this not be included into a new Rwanda? We must assume that some underlying complication hindered straight-forward happy liberation and transformation that would include everybody. Some terrible scores seem to have called for closure, and terrible wounds seem to have sought 'healing' through mayhem.

Currently, such assertions do not yet represent majority consensus. They are ridiculed as 'soft.' 'No-nonsense,' or 'hard' conceptualisations of human nature are called for instead. At the core of many current discussions of human evil are claims to a 'primordial aggressive human nature,' or an innate human 'desire to dominate,' or an 'inherent will to power,' or an '*animus dominandi*.' Yet, if we reflect for a moment, after having read about the profound difference between the defining conditions during the past ten thousand years of human history, and the current situation, we see that these views are far from 'hard' conceptualisations; they rather resemble cultural scripts that are outdated. They are myths built on the misreading of the human condition. 'Human nature' simply is not 'aggressive.' 'Human nature' does not force humans unavoidably into destructive Hobbesian competition. Such conceptualisations came about only because the relatively short historic period of complex agriculture fostered them and masked that

they are not primary, but dependent on a broader environment. As William Ury (1999) explains, the past ten thousand years, roughly, from the time of the introduction of complex agriculture onwards until recently, were indeed characterised by rather malign systematic war between hierarchically organised societal units, embedded in a win-lose framework and caught in what international relations theorists call the security dilemma. Human nature could easily be mistaken to be predator-like. Yet, ten thousand years are a relatively short time period compared with the ninety percent of human history that humans spent prior to complex agriculture in a comparably benign win-win situation of egalitarian hunting-gathering. There is no archaeological evidence for systematic war prior to ten thousand years ago. There is no proof of organised fighting among hunters and gatherers. The Hobbesian view that humans are in a constant state of 'Warre' since time immemorial cannot be underpinned by the archaeological record. And this is deeply encouraging. The ingathering of humankind and its heading for a global knowledge society re-opens the door to the more benign framework of an egalitarian win-win era. Prior to complex agriculture and subsequent to it – particularly in current times of ingathering – predator-like behaviour was and is not favoured by the deep structures of the overall environment.

If not pure unfathomable evil, then poverty, deprivation, or marginalisation are often pinpointed as driving people into terrorist activities or other forms of violence, somehow by design. However, if this analysis were correct, we should not see well-to-do and highly educated terrorists organising and perpetrating atrocities. And India would be in anarchy; the poor would be on the barricades. Indeed, more often than not, poverty is being tackled without violence. In essence, when there is too little to eat, we may share, or work together to increase the pie, instead of fighting. Likewise, ethnic, religious or cultural differences are not automatically divisive. On the contrary, diversity can be a source of mutual enrichment. In sum, what we can conclude is that poverty, deprivation, marginalisation, ethnic incompatibilities – or even conflicts of interest and struggles over scarce resources – sometimes lead to cooperation and innovation and only sometimes to violence. So-called 'hard' explanations for violence and terrorism falter, because at times the very same conditions lead to innovative non-violent solutions and not to violent confrontation.

The significant point is that for scarcity or difference to have fruitful outcomes, they need to be embedded within relationships of mutual respect. It is when respect and recognition are failing that those who are victimised feel frustrated and betrayed, and if they perceive this betrayal to be perpetrated by people with bad intentions, they feel humiliated. This humiliation may transform people into wise Mandela-like elders, in the very best case. Or, they may get depressed and apathetic. However, it may also make people angry and render them vulnerable to atrocious humiliation-entrepreneurs such as a Hitler, or the instigators of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, or leaders masterminding terror acts. When dreams for a dignified life are stifled, people become susceptible to fundamentalist fervour, writes Michael Slackman (2008) in the *New York Times*.

If not resorting to violence, disaffected people tend to highlight differences that otherwise would be insignificant. They erect fences against those they perceive as humiliators and they cease to emphasize common ground. What we call 'ethnic differences,' for example, may in many instances be far from predicated upon primordial differences. They may, instead, represent rifts that are secondary, namely the result of humiliation dynamics.

Humiliation May Lend Its Own 'Rationality' to Terrorism and Genocide

Many genocidal perpetrators have ended up worse off than they were prior to the genocide. To the outside observer, viewed through a lens of self-interest, genocide – apart from being morally repugnant – hardly seems worth the effort. Hitler brought ruin not only upon the world, but upon his own followers, and himself. He led an entire society into the abyss, as if this had been his aim. Many Hutu *génocidaires* live miserable lives today. Somalian dictator Siad Barre died in exile – hated, and in a foreign country, not venerated, in his own country.

Yet Hitler, in taking his own life, declared himself satisfied. Eberhard Jäckel (1991) reports Hitler's last words, on April 2, 1945: 'The world will be eternally grateful to National Socialism that I have extinguished the Jews in Germany and Central Europe' (Jäckel, 1991, p. 64). In other words, it seems Hitler's 'gain' was a glory lying somewhere beyond this Earth, and beyond physical death. His and his followers' physical preservation on Earth was not necessarily the desired endpoint of his calculus. The 'proud and dignified Germany' he sought to build might not take a physical form, but could receive its validation from *die Vorsehung* (providence), where humiliation and its redress would be recognised as meritorious.

Moreover, Hitler is said to have expressed satisfaction at the destruction of Germany in the war's later stages, because he judged that 'his' Germans had failed him, and did not deserve to survive. For Hitler, by being destroyed, *das Deutsche Vaterland* got what it deserved for failing to heed and implement his vision. After all, as Hitler explained in detail in his book *Mein Kampf*, the German 'fatherland' had neglected, overlooked, and humiliated the German minority in Austria (where Hitler was born and grew up). Furthermore, the elite of the German 'fatherland' had miserably failed in World War I through unintelligent strategies, thus bringing humiliation upon their entire people. In addition, Germany (and also England, in Hitler's view), were insufficiently alert to the supposed 'threat' posed by Jewish world-domination and world-humiliation. In Hitler's mind, he had tried to teach Germans nobility and grandeur – but in vain. Now Germans were reaping what they had sowed: downfall. Hitler's twofold satisfaction could be formulated as him having saved German greatness, and protected the world against future humiliation – even if this would be recognised only in the afterlife, and even if everyone else had failed him, including his own people.

We may hypothesise, then, that humiliation – as both act and feeling – is so powerful that it overrides calculations of earthly well-being, and the results can be observed not only in terrorism but also in genocide. It may transform what is regarded as 'rational' self-interest (before death) into redress of humiliation and protection against future humiliation, as a quasi-religious achievement (realised only after death). The 'nuclear bomb of the emotions' may encourage adoption of extreme strategies that pursue a mystical transcendence, and which hamper pragmatic, 'here-and-now' solutions. Dynamics of humiliation may thus be as potent and consuming as any addiction: 'getting the fix' of redress for humiliation may override all other rationales.

Terrorism and Genocide as a 'Cleansing' of the Inferiority Complex

Are not genocide's victims usually members of subaltern minorities? But if so, why are resources mobilised to humiliate and kill people who are already subordinate or powerless? Would not continued marginalisation be more 'efficient'? *What turns powerless people into such*

a threat? In Rwanda, Somalia, and Germany, the elite would surely have gained more by incorporating the minority that they feared (whether Isaaqs, Tutsis, or Jews). Instead, they ascribed preposterous powers and abilities to the minority – namely, its ability to dominate and subjugate the rest – and surprisingly low abilities to themselves, namely their inability to integrate this minority peacefully. Why so little self-confidence?

What we observe here seems to have its roots in the dynamic known as the *inferiority complex*. In psychology, the term is connected with the Viennese psychiatrist Alfred Adler (1870-1937). Thomas J. Scheff (2003: 258) explains that 'the concept of an inferiority complex can be seen as a formulation about chronic low self-esteem, i.e., chronic shame.'

Consider, in this context, the situation in Somalia under President Mohammed Siad Barre. Siad Barre initially gave people new hope. He condemned tribalism and clannism. He seemed to stand for a government that would attend to all Somalis' needs, not those of one clan alone. At least this was his rhetoric; perhaps, at the outset, it was also his conviction. He developed the economy, and gave Somalis some years of relative peace.

Then Siad Barre set out to fulfil Somalia's great dream of unification. In 1978, he invaded Ethiopia to capture the Ogaden territory, and bring the ethnically-Somali Ogaden 'home' to Greater Somalia. Somalia's defeat in this conflict constituted a devastating humiliation. Siad Barre, however, survived the humiliation by locating scapegoats. He targeted his fellow countrymen from the north, accusing them of having caused the defeat. The first objects of his campaign were the Majerteen, whose villages and wells he destroyed; later he turned on the Isaaq people.

The Morgan Report, an official top secret report on 'implemented and recommended measures' for a 'final solution' to Somalia's 'Isaaq problem' was written by General Mohammed Sidi Hersi 'Morgan,' Siad Barre's Majerteen son-in-law, and issued on 23 January 1987 (a worn-out English copy of this report was shown to me in Hargeisa, November 1998). Morgan writes that the Isaaq and their supporters must be 'subjected to a campaign of obliteration,' in order to prevent them 'rais[ing] their heads again.' He continued: 'today, we possess the right remedy for the virus in the [body of the] Somali State.' Among the 'remedies' he proposed: 'Rendering uninhabitable the territory between the army and the enemy, which can be done by destroying the water tanks and the villages lying across the territory used by them for infiltration'; and 'removing from the membership of the armed forces and the civil service all those who are open to suspicion of aiding the enemy – especially those holding sensitive posts.' (A worn copy of this report was shown to me in Hargeisa, November 1998.)

Why did Siad Barre choose the Majerteen and Isaaq as scapegoats? Indeed, they were no easy targets, but among the most challenging possible (and he paid the price: the Isaaq-dominated Somali National Movement, SNM, was among the leading forces that eventually toppled Siad Barre in 1991).

During colonial times, prior to independence in 1960, the north of Somalia had been the 'British Protectorate of Somaliland,' while the rest of present-day Somalia was under Italian rule. Through their traditional occupation as traders, northern Somalis had acquired greater managerial skills than southerners, and had learned English under their colonial masters – internationally more useful than Italian after independence was achieved. Siad Barre, an autodidact like Hitler (intelligent, but lacking formal education), hailed from the formerly Italian south – the part of Somalia that was surpassed in education and efficiency by the northerners. One Isaaq woman reported to me during fieldwork in 1998 that she had met the dictator to plead for her imprisoned family members. 'You Isaaq, you are so arrogant,' Siad Barre alleged told

her. It confirmed her belief that the dictator may have suffered personal humiliation at the hands of Isaaq colleagues more educated than he was.

By choosing not weak scapegoats but strong ones, Siad Barre turned scapegoating into a double victory for himself, at least in the short term. First, he survived politically, by pointing the finger at others for Somalia's disastrous defeat in the Ogaden war. Second, he settled a score – his feelings of humiliation at the hands of the scapegoats.

From the genocide in Cambodia, to Rwanda and Germany, and in innumerable other cases, it is the skilled, the intellectuals, the knowledge-carriers, who are the first to be exterminated, by those who thereby cleanse themselves of feelings of inferiority, and thus triumph over past humiliations. Consequently, the commonly-used term 'ethnic cleansing' may refer to more than the expulsion or eradication of another ethnic group. It may reflect subalterns' need to purge and eradicate their own unacceptable feelings of humiliation and shame, and thereby 'heal' their own sense of inferiority.

Also in the case of terrorism, the 'victims' are often powerful, hence the term 'asymmetric conflict.' Relating terrorism to genocide is interesting because it unmasks that the 'rationality' of terror that is expounded by their supporters, namely that in an asymmetric conflict 'there are no other ways,' may not be the entire truth. There may be ulterior motives pushing for violent exclusion instead of inclusive social change, psychological ones, which have little to do with pragmatic political considerations.

Terrorism and Genocide as the 'Cleansing' of Shame over Elite Admiration

This chapter took as its starting point genocide's many perplexing characteristics. One question raised was: if genocide is about killing, why are so many victims not only killed, but elaborately humiliated before death? Genocide seems to be about humiliating the personal dignity of the victims, depicting a group as 'subhuman,' then reducing them to that level. The Rwandan genocide of 1994 offers an intricate and gruesome catalogue of practices aimed at destroying victims' dignity. The most literal way to achieve this was to cut the legs of Tutsis (whose 'superiority' was symbolised by their average greater height), or to sever the Achilles tendon so they would be forced to crawl. These actions not only shortened Tutsi bodies, but 'cut them down to size' in a metaphorical sense, obliterating the source of their alleged arrogance.

The driving force behind these actions may be what I term *elite admiration*. In *Mein Kampf*, Adolf Hitler describes at length the Austrian political personalities whom he most admired – many of them Jews. Reading his text, it becomes obvious that he once admired Jews, even if only early in life. Later, Hitler attempted to expunge every trace of Jews – along, perhaps, with his admiration for them. Cognizant of their talents and aptitudes, he was convinced that they had the capacity to dominate the world, if he did not prevent them from doing so. His fear of this 'global elite,' and his desire to exterminate them, were founded at least in part on admiration of their competence.

Elite admiration and imitation is deeply inscribed in the culture of rank that has dominated the world for the past ten thousand years. It has been taught to, and learned by, subaltern actors through the millennia. Imitating masters was one way that subalterns could ascend in rank (another way was to replace their masters in uprisings). Still today, despite the fact that these mindsets are losing their structural underpinnings, elite admiration and imitation are widespread. Modern celebrity culture attests to this. The most recent 'high culture,' that of the French court

of Versailles, was not only imitated throughout Europe and its colonies, but is today imitated in the French-castle style adopted for millionaires' mansions in Texas, or the dwellings of the newly-rich in contemporary China.

At first glance, such imitation seems to be a quite innocent phenomenon. But it is often dysfunctional, and highly inappropriate to the environment to which it is transposed. The urge for imitation, moreover, is often so strong that even disability and self-mutilation may be accepted as consequences. Chinese foot binding, for example, began as a 'luxury' among the idle rich, who did not require women to be mobile enough for housework. But it was soon adopted by the subaltern classes, becoming a prerequisite for marriage – even though the female's reduced physical capacity and mobility had a negative impact on poorer households that could not afford servants. Foot binding lasted for a thousand years, during which time about one billion women suffered its mutilations – see, for example, Howard S. Levy (1992).

Earlier, we mentioned the Hutu revolution in Rwanda in 1959, which produced an enormous outpouring of enthusiasm among the subaltern masses. How could this enthusiasm later turn into genocide? What is it about a liberation movement that can carry it too far? What transforms saviours (and even Hitler and Siad Barre were initially welcomed as saviours) into other- and self-destroyers, when 'mere' oppression would have maintained them in power more efficiently? Perhaps what takes place is that *shame becomes unbearable* – shame rooted in subalterns' admiration of former elites, a dynamic accentuated further by the advent of modern concepts of human rights.

A brief reflection on the difference between shame and humiliation is relevant at this point. Shame may be defined as a humbling experience that a person agrees she has caused, while humiliation describes experiences imposed by others – those that the victim has *not* caused. Shame, by contrast with humiliation, is often prosocial – shamelessness is not a virtue! But there is an exception: a special and emotionally destructive type of shame, namely *unacknowledged and bypassed shame*. This is so unbearable that it cannot even be acknowledged, and is accordingly denied and disavowed. And it can be remembered over generations – see Paul Connerton (1989). For Thomas J. Scheff (2005), bypassed shame is the motor of all violence, and is the source of what Lewis (1991) calls 'humiliated fury.'

Human rights ideals amplify this phenomenon, because they call not only for an end to tyrants, but for an end to rank altogether. This turns elite admiration into a *doubly* shameful voluntary self-lowering and self-humiliation. In former times, subalterns rose and stepped into the shoes of their envied masters, taking over as objects of subaltern admiration and imitation. But when the master-subaltern dyad is dismantled, there is no place left for elite veneration. Therefore, shame for elite admiration in subalterns – particular bypassed shame – may explain why such particularly extreme cruelties and humiliations are inflicted when subaltern actors rise up to take 'revenge.'

Notions of 'cleansing,' ethnic and otherwise, thus may also point to subalterns' need to cleanse and eradicate their own elite admiration. The obsession with tearing even the babies out of mothers' wombs, to wipe out 'root and branch' every trace of the formerly admired elite, may derive from this shame. For entrenched elites, the 'mere' oppression of subalterns might suffice. Rational considerations may prevail; excessive humiliation or killing is simply 'not worth the bother.' But former subalterns – now risen to power – often seem obsessed with 'total cleansing,' and may perpetrate extreme forms of violence and humiliation on the former (and, one suspects it is feared, *future*) elites.

For the study of genocide, Figure 1 may be adapted to arrive at Figure 2. The cruellest behaviour may not be exhibited by long-established elites, but rather by subaltern actors attempting to 'cleanse' themselves of inferiority and elite-admiration.

Genocidal 'Cleansing'

Newly risen
subalterns
attempt to 'cleanse'
themselves
of elite admiration

Top of the
scale

Humility

Line of
equal dignity

Former elites,
now deposed
are humiliated
even further

Bottom of the
scale

Figure 2: Genocidal 'cleansing'

'Getting the fix,' in the case of humiliation, may also be conceptualised as resolving dissonance and self-doubt, and gaining 'purity' – see the work done by Leon Festinger (1957) or Mary Douglas (1984). 'How can I feel sympathy, let alone admiration, for oppressors I ought to hate!' – this is the dilemma. It may be that genocide's victims are dehumanised and humiliated, before being exterminated, not so much because perpetrators actually believe they merit this, but *because they have doubts and need to persuade themselves through the infliction of atrocity*. They may feel a need to go as far as total extermination, precisely because they do not trust their own ability to always hate. They may fear that weakness on this score will lead to a return of the oppressors, and to a fresh round of humiliation.

This doubt is analogous to what Paul Rusesabagina has called the 'soft spot.' Rusesabagina's story is well-known, and formed the basis for the 2004 film *Hotel Rwanda*. He managed to shelter more than 1,200 Tutsis and moderate Hutus in the Hotel Mille Collines, which he managed, while killers roamed outside with guns and machetes. In a BBC *HARDtalk* interview with David Jessel (May 24, 2007), Rusesabagina explained his strategy: He would find what he called the 'soft spot' in the perpetrators. 'Nobody is totally good or totally evil,' he attested.

Rusesabagina described how, at one point, he travelled from his house to the hotel, along with his family and people who had sought refuge in his house. At a roadblock, he was handed a gun and ordered to kill his family and everyone accompanying him; thereafter, he too would be killed. He looked into the eyes of the man who gave this order, while the man proceeded to oversee the killing of others at the roadblock. For five long minutes, Rusesabagina attempted to hold his gaze. He noticed that the man could not withstand it: he had touched this Hutu perpetrator's inner awareness of his own guilt. Eventually, his party was allowed to leave.

Again, what we learn from looking at the deep psychological underpinnings of subaltern genocide, may serve us in the analysis of terrorism. Chinese and Indian economic power, already now increasingly translated into political power on the world arena, may undo Western dominance much more effectively and efficiently than any terror that aims at the same end. Again, we understand how weak the argument of 'rationality' is for terror, if we mean by rationality pragmatic well-being before death. Another 'rationality' may reign, namely the rationality of negotiating the psychology of humiliation beyond earthly pragmatics. Instigating violence, and participating in violence, may be perceived as the necessary, self-affirming response, regardless of the earthly cost on self and others.

Looking into the Future

Policy challenges

Men such as Osama bin Laden, or visionaries of holy wars against infidels, would never have any followers or adherents if there were no victims of humiliation around in many parts of the world, among them young, intelligent and dynamic men, who are willing to die avenging what they perceive as the 'debasement of our people.'

Shibley Telhami (2003) writes, 'Today militancy in the Middle East is fueled … by a pervasive sense of humiliation and helplessness in the region. This collective feeling is driven by a sense that people remain helpless in affecting the most vital aspects of their lives, and it is exacerbated by pictures of Palestinian humiliation. There is much disgust with states and with international organizations' (2003, p. 1).

The rich and powerful, in what we refer to as 'the West', have long been blind to the fact that their superiority, particularly when combined with the human rights message, may have humiliating effects on those who are less privileged or who identify with the less privileged. As long as people live far away from each other, in isolation, deprivation goes undetected. Nowadays, however, Western soap operas and Western tourists walking about with cameras on large stomachs are teaching the less privileged of the world to recognise their own deprivation. As long as people accept justifications for poverty – for example that it is nature's order to have rich and poor people around – there may be pain, but no shared awareness of a problem that needs fixing, no conflict, and no violent reactions. Yet, the human rights call for equal dignity for all teaches that poverty, or relative deprivation, is not divinely ordained but a violation of human rights. When a person identifies the rich of the world as perpetrators of this violation, when she suspects that the rich peddle empty human rights rhetoric to maintain their powerful positions, poverty turns into humiliation. The underdogs in the world, and those who identify with them, listen to empty human rights rhetoric from elites, and feel humiliated by the emptiness of the sermon: 'to recognize humanity hypocritically and betray the promise, humiliates in the most devastating way by denying the humanity professed' (Stephan Feuchtwang, November 14, 2002, in a personal note).

The affluent 'West' teaches the ideals of human rights and equal dignity for all, while, at the same time, allowing for undignified poverty to be on the increase, both globally and locally. The gap between rich and poor is wider in 2006 than it was a decade earlier. So far, wealthy nations are the main beneficiaries of economic development and they make their weight felt in all realms of life, including global challenges that call for shared sacrifice. Clearly, many in the West, with elites of the non-West in their tow, do not put their feet where their words are. The problem is

that those 'words,' the promotion of ideals of equal dignity for all – the vision of a world of dignity and respect for each other and for ecological balance – when betrayed, heighten feelings of humiliation among the underprivileged and those who identify with them.

One of the most important policy challenges in present times is the risk of undermining cooperation through unintended humiliation. Elites are particularly prone to perpetrate humiliation unwittingly, since they expect that what they feel to be their benevolence and generosity ought to be understood as such by the recipients. An important link exists between help and humiliation. Any attempt to help others is counter-productive when humiliation is involved, be it through acts of inadvertent or advertent humiliation on the helper's side, or through feelings of humiliation on the recipients' side, even if they emanate from pure misunderstandings. Sam Engelstad, UN's Chief of Humanitarian Affairs, and, on several occasions Acting Humanitarian Coordinator in Mogadishu in 1994, wrote (personal communication from Sam Engelstad, 28th September 1999, quoted with his permission.): 'During my own time in Somalia in 1994, humiliation was never far from the surface. Indeed, it pretty much suffused the relationship between members of the UN community and the general Somali population. In the day-to-day interaction between the Somalis and UN relief workers like ourselves, it enveloped our work like a grey cloud. Yet, the process was not well understood, and rarely intended to be malevolent.' Engelstad adds, 'Among the political and administrative leadership of the UN mission, however, humiliation and its consequences were far better understood and were frequently used as policy tools. Regardless of intent, it was pernicious and offensive to many of us.'

During my own fieldwork in Africa, I learned a lot about unwitting humiliation. 'You from the West, you come here to get a kick out of our problems. You pretend to want to help, but you just want to have some fun. You have everything back home, you live in luxury, and you are blind to that. You arrogantly and stupidly believe that you suffer when you cannot take a shower or have to wait for the bus for more than two hours! Look how you cover our people with dust when bumping childishly and proudly around in your four-wheel drive cars! Look how you enjoy being a king, while you would be a slave in your country! All what you want is having fun, getting a good salary, writing empty reports to your organisation back home, in order to be able to continue this fraud. You pay lip service to human rights and empowerment, but you are a hypocrite! And you know that we need help – how glad would we be if we did not need it! And how good would it be if you were really to listen to us once, not only to the greedy among us who exploit your arrogant stupidity for their own good!' (this is a condensation from statements that were repeated in Somalia and Rwanda, Burundi, and Kenya).

Helping can be both, an expression of caring and a demonstration of superiority – says Arie Nadler (2002). Helping can be an effective instrument of dominance in the hands of a more advantaged group. As a result, help may be resented. Applied to international development, truly fair trade may advance peace more than aid, not only because of its economic clout, but also because it does not entail humiliation.

When people learn about human rights and begin to perceive a condition – poverty, for example – as a deprivation that violates human dignity, that situation becomes amenable to constructive improvement, through cooperative action. Enabling environments can be built jointly. Conflicts of interest can be solved by cooperation. Conflict in general can be solved mutually and creatively. But, when feelings of humiliation emerge, rifts are created and trust destroyed. If feelings of humiliation are not overcome constructively, cooperation fails. In the worst-case scenario, violence and terrorism ensues. These are today's policy challenges.

International action

A dear friend, a Holocaust survivor, told me about a joke that is illustrated in two sketches (Israel, 12th November, 2003). In the first scene, people sit in an untidy office and sigh 'We need order!' The next picture shows an admirably tidy office. However, the employees cry out, in exasperation, 'Now that we have order – what now?' This is the situation in the Middle East, my Israeli friend explained to me. He said, 'Everybody categorises the other side, neatly, orderly, staunchly, and almost obsessively, as monsters, as enemies, or terrorists – and what now?' The Holocaust survivor continued, 'As 'entrance ticket' into our in-group, we demand from everybody in our in-group to cut short empathy, to mutilate sympathy with 'the enemy.' Those who dare to 'blur the line' by conceptualising the other side as 'human' are ostracised. Good! Now we have order! – And what now?'

What my Israeli friend tries to explain, underpinned by his horrific experience of Auschwitz as a young lad, is how people intentionally limit a broader picture and construct dichotomies so as to experience what they believe will be peace of mind. My friend had learned from his endurance under extreme circumstances that the price one pays for such an outlook is possible death – loss of health and the decrease of the odds for survival. Today he nourishes a mild contempt for immature demonstrations of masculine self-enhancement that exhibit a 'resolve and readiness for tough leadership and heroic action instead of appeasement,' and that end in nothing but 'stupid actionism.'

My Israeli friend had identified the old script of the past ten thousand years, a cultural-social script of in-group soliloquy that thrives on out-group rejection and feeds notions of femininity and masculinity that serve the same end. This approach had its function in the past; however, it is no longer functional in a world of increasing interdependence. Such scripts do not lead to the constructive tackling of global problems, including global terrorism. Monty G. Marshall (1999), has written most remarkably on protracted conflict and how *insecurity gets diffused*. Global terror is the ultimate diffusion of insecurity. A new world requires new solutions and new cultural-social scripts both globally and at home that are more relational, more preventive, more dialogical, and that lead to useful solutions instead of 'stupid actionism.'

His view dovetails with advice given by Michael Levi (2008) recently in *Foreign Affairs*. Clearly, Levi points out, particular nuclear terrorism poses a grave threat to global security. Indeed, in June 2004, Mohamed El Baradei (2004), the usually guarded Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), described the threat of nuclear terrorism as "real and imminent," and talked of a "race against time" to prevent terrorists from obtaining nuclear and radioactive materials. However, argues Levi, seeking a grand "silver bullet" strategy to counter it does not make sense. Levy rather proposes creating a nuanced multi-layered integrated defensive system that addresses terrorist activities at every stage, thereby undermining their overall chances of success.

The human rights revolution could be described as an attempt to collapse the master-slave gradient of the past ten thousand years to the line of equal dignity and humility. The practice of elites arrogating superiority and subjugating underlings is regarded as illicit and obscene. Human rights advocates invite both masters and underlings to join in a shared humility at the level of equal dignity. Feelings of humiliation, felt by the downtrodden and those who identify with them, serve as the 'fuel' for the human rights revolution.

It is important to note that equal dignity for all or the horizontal ranking of human worth and value is what is discussed here, not sameness as an antidote to inequality, hierarchy, or stratification. The significant point in this transition is not the absence or presence of hierarchy, inequality or stratification, but whether human worthiness is ranked or not. Functional hierarchies are still needed and, under conditions of equal dignity, difference and diversity can be celebrated. The human rights revolution calls for a new way of dealing with human value and worthiness. Of primary importance is a shared sense of humanity; our differences can only flourish when given a secondary importance. If elevated above equal dignity for all, they quickly become the roots of destruction.

The horizontal line in Figure 1 is meant to represent the line of equal dignity and humility. This line does not signify that all human beings are equal, or should be equal, or ever were or will be equal, or identical, or all the same. This horizontal line is to represent a worldview that does not permit the hierarchical ranking of existing differences of human worth and value. Masters are invited to step down from arrogating to themselves *more* worthiness, and underlings are encouraged to rise up from their humiliation - up from being humiliated downward to *lower* value. Masters are humbled and underlings empowered. See Figure 1: The historic transition to egalisation.

I have coined the word egalisation so as to match the word globalisation and at the same time differentiate it from words such as equality or sameness, because the main point is not equality or sameness. The point is equal dignity, even though there is a connection between equality and equal dignity. (The connection is 'hidden' in the human rights stipulation that equal chances and enabling environments for all are necessary to protect human dignity.)

The term egalisation is meant to avoid claiming that everybody should become equal and that there should be no differences between people. Egality can coexist with a functional hierarchy that regards all participants as possessing equal dignity; egality can not co-exist, though, with a hierarchy that defines some people as lesser beings and others as more valuable.

If we imagine the world as a container with a height and a width, globalisation addresses the horizontal dimension, the shrinking width. Egalisation concerns the vertical dimension. Egalisation is a process moving away from a very high container of masters at the top and underlings at the bottom, towards a flat container with everybody enjoying equal dignity.

Egalisation is a process that elicits intense humiliation when its promises fail. The lack of egalisation is thus the very element that intensifies feelings among so-called 'globalisation-critics.' Their disquiet stems from lack of egalisation and not from an overdose of globalisation. What they call for is that *globalisation* ought to marry *egalisation*. What they call for is globalisation without humiliation.

If we look for tools that we can use to develop useful strategies for a better world in the spirit of Mandela's maturity and wisdom, then pendulation through a double-swing conceptualises how individuals and concepts can meet in constructive ways. The double-swing can be graphically presented as the infinity symbol or Möbius Strip (∞) with two separated loops that still remain connected. A Western concept of dialogue can be depicted in this way, as can the Eastern Buddhist logic of 'soku.' The essence of pendulation is to avoid circling only within one side. It means the swinging back and forth between my point of view and that of the other or of one concept and another. By immersing myself in the others' worldviews I develop the resources for understanding those others. Pendulation allows for separateness while connected, whether it is with people or concepts. The Möbius Strip illustrates how we can disentangle understanding and condoning. Those who hold the view that we condone terrorism when we conceptualise

perpetrators as human beings rather than mad monsters, loop in on only one side of the double swing. Yet, terror can only be diminished through doing double swings, through including shared humanity into the equation, as painful and unsettling as it might prove to be. Understanding does not mean condoning. Arne Næss, the great icon of Norwegian explorer-philosophers says, 'There are no murderers! There are only human beings, who have murdered! Also a person who has murdered is first a human being' (personal communication, Paris, 2003).

Double swing pendulation – from you to me, back to you, back to me, and so on – has to be conducted with caring warmth and respect for all parties. Care, respect and warmth are the glue that keeps people together while they pendulate. We could also use the Greek word *agape*, meaning love for the unknown human other. Like the art of pendulation, respect and warmth are not inherited; they must be learned.

What is needed to engage the entire world into constructive pendulation is a culture of agape, courage, curiosity and patience that emphasizes a learning orientation and not an ego orientation. Patience, for example, is something that even many human rights defenders lack. They undermine their own efforts by peddling indignation at the slowness of the human rights revolution. Many a human rights group is devoured by the rage entertained by their own members, who, on the look-out for 'enemies,' often hurt their closest allies. They have to learn to understand that transitions are inherently difficult and that self-righteous anger – for instance, witch-hunting those who are slower – is counter-productive. The French revolution devoured its own children. Mandela, on the other hand, never contented himself with self-righteous indignation. In terms of the learning process, facing the challenges of life involves jointly engaging in learning from mistakes rather than trying to appear to be perfect. Polishing ego-facades is a dangerous cultural-social practice that under-uses the creative potential entailed in making mistakes and learning from them. Lethal outcomes are risked when grave mistakes are covered up for the sake of a good façade.

Successful pendulation can produce solidarity and social integration; without it, we have alienation and lack of social integration. Good attunement is achieved when pendulation is successful, when intersubjectivity is lived to its fullest potential – see an illustration of these dynamics in connection with terrorism by Emily Bronin, Kathleen Kennedy, & Sarah Butsch (2006). Pendulation produces interdependent relationships. To 'wage good conflict,' we must design our efforts in ways that keep the double swing connected. Healthy 'identity in unity' and pendulation are interdependent – neither independent and isolated, nor engulfed. Both parties in conflictual relationships must avoid going too far, 'walking over' the other or allowing the other to 'walk over' them. When all players in a conflict learn to invest respect, warmth, and 'calmly floating confidence' rather than 'frantically righteous zealousness,' conflict can be framed benignly.

The case studies presented earlier, of Palestinian and German clients, showed how both lacked a broader vision that showed them constructive ways out of humiliation. The single most important current policy challenge is creating a 'doable' vision for how the world could be made a better place and promoting this vision with patience and caring. The skill of pendulating from compassionately understanding the plight of people caught in suffering, to adamantly rejecting solutions of destruction of self and others, is at the core of such a vision. Travelling through both sides of the Möbius Strip combines softness and hardness, and calibrates them in a tailor-made fashion, bringing them to scale, instead of fixing them in unsuitable stereotypes that merely lead to the helpless question 'and what now?'

Travelling the loop of understanding, on one side of the Möbius Strip, has its merits, because it introduces caring and respect and establishes dignity through shared humanity. This loop should not be suppressed just because it is so much easier for victims to have 'evil enemies' who so nicely throw resistance into a light of heroism. Not least Hitler styled himself and Germany as victims, heroically resisting 'evil.' The 'heroic victim paradigm' that is predicated upon painting an 'enemy' as 'evil' can be a dangerous trap. And, on the other side of the Möbius Strip, travelling the hard and tough side of rejecting humiliation-for-humiliation as 'remedy' for suffering, has its merits as well. It introduces as much humanity as the other side. It is not acceptable within the realm of shared humanity, under no circumstances, to engage in taking lives. We need to work for a world of just rules, enshrined in national and international law, and not a world of everybody pushing around everybody else and taking grievances to self-styled killing. Travelling both sides of the Möbius Strip can co-exist. There is no automatism indicating that one side inherently cancels out the other or weakens the other. On the contrary, if travelled in a mature manner, this pendulation enhances the probability of finding constructive solutions for deadly conflict, violence and terrorism within a field of shared humanity.

The term social control is a related term that encapsulates how third parties, for example representatives of the international community, may intervene. The term social control intertwines understanding and respect (the 'soft' side) with coercion (the 'tough' or 'hard' side). Gandhi disliked the words and idea of 'passive resistance.' The term *Satyāgraha* (nonviolent action), is a combination of *satya* (truth-love) and *āgraha* (firmness/force). *Satyāgraha* encapsulates the intertwining of precisely coercion with respect. (Satyāgraha with long accent indicated by ā is the combination of the two words: satya+āgraha. Unfortunately in English spelling such details are missed. Just '*graha*' means 'planet.' In Sanskrit. āgraha means firmness/force, etc.)

Incidentally, this entails an interesting gender aspect. Traditionally males learned coercion in the public sphere while women were socialised into harmonising the private 'inside' sphere. Indeed, recent research shows that women's reactions to stress vary from men's. Women show a 'tend-and-befriend' response to stress, rather than a fight/flight reaction. The emerging reality of the global village lessens the probability of imperial war and weakens the security dilemma, and this, in turn, weakens the traditional social construction of gender difference that was predicated upon the anticipation of war. Women no longer need to be socialised to produce the next generation of soldiers, and men can be freed from preparing for premature death in guarding the frontiers of the in-group against aggression from outside. Women and men, for the first time in human history, share a common 'inside' sphere and together need to learn how to combine the coercive element of former male training and the cooperative and harmonising strategies that formerly were considered the domain of females. Globalisation, as it weakens gender divisions, gives unprecedented visibility to traditional 'female' scripts of tackling problems.

The rise of attention to the phenomenon of humiliation is inscribed in this transition. Until recently, research on emotions was gravely neglected, not least within psychology, the very field that ought to have taken up this theme. Emotions, feelings, were associated with women. Men supposedly did not act on emotions but on rational deliberations. Today we know that without feeling, thought is neither real nor effective, in both men and in women. The myth of male rationality and female emotionality is in the process of being overcome, and the significance of emotions – humiliation included – is finally being recognised.

Let me illustrate the intertwining of respect and coercion with an example. During my time in Egypt, I was amazed at the low rate of crime and unrest in Cairo, a huge metropolis with at that

time ten to fifteen million people. I soon understood that a high amount of *social control* is part of Egyptian culture. I frequently witnessed incidents that gave testimony to this social control, among them the following scene that I observed numerous times: An accident happens in the street in the middle of overcrowded Cairo. The two involved drivers get out of their cars and look angrily at the damage. They build up anger and subsequently shout and jump; they scream, they pull each other at their cloths, they even hit each other. Around this scene, in the street, in coffee houses, in shops, people's attention is caught. The expressions on people's faces change and quickly reach a common expression of seriousness, of urgency, and of respect and involvement. About ten to twenty men, usually young and strong ones, slowly leave whatever they are doing and approach the scene of the conflict. They separate into two groups of about five to ten men each. Each group of ten men assumes responsibility for one of the opponents. Each opponent is held back and talked to by his 'party.' He is held back sufficiently so that he cannot really hit and hurt his opponent any more, but he is on the other hand not held back too much, so that he still can shout and scream and make brief attack leaps (therefore it needs strong men, since a person in rage can be quite overwhelming). At the same time each opponent is talked to in a very special manner. His 'facilitators' speak calmly and with a high degree of respect to him. They show him that they are fully aware of the urgency of any situation which forces a man to go out of his way in such a dramatic manner (a person being *outside* of him/herself is almost seen as holy in Egypt, as if an important spirit were trying to speak via this person). The 'facilitators' try to understand the nature of the conflict and propose various compromises designed to resolve the conflict. They do not focus unduly on the rational side of the conflict. Instead, they constantly assure the opponents of their respect, acknowledging the fact that the two men are psychologically overstressed by the conflict. The 'facilitators' understand that the rupture of social peace has to be healed by psychological efforts of the whole group. After about ten to fifteen minutes the opponents' rage loses thrust; they agree on a compromise in case this is appropriate. If necessary some facilitators promise to act as witnesses and/or enforcers of the compromises. The opponents can finally be pulled apart by their respective 'facilitators.' The conflict is over. The opponents leave. The facilitators go back to their previous activities and as they stayed calm during the conflict, they do not find it necessary to be overly exited after the event. Patching up conflicts is routine.

When we analyse this conflict resolution and containment scene in the streets of Cairo, we observe a twenty-to-two ratio, or at least a ten-to-two ratio. We note that as many as ten or up to twenty physically strong men may be required to cool and pacify two clashing opponents. If this scenario is taken as a blueprint for conflict resolution, then resources for the prevention, containment, and resolution of conflicts around the world need to be increased.

Conclusions

Aaron Lazare (2004) writes: 'I believe that humiliation is one of the most important emotions we must understand and manage, both in ourselves and in others, and on an individual and national level' (Lazare, 2004, p. 262).

In medicine, there is prevention and treatment. For the eco- and socio-spheres of planet Earth, prevention deserves extra attention, because post-hoc treatment, if too late, risks rendering a dead 'patient.' Prevention means moving from short-term reactionism to long-term construction of a more sustainable world. The paradigm of the Möbius Strip (∞) helps to build sound prevention

strategies in the socio-sphere by *understanding* feelings of humiliation on one side and NOT *condoning* retaliation with violence on the other side. It helps giving up the short-sighted and destructive assumption that *listening* supposedly means *agreeing*, that *dialogue* allegedly equals *defeatism*, and that *reaching out* amounts to *justifying* or *excusing*. These unhappy equations have to be deconstructed and differentiated. They amount to nothing but self-inflicted mutilations of the range of possibilities for handling the world. Dialogue does not have to be defeatist. There is no automatic link. Dialogue can be tough, tougher than retreating behind safe fences that are not safe after all.

There is a consensus among those who know the Arab world (and I lived there for seven years and have kept close links), that the polarisation between the 'East' and the 'West' has become deeper today than a number of years ago. Feelings of humiliation are cumulative. And the more they permeate a community, the more this community is pressed into a retaliatory corner. The moderates lose ground. The extremists gain weight and opportunities to seduce impressionable adolescents. 'Rooting out' terror by using old methods fails. There is no alternative: old Realpolitik, which creates a dangerous illusionary world, has to be transformed into a new Realpolitik.

Feelings of humiliation, when respect is felt wanting – and this is compounded in a human rights context – represent the 'nuclear bomb' of the emotions. The wounds from feeling humiliated can have a terrible impact. Feelings of humiliation can create and deepen fault lines that hamper what is most needed in the 'global village,' namely cooperation. In an increasingly globalising and interdependent world, in a world that at the same time wakes up to the call for equal dignity for all, no longer is it the fear entailed in the security dilemma, but wounds from failing respect which play a key role. They entail the potential to turn human beings into creators and users of 'weapons of mass destruction,' and into perpetrators of terrorist acts. This has to be prevented with tailor-made long-term strategies.

What makes wounds from debasement particularly salient – and what therefore represents a particularly urgent call for their prevention – is that people, who have set their minds on humiliating their perceived humiliators, do not need much military training or expensive equipment. For humiliation-entrepreneurs, instigating feelings of humiliation in followers is far more 'cost-effective.' Household knives and machetes were sufficient to 'cut down' almost a million neighbours (the former elite who were perceived to be arrogant humiliators in Rwanda). And simple passenger airplanes were highjacked and turned into missiles to 'bring down' the symbols of pride of the world's allegedly 'arrogant' superpower (September 11, 2001).

Feelings of humiliation have malign effects when they are translated into violence à la Hitler, or modern terrorism, and set off cycles of humiliation. However, feelings of humiliation do not automatically trigger violence. There is no rigid link. Feelings of humiliation can also be invested into constructive social change. When we look at domestic relationships and what people do when they feel humiliated, we see that some get depressed, some withdraw, others throw enraged tantrums – and the Mandelas engage in constructive change. Larger groups often do the same. Robert M. Prince (1985) for example, in 'Knowing the Holocaust,' describes several paths that can follow second-generation surviving.

Many would claim that China has long responded to national humiliation – and hurtful memories of it – with 'withdrawal,' while from the Islamic world we see 'rage,' but in Mandela's case he was able to forge constructive change. Nelson Mandela showed that there is a constructive script that proceeds from being humiliated and feeling humiliated to beneficial engagement in deep social and societal change, as opposed to retaliation with brutal humiliation-

for-humiliation. Mandela was certainly exposed to humiliating treatment, for twenty seven years in prison, yet, unlike Rwanda, where the former underlings killed the former elite in genocide, Mandela did not unleash genocide on the white elite in South Africa.

If world affairs are conducted in a respecting manner, the probability for constructive cooperation is high. If managed in condescending, patronising and arrogant ways, even if this is done unwittingly, ensuing feelings of humiliation will undermine constructive collaboration. If we wish to forge more humility in the world and want to humble people who arrogate superiority, humbling must be done with respect. In a world that is touched by human rights ideas, humiliation no longer leads to humility. Anger must be translated into respectful work for change, not in anger-entrepreneurship. The entire world needs to learn constructive mature pendulation à la Mandela and develop a culture of agape, courage, curiosity and patience that emphasizes a joint learning orientation and not a defensive ego orientation. Hearts and minds must be won for constructive long-term collaboration and prevention of deadly conflict. The global knowledge society is only viable as a world of 'neighbours' who coexist without mayhem even if they dislike each other – not a world of 'enemies and friends.' These insights can also be institutionalised. At a societal level, to secure peace, in his book *The Decent Society*, Avishai Margalit (1996) calls for institutions that do not humiliate. I conclude this chapter with a call for the non-violence of a 'Moratorium on Humiliation,' and the creation of a *Decent Global Village*.

Let us round up this paper by highlighting that there is hope amidst the bleakness that sometimes threatens to overwhelm us. Hunter-gatherer cultures, existing up until ten thousand years ago or so, provided a cultural context that promoted cooperation. This was enough time for such cooperation to be partly 'hardwired': for genetic adaptation to derive from cultural adaptation. Then, about ten thousand years ago, a cultural context arose that favoured war. The intervening millennia, however, were not sufficient for genetic adaptation – so this aspect is *not* hardwired. Soldiers have had to be trained and inculcated to kill their 'enemies,' since killing is not something that human beings do 'naturally' and easily. (We usually forget how much we depend on our expectation that fellow human beings outside our own tribe will not kill us. The global tourism industry, for example, would founder without this expectation!)

We currently inhabit a transitional period that promotes malign aspects drawn from the legacy of the past ten thousand years, such as an orientation towards competition and accumulating material goods; but which also features benign elements derived from the period prior to the rise of agriculture, which is now linked to the similarly benign aspects of an emerging knowledge society. Thus, neither ancient nor modern culture can be said to corrupt or (alternatively) ennoble humans. Rather, certain aspects and elements of these cultures can corrupt, while others exert a positive influence.

I agree with Ury (1999) that for all its negative aspects, globalisation – by paving the way for a global knowledge society – may allow us to push toward a more dignified and egalitarian world. We need to become more attentive to this trend, and start channelling it constructively. I call for globalisation to be married to *egalisation* (the implementation of the human-rights call for equal dignity). Such a strategy might allow us to build a decent global village, following the call for a decent society issued by Margalit (1996).

Egalisation must be implemented at all levels, from the global 'macro' context to the 'micro' contexts of relationships with our families, colleagues, and friends – even within our own psyches. Egalisation offers an opportunity to dismantle tyrannical systems and their destructive ways of defining human conduct, including the tyrannical behaviour that emanates from deep within us. Another way to frame this is as thesis-antithesis-synthesis. In the *thesis*, subalterns

subserviently accept oppression). In the *antithesis*, subalterns violently reject oppression. In the needed *synthesis*, human beings transcend oppression rather than merely rejecting it, and construct thereby a newly dignified world.

In former times, the process stopped at the antithesis stage. Subaltern actors rose up, replaced the tyrant – and maintained the tyrannical system intact. This is also what the *génocidaires* and terrorists of today accomplish. They act like tyrants in their fight against tyrants. They focus on the *what*, not the *how*. In many cases, this flows from an enthusiastic fervour for liberation – from aspirations to greater dignity. In my research, I attach the label 'extremists' to those who perpetuate cycles of humiliation rather than seeking to end them. 'Moderates,' by contrast, are those who have the intellectual and emotional resources to end such cycles.

I see some of these dangers, and also the potential for constructive action, in the present-day 'war on terror.' If we accept that feelings of subaltern inferiority influence the decision to adopt terrorist methods, it hardly suffices for target populations to triumphantly cry: 'Oh, they only hate us because they admire and envy us!' – as if the fact of envy bolsters the targets' superiority. And subalterns who rise to power need to understand that feelings of inferiority are not something to be ashamed of, or to 'cleanse.' They stem, rather, from a historic evolution that first cultivated hierarchies, including emotional mindsets of inferiority and elite admiration for subaltern actors, only later to delegitimize them. The emotional pain associated with this transformation cannot be healed by violent mayhem, whether terrorist or counterterrorist in nature. It can be healed only by gradually expanding boundaries of a world in which all people have equal rights and access to dignity.

In recent times, few leaders have so exemplified the possibility of such a healing strategy as Nelson Mandela in South Africa. Mandela could have followed the example of Rwanda. He would certainly have had the power to unleash genocide on the white elite in South Africa. He did not. 'I think this is what we've got to say to white people of this country: You don't know how lucky you are…' says Desmond Tutu in an interview by Sharon Davis ('Moment of Truth,' Sunday, 4th May 1997, ABC Radio National in "Background Briefing," retrieved from http://www.abc.net.au/rn/talks/bbing/stories/s10597.htm on 1st January 2008).

Clearly, post-Apartheid South Africa still faces many challenges. However, the lessons that Mandela taught the world are still relevant. After 27 years in prison, some of his prison guards had become his friends. In short, his strategy was not to kill enemies, but to turn them into partners. Let us accordingly end this chapter with a quote from Nelson R. Mandela (1994) himself:

> I always knew that deep down in every human heart, there is mercy and generosity. No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite. Even in the grimmest times in prison, when my comrades and I were pushed to our limits, I would see a glimmer of humanity in one of the guards, perhaps just for a second, but it was enough to reassure me and keep me going. Man's goodness is a flame that can be hidden but never extinguished (Mandela, 1994, p. 542).

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[1] This paper is collated and adapted from earlier texts on terrorism and genocide by Lindner, see, for example, Evelin G. Lindner (2008), Evelin G. Lindner (2007b), Evelin G. Lindner (2006b), Evelin G. Lindner (2005), Evelin G. Lindner (2001b), Evelin G. Lindner (2001a), Evelin G. Lindner (2000b).