Futility of Armed Conflict: The Role of Dignity and Humiliation

Evelin G. Lindner, MD, PhD, PhD (Dr psychol, Dr med)
Social scientist

Evelin G. Lindner

Founding Director and President of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (HumanDHS, http://www.humiliationstudies.org/)
- recipient of the 2006 SBAP Award
- affiliated with the Columbia University Conflict Resolution Network, New York
- affiliated with the University of Oslo, Department of Psychology
- affiliated with the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Paris
- teaching, furthermore, in South East Asia, the Middle East, Australia, and other places globally
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Abstract

This chapter argues that a new concept of *Realpolitik* is currently emerging and has to be developed more succinctly. Old Realpolitik was defined by fear, collective fear of attack from outgroups, informed by the so-called *security dilemma* (a term used in international relations theory). In this context, armed conflict was accepted, both practically and normatively. The human and material cost of armed conflict was regarded as necessary price to pay for victory.

In contrast, the new concept of Realpolitik should take into account that the reality of the world has changed. In a world that grows ever more interdependent, human rights replace the old definition of *security*, which is 'keeping enemies out, and underlings down,' with a new definition. The new definition reads, 'integrating all humankind in a world of equal dignity for all.' In the new context, armed conflict is a recipe for the demise of all parties, no longer for the victory of one side. In the new context, armed conflict is therefore neither utile nor acceptable, be it practically or normatively.

Introduction

The editors of this book, Seema Shekhawat and Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, wish to bring to the fore the cost of conflict in terms of material and humanitarian loss and suffering. They intend to highlight the cost of armed conflict so as to underline its futility.

Let us begin this chapter with a few provocative questions: Is it true that armed conflict is futile? Proud war veterans would violently contest that using arms in conflicts

is futile. Historic victories in war are usually celebrated, and the price of material and humanitarian loss and suffering considered worth paying. Even suicide bombers view explosive suicide and homicide as noble rather than futile. In other words, even violent self-destruction as a means to achieving goals feels utile rather than futile to those who choose this path.

Many believe that violent struggle is unavoidable, that it is part and parcel of the natural order of things, both in the animal kingdom and among humans, just as unavoidable as natural laws. 'The strongest wins, and in order to win, violence is indispensable' is a sentence that many subscribe to. 'Might is right' is the short version of this popular philosophy. And violence will only increase – this is the forecast – since conflicts over scarce resources, for example water, or fertile soil, will only become more pressing in an overpopulating world. Disputing this interpretation of the human condition is regarded by many as blue-eyed idealism that only misguided dreamers can entertain.

In short, should I stop writing this chapter here, and advise the editors to come to their senses? Are Seema Shekhawat and Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra blue-eyed misguided dreamers?

The editors are no misguided dreamers. They are contemporary realists. This chapter not only supports their project, but also positions it within a larger historical context. The chapter draws on a transdisciplinary description of human history to explain why we face this contest of opinions about the futility versus utility of armed conflicts, and why armed conflict indeed is futile in our present-day interdependent world.

The argument in this chapter is that a new concept of *Realpolitik*[1] is emerging at the present point in human history, a concept that needs to be shaped and developed more purposefully and proactively. This new concept is part and parcel of the currently unfolding larger normative paradigm shift toward a more efficient implementation of human rights. This book and its editors and authors are inspired by this larger normative paradigm shift, and this book contributes to shaping it with greater precision.

Old Realpolitik was defined by fear, by collective fear of attack from outgroups, informed by the so-called *security dilemma* (a term used in international relations theory, see more explanations further down). In the context of a strong security dilemma, armed conflict is almost inevitable – this is why it is called a *dilemma* – and thus it came to be regarded as 'normal.' And undeniably, 'might' most often turned out to be 'right' throughout the past millennia. No wonder that armed conflict, including its cost, was accepted, both practically and normatively.

In the context of a strong security dilemma no statistics of the cost of war and violent conflict, even the most disastrous ones, can persuade policy makers to abandon war and violent conflict. This book will therefore have difficulties reaching the eyes and ears of adherents of the old concept of Realpolitik, since mere statistics of cost have little significance for their decision-making. They will find no flaw with the fact that the world's military expenditure in 2006 reached a new high of $1204 billion, while the annual cost of meeting the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 would amount to little more than 10% of these funds.

In contrast, the new concept of Realpolitik takes into account that the reality of our world is in the process of changing. Today, we no longer live in several *villages*, pitted against each other in mutual fear of attack, but in what emerges as *one single global village*. More so, the new normative system that currently gains mainstream acceptance

in a globalising world, namely human rights, replace the old definition of *security*, which is 'keeping enemies out, and underlings down,' with a new definition. The new definition reads: 'integrating all humankind in a world of equal dignity for all.' In the new context, armed conflict is no longer utile and therefore no longer acceptable. And the more this historically completely novel fact is being understood and grasped, an increasing number of people cease to accept armed conflict, be it practically or normatively. In the new context, armed conflict represents a recipe for collective suicide – and not victory. Armed conflict no longer serves anybody's self-interest (except the interest of those who thrive on martyrdom and do not hesitate to mete out death to the rest).

In the new context, the old fear of attack is replaced with humiliation as defining negative emotion, namely feelings of humiliation felt by individuals in response to failing respect for equal dignity. If the transition to the new world is handled well by the international community and humankind at large, it entails hope, if not, it can seriously undermine any chances for building a sustainable future for humanity. Two facts in particular threaten peace, locally and globally, at the current point in historic times. First, feelings of humiliation represent 'the nuclear bomb of the emotions' (a term that Lindner has coined) – meaning that feelings of humiliation are so strong that they easily push people into violent cycles of humiliation. Second, in the new context such cycles are ubiquitously destructive if carried out with arms. Therefore, the transition toward the new normative universe of human rights, including new definitions of Realpolitik, is endangered by 'clashes of humiliation,' clashes that have to be avoided.

This chapter is written with the intention to help making the transition more constructive. Part of this effort is explaining why taking up arms against alleged 'enemies' is no longer feasible in a fledging global village. The only niche left for arms – at least a certain type of arms – are democratically legitimised police forces that guard the inner peace of the global village (these forces have still to be created – United Nations peace keeping troops represent only a rudimentary inception).

The author of this chapter sees humiliation not as an a-historic emotional process, but as a historical-cultural-social-emotional construct that changes over time. The currently living generations find themselves in a crucial historical transition shifting from an older world grounded in ranked honour – an *honour world* (with the experience of honour-humiliation) – to a vision of a future world of *equal dignity* (and a quite distinct experience of dignity-humiliation).

In traditional hierarchical societies, elites were socialised into translating feelings of humiliation into an urge to fight back in a duel-like fashion. They defended their honour against humiliation with the sword (in duels, or in duel-like wars, with historically increasingly lethal weapons), while underlings (women and lowly men) were expected to humbly, subserviently, and obediently accept being subjugated without invoking or expressing any feelings of humiliation. In this context, rulers were not held responsible for caring for the well-being of their subjects. Rulers fought their wars over honour and land, and the suffering of their subjects went unmentioned. When people perished, through human-made or natural disaster, and when they were traumatised, this meant little.

This conceptualisation of the world began to hold sway about ten thousand years ago, when hierarchical societal systems emerged as more complex agricultural societies evolved (see Ury, 1999, for a comprehensive description, which will be explained in

more detail further down). Until recently, such hierarchical societal systems were regarded as thoroughly legitimate, even as divinely ordained. This was world was guided by the old Realpolitik.

Today, in many places, people still subscribe to such concepts. Yet, this state-of-affairs is in the process of changing. This book is one of the outcomes, proofs, and drivers of this paradigm shift. The fact that the phenomenon of humiliation is gaining significance is part of this large-scale paradigm shift. It gains significance within society at large and therefore also as a topic to be studied, not just by emotion researchers, but in a transdisciplinary fashion, by all social sciences.

This chapter lays out the changing role of humiliation during the past ten thousand years, and its significance in current times of paradigmatic transition. This historic analysis illuminates why it is not the net cost of armed conflict that drives decision making, but the larger context within which such cost is gauged.

Old Realpolitik: Self-interest is defined by borders and honour

William Ury, anthropologist, and director of the Harvard University Project on Preventing War, conceptualises human history by drawing together anthropology, game theory and conflict studies (Ury, 1999). He differentiates three major types of society: a) simple hunter-gatherers, who dominated human history until circa ten thousand years ago, b) complex agriculturists, who lasted throughout the past ten thousand years, and c) the currently emerging knowledge society. This categorisation follows a Weberian *ideal-type* approach.[2]

The defining element of the hunter-gatherer way of life was that their wherewithal – wild food – represented an expandable pie of resources that offered a rather benign frame of life because it allowed for win-win solutions. Conflicts were addressed, not through force and domination, but through negotiation in open networks. The hunter-gatherer way of life defined human history for ninety percent of its total duration, until approximately ten thousand years ago, when deep change occurred: *Homo sapiens* developed agriculture. The exact factors and sequence in the causal chain that led to the emergence of agriculture, are hotly debated. What is clear is that agriculture represents a way of life that is defined by the fixity of the pie of resources – land is either mine or yours – a fixity that forces all participants into a rather malign win-lose definitorial frame. Hence, complex agriculturalists lived in a world of coercion and closed hierarchical pyramids of power instead of open networks.

Apart from anthropology, also international relations theory sheds light on human life during the past ten thousand years. Agriculturalists lived in communities that were pitted against each other in what international relations theory calls the security dilemma.[3] The term was introduced by John Herz in 1950, to explain why states wage war against each other without intending to. The security dilemma is defined by fear, fear of attack. It has the nature of a dilemma because it aggravates fear instead of mitigating it. Its inherent tendency is to trigger arms races: 'I have to amass power, because I am scared. When I amass weapons, you get scared. You amass weapons, I get more scared.'

In a world of honourable domination/submission, everybody accepts that it is divinely ordained or represents nature's order that higher beings hold down lesser beings. Even

the most atrocious schemes, when seen as 'honourable' strategies, are regarded as beneficial for the victims and society at large. Victims have no right to invoke the notion of humiliation as a form of violation, for them being humiliated has to be equivalent to being rightfully humbled, of being 'justly' shown their 'due lowly place.' Only their masters, when their privileged position is questioned, can appeal to humiliation as an infringement on their honour, and redeem it, for example, by going to duel.

For many thousands of years this system was identified with 'civilisation,' while equality meant 'barbarism.' In a book on *Early Civilizations*, we read, 'If egalitarianism was known, it was as a feature of some of the despised, barbarian societies that existed beyond the borders of the civilized world' (Trigger, 1993, 53-54).

Slavery, bondage, serfdom, feudalism, lords, vassals, Apartheid, Coverture – terms abound that describe the various degrees to which a person could lose the relative sovereignty a hunter-gatherer enjoyed prior to ten thousand years ago, and the different ways in which a person could be subordinated, stripped of her equality in dignity, and turned into the property of a master. Systems of domination/submission were developed to various degrees of sophistication and thoroughness during the history of the past millennia. Examples range from Mesopotamia, Pharaonic Egypt, old China, to more recent colonial empires. German Prussia, for instance, developed the honour code to a high point of a combination of *discipline* and honourable rank (Elias, 1996); historic France developed *etiquette* at its royal court, a refined way of honouring rank (Elias, 1994); in Rwanda, *ubuhake* signified a clientilist kind of strong interdependence between a patron, who was mostly Tutsi, with clients who could be Hutu (Hutu means 'servant') or lower-ranked Tutsi.

This rather malign setup is currently in the process of being undone by the *ingathering* of the human tribe (ingathering in the appropriate anthropological term for the coming together of humankind as part of globalisation). The advent of globalisation and human rights entails the benign promise to liberate humankind from a host of malign framings, dilemmas and biases.

New Realpolitik: Self-interest is identical with common interest in a global knowledge society of equal dignity for all

Human rights, in contrast to honourable domination/submission, could be described as an adaptation to new circumstances, namely to currently ever-increasing global interdependence. In the emerging global knowledge society, the security dilemma gets increasingly weaker as defining principle. As soon as there is only One World, only One 'global village' – no longer many 'villages' pitted against each other – new moral adaptations are called for. And indeed, human-rights ideals are gaining mainstream visibility, while honour strategies lose their taste of 'heroism,' and begin to smack of abuse. What was once legitimate *rank*, transmutes into illegitimate *rankism* (Fuller, 2003).

According to Ury, a knowledge society resembles the hunter-gatherer model because the pie of resources – knowledge – can be expanded infinitely (there are always new ideas to be developed), thus re-opening the door for win-win solutions. Rigid hierarchical structures become obsolete and the more benign open networks typical of early hunter-

gatherers re-emerge. Negotiation and contract replace command lines, and coexistence, embedded in values of equal dignity for everybody, replaces the ranking of people in higher and lesser beings.

The first sentence in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights reads, 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.' In other words, human rights ideals oppose hierarchical rankings of human worthiness that were once regarded as 'normal' (and are still 'normal' in many parts of the world). Practices of routine humiliation of underlings, which once were legitimate virtually everywhere around the globe, become illegitimate.

1757 is the point in time when the verb *to humiliate*, for the first time in the English language, parted from the positive signification of *to humble*, and acquired the negative meaning of 'to violate the dignity or self-respect of someone' (Miller, 1993, p. 175).

The period of honour during human history was defined by the fear that is definitorial of the security dilemma, collective fear of attack from outgroups. Human rights introduce humiliation as defining negative emotion – feelings of humiliation as a reaction to failing respect for equal dignity. And these feelings of humiliation, in a context of human rights, are felt on the part of each individual qua being an individual, no longer qua being part of a collective. Human rights invite all human beings into one single human family where every individual member enjoys equal dignity. All are neighbours, no longer friends versus enemies. Former honour-humiliation (where only elites could invoke humiliation as a violation and underlings had to accept it humbly) transforms into dignity-humiliation that is illegitimate in all cases.

Human rights currently drive a process where 'normal predicaments' transmute into 'traumatic and humiliating violations,' and this permeates all levels, from global macro levels to intergroup, intragroup, and even intrapersonal micro levels. 'Domestic chastisement,' for example, transmutes to 'domestic violence' – a beaten wife, a subjugated underling in general, is no longer expected to quietly swallow lowliness and equate humiliation with due humbleness, but is encouraged to feel violated, abused, and humiliated in the sense of violation. Companies pay large amounts to consultants to train their employees to become team players who contribute with their creativity to the company's tasks in an empowered spirit of equal dignity, instead of distributing and accepting orders within an autocratic top-down system. Clinical psychology, as well, is at the center of this transition, inspiring empowerment in clients who grew up in contexts where 'breaking the will of the child' still was regarded as 'prosocial pedagogy,' rather than 'antisocial abuse' (Miller, 1983).

While formerly only elites were allowed to define mistreatment as violation of their honour, now, this right is given to all underlings. The right to define humiliation as violation is removed from the masters and given to the downtrodden, marginalised, and underprivileged. Feelings of humiliation are indeed the very 'fuel' that drives the human rights revolution.

A host of recent research in the fields of psychology and neuroscience underpins that indeed, human rights are not only the appropriate normative adaptation to a globalising world, they are furthermore the adequate value system for a humane world. Old power-over cultures, including more recent outgrows such as 'rugged individualism' ideologies, are damaging to human beings. For example, much of the research on resilience points in a relational direction, suggesting that resilience grows through connection (Jordan,

Jordan, Walker, & Hartling (Eds.), 2004). Jean Baker Miller and her colleagues at the Jean Baker Miller Training Institute (JBMTI) emphasise *connection* and *mutuality* as part of their *Relational-Cultural Theory (RCT)*.

In sum, human rights are more humane than the old honour code, they are more in tune with a modern globalising world, more conducive to the need for creative solutions for global challenges, and at the same time more consistent with the long-term evolutionary background of the human species. The past ten thousand years could be regarded as a rather short period (in historical terms) of harsh adaptation to malign circumstances that ran counter to earlier evolutionary adaptations of Homo sapiens (Giorgi, 2001). Ranking people, turning human beings into tools in the hands of masters, is not beneficial to anybody, not to masters, not to underlings, and not to society at large, not least because such strategies deprive society of what fully empowered human beings potentially can contribute to social and societal life.

Old Realpolitik is deeply emotional, contrary to their proponent's insistence that it is rational. Old Realpolitik is deeply emotional because honour is a concept that has strong emotional anchorings. For the past ten thousand years, men were trained by society to be prepared for early honourable death in battle so as to protect their ingroup – only 'women' and 'cowards,' those who did not have the 'guts' to behave honourably, lamented the cost of armed conflict.

Today, in a globalising world, defending ingroups against outgroups is no longer a suitable concept. All humankind needs to cooperate, jointly, to solve new global problems. The suicidal aspect of honour is no longer concealable by the argument of ingroup self-interest. New Realpolitik has to take this historically unprecedented situation into account. Only human rights offer a non-suicidal normative framework for world society in an increasingly interdependent world. This state-of-affairs is so novel that no history lesson can offer help, only clear analysis. History does not go in cycles, it does not repeat itself. None of our forefathers was able to see pictures of their Blue Planet from the perspective of an astronaut. None of our forefathers lived in a world with man-made global challenges, and the relevant knowledge to tackle them.

To conclude, brave heroism and sacrifice in the old world of honourable old Realpolitik meant standing up *against* your enemies, it meant accepting to be part of a hierarchically organised ingroup, united in patriotic love for your ingroup, pitted against threatening outgroups. Brave heroism and sacrifice in the new Realpolitik of dignity means standing up united in humanising love *for* a vision of one united family of humankind, where everybody deserves to be respected as equal in dignity, a world without enemies and outgoups, a world of neighbours, who together find a way to live together even if they do not love each other.

The case of genocide

The author of this chapter focuses on the phenomenon of humiliation since 1996. I conducted a four-year doctoral research project, entitled *The Feeling of Being Humiliated: A Central Theme in Armed Conflicts. A Study of the Role of Humiliation in Somalia, and Rwanda/Burundi, Between the Warring Parties, and in Relation to Third Intervening Parties*, from 1997 to 2001.[4] I carried out 216 qualitative interviews in

Somalia, Rwanda, and Burundi addressing their history of genocidal killings. From 1998 to 1999 the interviews were carried out in Somaliland, Rwanda, Burundi, Nairobi, Kenya; and Egypt. I also conducted interviews in the same period in Norway, Germany, Switzerland, France, and Belgium. Some of the interviews were filmed (10 hours of film and images of Somaliland and Rwanda), others were taped (over 100 hours of audiotape), and in situations where this seemed inappropriate, I made notes. The interviews and conversations were conducted in different languages; most of them in English (Somalia) and French (Great Lakes), many in German or Norwegian.

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.[5] 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.

German history served as starting point for my research. It is often assumed that the humiliation of the Germans through the Versailles Treaties after World War I was partly responsible for the Holocaust and the Second World War. The results of my research confirm the original hypothesis that, indeed, humiliation plays a role for armed conflict and mass violence not only in Europe, but also outside of Europe, and not only in the past, but also today, with increasing relevance. In all three cases that were included in my doctoral research, Somalia, Rwanda and Germany, it was the fear of imagined future humiliating subjugation of one group at the hands of another that typically figured as justification for genocidal killings. In Germany it was the fear, projected into the future, of a future *Weltherrschaft des Judentums* (the world dominated by Jews). In Rwanda it was the fear that future democratic power-sharing with Tutsis would mean but Tutsi domination. And also Somalia's future was regarded as threatened – by the 'arrogant' Isaaq tribe.[6]

In all three cases, killing the alleged humiliators and their allies was chosen as 'solution' – by Hitler in Germany, by Siad Barre in Somalia, and by the extremist Hutu elite in Rwanda, all of whom portrayed themselves as 'saviours' and were initially widely welcomed and celebrated as such. However, as it turned out, the 'rational' self-interest of the perpetrators and their followers was ultimately undermined, not supported. Hitler took half of the world, including his own Germany and Austria, with him on a path of homicidal and suicidal destruction; Somalia's dictator Siad Barre had to flee in disgrace, leaving behind a country in chaos; and also the extremist Hutu elite in Rwanda lost precisely what they wanted to protect, despised by the world as the worst of *genocidaires*.

If we apply these lessons to contemporary world politics, we observe similar dynamics. In an ever more interdependent world it is no longer feasible to achieve security through exploding bombs, be it big-scale or small-scale. In former times, the mighty could hope to achieve calm and stability by keeping enemies at bay, and underlings humble, through applying a mixture of manipulation, routine subjugation, and, in case of attacks and uprisings, brutal retaliation and subjugation. In today's interdependent world, every single world citizen acquires the potential to turn into a 'Hitler' and pull the world into self- and other-annihilation. Anybody can download the construction plans for bombs from the internet, and anybody can maintain websites and

global networks that instigate violence, locally and globally. More even, the probability of people actually being attracted to this path of violence is heightened with ever more people expecting global solidarity, and equality in dignity, instead of division and subjugation. Feelings of humiliation emerge when equality in dignity is promised but not implemented, and when these feelings are instrumentalised by Hitler-like humiliation-entrepreneurs and translated into violence, world peace is in danger.

Statistics underpinning these claims abound. The *2007 State of the Future* report, for example, concludes that terrorism is a problem that the world is not yet tackling well (Glenn & Gordon, 2007, Executive Summary, p. 6). And tellingly, much of what would have been dubbed 'aggression,' or 'uprising' earlier, has acquired the label of 'asymmetric conflict' today, at least in academic settings,[7] indicating how the call for equality in dignity has gained legitimacy. Yet, the new label alone does not render more constructive outcomes – the mighty reap 'terrorism' with their bombs, and all reap less security and quality of life rather than more, in a downhill cycle. The mighty and the weak in asymmetric conflicts have to understand that humiliating opponents by force no longer humbles and pacifies (as it may have done in former times). On the contrary, in the new context, ubiquitous cycles of humiliation risk leading to collective suicide.

Current state-of-the-art with respect to research on humiliation

Only very few researchers have studied the phenomenon of humiliation explicitly so far. Mostly, humiliation figures implicitly, for example, in literature on violence and war. The view that humiliation may be a particularly forceful phenomenon is supported, however, by the research of some authors.[8]

The notion of *oppression* is related to humiliation (Deutsch, 2006), as is the concept of *domination* (Pettit, 1996). There is, furthermore, a significant literature in philosophy on the *politics of recognition* and *ressentiment*.[9] Using the examples of Ethiopia and Eritrea, Liah Greenfeld suggests that resentment plays a central role in nation building.[10] The Philosopher Avishai Margalit's (1996) calls for a *Decent Society*, in which institutions no longer humiliate citizens.

The relationship between *guilt, shame* and *aggression* has been addressed,[11] as has the relationship between *anger* and *aggression*.[12] *Hazing* and *bullying* entail humiliation at their core.[13] Cultural differences have been highlighted.[14]

I have focused on *transdisciplinary* work on humiliation that includes a range of fields, from political science, sociology, anthropology, history, theology, to social psychology and clinical psychology.[15] I see humiliation as a complex cluster of acts, feelings, and institutions, entailing at their core the holding down of a person, a practice which may be regarded as legitimate or illegitimate depending on its normative frame, and which is moreover played out differently by different cultures and people.[16] To my view, the conflicts in Rwanda and Somali, as much as global terrorism, can be described more accurately as *clashes of humiliation* than as *clashes between civilizations* (Huntington, 1996).

Let me give you the definition of humiliation that I have developed for my work:

In everyday language, the word humiliation is used at least threefold. Firstly, the word *humiliation* points at an *act*, secondly at a *feeling*, and thirdly, at a *process*: 'I humiliate you, you feel humiliated, and the entire process is one of humiliation.' (In this chapter, the reader is expected to differentiate according to the context, because otherwise language would become too convoluted.)

Humiliation means the enforced lowering of a person or group, a process of subjugation that damages or strips away their pride, honour or dignity. To be humiliated is to be placed, against your will (or in some cases with your consent, for example in cases of religious self-humiliation or in sado-masochism) and often in a deeply hurtful way, in a situation that is greatly inferior to what you feel entitled to. Humiliation entails demeaning treatment that transgresses established expectations. It may involve acts of force, including violent force. At its heart is the idea of pinning down, putting down or holding to the ground. Indeed, one of the defining characteristics of humiliation as a process is that the victim is forced into passivity, acted upon, made helpless.

People react in different ways when they feel that they were unduly humiliated: some just become depressed – anger turns against oneself – others get openly enraged, and yet others hide their anger and carefully plan for revenge. The person who plans for revenge may become the leader of a movement and instigate mass violence, by forging narratives of humiliation and inviting the masses to pour their grievances into those narratives. Feelings of humiliation and fear of humiliation represent the *nuclear bomb of the emotions*, which, if instigated and harnessed in malign ways by humiliation-entrepreneurs, can power mass atrocities in an unprecedented efficient way.

The most powerful weapon of mass destruction is the humiliated mind (authentically feeling humiliated or manipulated into it), who is ready to transgress all 'normal' self-interest calculations and psychological barriers in response. A relatively small number of so-inclined people can reduce big armies to insignificance, not least because cycles of humiliation, if kept in motion by sufficient number of people, can foreclose the need to procure costly weapons. In Rwanda, household tools such as machetes were sufficient; many victims paid for bullets, to be shot, instead of being hacked to death. Also the downing of the Twin Towers on the September 9, 2001, was achieved without the purchase of missiles. Modern technology serves as a magnifier, in the Holocaust it enabled industrial mass killing, in Rwanda, Radio Milles Collines disseminated propaganda, and 9/11 was possible through the victim's civil airplanes turned into missiles.

Studies show that the pain from insults and humiliation is processed in the human brain like physical pain, equally strong and compelling. 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 also their intentions, the social meaning of their behaviour and their emotions. Social emotions like guilt, shame, pride, embarrassment, disgust and lust are based on the human mirror neuron system. Humiliation appears to be mapped in the brain by the same mechanisms that encode real physical pain. These discoveries shift our understanding of a vast array of fields, from philosophy, linguistics, and culture, to empathy, and learning. In a recent article entitled 'A Unifying View of the Basis of Social Cognition' (Gallese, Keysers, & Rizzolatti, 2004), it is argued that 'at the

basis of the experiential understanding of others' actions is the activation of the mirror neuron system. A similar mechanism, but involving the activation of viscero-motor centers, underlies the experiential understanding of the emotions of others' (Gallese, Keysers, & Rizzolatti, 2004, p. 396).

In 'Why It Hurts to Be Left Out: The Neurocognitive Overlap Between Physical Pain and Social Pain' Eisenberger & Lieberman (2005) 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).

However, it is not only the *experience* of emotions like humiliation, but also the *memory* of such emotions, that is relevant and which may motivate aggressive retaliation. Avishai Margalit (2002), a philosopher based in Jerusalem proposes that some people may become obsessively attached to feeling humiliated, not least because this secures the 'benefits' of the victim status and an entitlement for retaliation. '[W]e can hardly remember insults without reliving them… The wounds of insult and humiliation keep bleeding long after the painful physical injuries have crusted over' (Margalit, 2002, p. 120; see also Goldman & Coleman, 2005).

Post Victimization Ethical Exemption Syndrome (PVEES syndrome), is a related syndrome that has been described by Jimmy Jones, Professor of World Religions/African Studies in the United States. He explains, 'Rather like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, it's a psychological condition that causes people to behave in an inerrant manner. This PVEES seems to affect in particular African Americans and Muslims. The syndrome is rather like the golden rule turned on its head. So instead of 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you', its 'They did it to us so we can do it to them!'' (http://www.islamsgreen.org/islams_green/2007/01/dr_jimmy_jones_.html). The memory of humiliation, and the *PVEES syndrome*, all are prone to defend cost of conflict that otherwise would be deemed unacceptable.

And humiliation is not only constitutive for victims who are directly affected. Mirror neurons make us identify with the humiliation we observe in others as if it were ours, and react as if we had been humiliated ourselves. Mirror neurons allow human beings to grasp the minds of others by feeling, not by thinking. It is therefore not surprising that there are at least 2,000 people in the UK, who pose a threat to national security because of their support for terrorism, as the head of MI5, Jonathan Evans, reported on 5th November 2007, a rise of 400 since November 2006 (see http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/7078712.stm). Humiliation-entrepreneurs 'use' the human mirror neuron system to recruit followers.

Since feelings of humiliation are very powerful, representing the 'nuclear bomb of the emotions,' former masters must learn new humility and former underlings develop new self-empowerment so that all can cooperate as equally dignified players of a global team. And all have to learn the mature handling of conflict, in the spirit of Mandela's mature moderation. Even the gravest humiliation does not have to lead to mayhem; we can jointly foster constructive change.

Looking into the future

This chapter argues that a new concept of *Realpolitik* is emerging, and that it has to be developed more purposefully. Old Realpolitik was defined by fear, collective fear of attack from outgroups, informed by the so-called *security dilemma*. Armed conflict was accepted, both practically and normatively. The human and material cost of armed conflict was regarded as necessary price to pay for victory.

In contrast, the new concept of Realpolitik should take into account that the reality of the world has changed. In a world that grows ever more interdependent, human rights replace the old definition of *security*, which is 'keeping enemies out, and underlings down,' with a new definition. The new definition reads: 'integrating all humankind in a world of equal dignity for all.' In the new context, armed conflict is a recipe for suicidal demise for all, no longer for victory of one side. In the new context, armed conflict is therefore neither utile nor acceptable, be it practically or normatively.

At the current points in human history, what is lacking is not information about the cost of armed conflict. A simple Google Search provides ample insights. What is lacking is more clarity about the emerging new conceptual framework within which to gauge which cost is 'acceptable' and which not. It is thus not the pure quantity of cost that counts. It is the weighing of advantages versus disadvantages of paying a certain price.

In the context of a strong security dilemma, almost any cost of armed conflict is considered acceptable. What is needed at the current historical juncture is a new framework for interpreting the advantages versus disadvantages of paying this price. This chapter aims at explaining this new framework.

The price of wars, globally, is being documented, for example, by The International Peace Bureau (IPB) in Geneva, Switzerland. It offers a wide variety of statistics on military spending (http://www.ipb.org/milspending.html). See also the *Global Surveys of Armed Conflicts* (the most recent one by Marshall & Gurr, 2005), see also *Third World War* (Marshall, 1999) or, *The Price of the War on Terror* (Goldstein, 2004).

World military expenditures in 2006 reached a new high of $1204 billion, reports the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI, www.sipri.org) at the launch of its annual Yearbook (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2007). This represents an increase of 3.5% over the 2005 figure, and is 37% more than a decade ago. The USA accounted for nearly half the total, with $529 billion.

'These amounts constitute a huge treasury that should be re-directed to the fight against mass poverty and the threat of climate change, according to the IPB. The UN's Millennium Project (2005) has estimated that the annual costs of meeting the Millennium Development Goals by the target date of 2015 are of the order of $135 billion per year, little more than 10% of the money currently allocated to the military sector' (retrieved on 30th November 2007, from http://www.ipb.org/milspending.html)

How can we explain that a world military expenditure of $1204 billion is possible, at a time when the advantages to invest these funds more constructively are so obvious? Old Realpolitik conceptualises the world as a fragmented world, where *security*, or *counterterrorism*, means keeping 'enemies' out of ones ingroup or in 'secure submission.' And it is in the framework of this old Realpolitik that a world military expenditure of $1204 billion is anchored. Today, ranked honour, with all its oratory of patriotic love, resolve, bravery and heroism, is still strong in three realms: in certain

world regions (for example, where so-called honour killings are accepted as legitimate), in certain segments of societies (for example, city street gangs), and at macro levels, where international elites interact. Even though no longer as openly espoused as in former times, a state's 'honorable preeminence' (Donald Kagan, 1998) is still upheld by many diplomats, foreign policy makers, and military personnel. The average citizen, the common man and woman, are often much more attached to human rights.

In times of growing global interdependence, the old approach rapidly loses feasibility; indeed, it becomes increasingly counterproductive and self-destructive. In an interdependent world, unilateral action no longer stays unilateral, every action becomes a boomerang. Dishing out violence and humiliation to deter 'enemies' or keep them 'down' no longer pacifies the world, but comes back in kind. Humiliation no longer renders humble underlings but may produce enraged terrorists. New Realpolitik is *global human security*. A formerly fragmented world needs to unite in a new global ingroup, a global community, to tackle common challenges and give the survival of all humankind a chance. *Global human security* is safeguarded not by fighting *against*, but by standing up *for*, for a vision of one united family of humankind, where everybody deserves to be respected as equal in dignity, a world without enemies and outgoups, a world of neighbours, who together find a way to live together even if they do not love each other.

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[1] The term Realpolitik was coined by August Ludwig von Rochau (1810-1873), a German writer in the nineteenth century, following Klemens Fürst von Metternich (1773-1859) in his quest to find a balance of power for the European empires. See, for example, Doll, 2005.

[2] See, for an explanation of this approach Coser, 1977, p. 224.

[3] Collins, 2004; Jervis, Lebow, & Stein, 1985; Herz, 1950; Snyder, 1985; Posen, 1993, and Hardin, 1995, discuss its emotional aspects.

[4] See Lindner, 2000a.

[5] See, for example, Lindner, 2007a, Lindner, 2007b, Lindner, 2006a, Lindner, 2006c.

[6] See a deeper discussion in Lindner, 2000b and Lindner, 2006b.

[7] See the new journal *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict*, founded in 2008, published by Taylor and Francis, edited by Clark McCauley and Marc Ross, Asch Center, Bryn Mawr College, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

[8] Gilligan, 1996; Hale, 1994; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; Klein, 1991; Lewis, 1971; Miller, 1993**;** Negrao et al., 2005; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Retzinger, 1991; Scheff, 1990, Vogel & Lazare, 1990; Volkan, 2004.

[9] Honneth, 1995; Honneth, 1997; Scheler, 1912.
[10] Greenfeld, 1992; Greenfeld, 1996.
[11] See, for example, Tangney et al., 1992.
[12] See, for example, Averill, 2001.
[13] Olweus, 1993, is a pioneer in research on bullying.
[14] See, among others, Smith & Bond, 1999.
[15] See, among others, Lindner, 2006c, and a number of full online texts on
http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin02.php.
[16] In this paper, the reader is expected to deduct which type of humiliation is referred to at any given point (act, feeling, or institution), because language would become too convoluted otherwise.