Guest Author

Urban Dignity–Global Dignity

What Is It? How Do We Achieve It? (Part 1)

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Abstract

Unity in diversity is at the centre of dignity. It means that people of all classes and colors intermingle in a spirit of mutual care and respect. Traditionally, throughout the past millennia, *uniformity in division* has been practised almost everywhere on the planet: to strengthen their competitive advantage over enemy out-groups, in-groups maintained a strictly unequal domination of *higher* beings over *lesser* beings. Unity in diversity is a more complex concept as it requires the readiness and ability to consider everyone else as equal in dignity, and it calls for the skills to enter into dialogue with equals. As long as such a culture is not yet established, unity in diversity has the potential to trigger uneasiness, including feelings of humiliation, and can lead to attempts to cleanse and exclude diversity so as to return to the more familiar and less complex experience of uniformity in division. Urban contexts are prime experimental laboratories for this transition. For urban dignity to flourish and social and ecological sustainability to emerge, interdisciplinary dialogue is needed to overcome the traditional practise of domination over people and over nature. Urban dignity flourishes when the city is regarded in terms of a family that collaborates in mutual communal sharing and stewardship of their environment, while urban dignity collapses when priority is given to clambering for power and status, be it through overt oppression or cloaked as economic necessity. Artists can play a central role in creating conditions for social interactions of dignity instead of humiliation. Music, for instance, has the power to unite. One example was given by Oslo citizens when they reacted to the 22 July 2011 terror attacks in Norway by gathering in front of the courthouse singing 'The Rainbow People.'

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This article summarizes two presentations and is published in two parts across volume 8 and 9 of JUCR:

'Urban Dignity: What Is It? How Do We Achieve It?'
This talk was presented at the 12th Urban Culture Forum, 'Arts and Social Outreach - Designs for Urban Dignity' organized by the Urban Research Plaza, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand, 3rd - 4th March 2014. Evelin Lindner gave a brief overview over her work on dignity on 4th March 2014. The video was recorded by Deeyah Khan. Please note that due to technical issues, this presentation was shorter than its full length and that the video is unedited. See youtube/Vh0ZSRzzfDY and www.urp.faa.chula.ac.th/urp/Forum.html.

'Global Dignity'
This talk was given at the 23rd Annual Conference of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies, 'Returning Dignity,' that took place at Chiang Mai University, Northern Thailand, 8-12th March 2014, inspired by Kjell Skyllstad and convened by Chayan Vaddhanaphuti, Professor and Founding Director of the Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development (RSCD) and Director of the Center of Ethnic Studies and Development (CESD) at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University. Evelin Lindner gave a brief overview over her work on dignity on 12th March 2014. The video was recorded by Donna Fujimoto. Please note that this video is unedited. See youtube/4H-wB9f0jO8 and www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/annualmeeting/23.php.

A Dual Call for Papers had been issued for The Urban Research Plaza's 12th Urban Culture Forum, and for the Journal of Urban Culture Research. Presentations were invited spanning the wide and diverse field of urban culture. The questions below were offered as evocative guidelines:

- How can we open the world of art for all (children, youth, elderly, disabled, disadvantaged)? How can we promote artistic expressions of minority groups?
- What are the means of enlarging participation in artistic activities among urban populations?
- How can art stimulate and promote citizens interaction in urban planning and design?
- How can art activism confront urban patterns of gender inequality and humiliating practices?
- How can the artist community contribute to solving urban conflicts and restoring human dignity?
- What allows traditional cultures and values to survive?
- How can artists contribute to the preservation of national art treasures? What measures can be taken to promote cultural continuity in urban environments?
- What is the place of arts education in promoting social and environmental awareness?
- In short: How can we promote art for social dignity?

Introduction

At the 12th Urban Culture Forum at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, a group of doctoral students presented a fascinating project titled 'The Resonance of Reasons from the Streets of Bangkok.' This presentation documented the high sense of responsibility among protesters in Bangkok, responsibility not just for oneself and one's family, but for Thailand as a whole.

When I gave my talk the next day, I began by asking the audience: 'How many of you feel a responsibility for your family and for Thailand?' And then I asked: 'How many of you feel a responsibility for our planet with all its people and animals?' Almost everyone raised their hands.

With these questions I placed a value choice at the outset of my lecture. I did this to counter the trend in contemporary academia to obscure value choices by bypassing them. I agree with Kjell Skyllstad, the convener of this conference, that present-day social sciences need to revive their responsibility, which is to think critically (Habermas, 1973).

What is at stake? At stake is the *scope of justice*, or the reach of morals: 'Individuals or groups within our moral boundaries are seen as deserving of the same fair, moral treatment as we deserve. Individuals or groups outside these boundaries are seen as undeserving of this same treatment' (Coleman, 2000:118). I highly appreciate the students' care about society at large, not just about their own career. I admire that they make their research relevant to society. Likewise, I admire the courage of another group of doctoral students who problematized the role of sexuality in society. Their presentation was titled 'Wall of Sex.' The choice of this topic was so extraordinary that the following note was attached to the programme: 'this important presentation deals with & displays mature subject matter that may be offensive to some; viewer discretion is advised.' In our conference in Chiang Mai, it was researcher Patchanee Malikhao who spoke on a related theme, on 'Culture, Religion, and HIV/Aids in Thailand.' See also her book *Sex in the Village: Culture, Religion and HIV/AIDS in Thailand*, Malikhao, 2011.

With my question about global responsibility I intended to convey two messages, first, that it is possible to widen the scope of justice from the personal to the national and to the global level, and, second, that the shouldering of global responsibility is what is needed most when the local is captive to global pressures.

The call for global responsibility comes from all continents. Another way to name it is *transformation by enlargement*. Catherine Odora Hoppers holds the South African Research Chair in Development Education at the University of South Africa in Pretoria. She is originally from Uganda, where she supported Milton Obote and his vision for Africa. She calls for the 'enlargement from Africa to humanity.' Transformation by enlargement, in her view, means that 'all key concepts and ideas driving or anchoring policy and the academy are revisited with a view to expanding their understanding to include ways of seeing that had been preciously excluded. These include the information society/ knowledge economy, and innovation, two central themes that underpin policy discourses in higher education, science, research and innovation from the perspective of human development, and especially the marginalized' (*Report of the 4th Retreat Development Education and Systems Transformation: Transformation by Enlargement: From Africa to Humanity!,* 2011:4).

We hear a similar call from South America. Here it has yet another name, namely, *organizational level of awareness*. Clodomir de Morais was less known than his colleague Paulo Freire, however, perhaps his contribution is even more important:

> De Morais, in contradistinction to Freire, sets forward not two but three levels of awareness. He adds to Freire's two, which are: the naive level and the critical level. The third is the organizational level of awareness. At the naive level a person is aware of problems but is unable to understand their cause (and so may blame God or the Fates). The critically conscious person is able to identify the factors responsible for problems, and their inter-relationship. Organizational awareness is reached when the person has the ability to act together with others to address a problem or attain particular results. Organizational awareness manifests what de Morais calls a 'methodological rationality.' This distinction between Freire's 'critical consciousness' and de Morais's 'organizational consciousness' has already been discussed above in Chapter Three (Andersson, 2013, chapter IV:15).

Why is it so important for us, the human family on planet Earth, to enlarge our awareness to global levels, to take responsibility for our global affairs, in addition to our local affairs? Catherine Odora Hoppers shared the image (figure 1) when we worked together in Pretoria in South Africa in May 2013. It shows the mouth of a crocodile, waiting to eat all, both the winners and the losers in local struggles. The picture invites viewers to lift their eyes from the local to the global level, since the crocodile operates at the global level. Odora Hopper's message is that it is unwise to concentrate on local matters while overlooking that the crocodile is ready to eat us all.

Figure 1. Illustration by Catherine Odora Hoppers.

Odora Hoppers would agree with French wartime resistance hero Stéphane Frédéric Hessel, who cried out *Indignez vous!* (Hessel, 2010). He called on people to 'cry out against the complicity between politicians and economic and financial powers' and to 'defend our democratic rights.'

Future generations may call our era 'the dark era of absurdities.' 'Business as usual' is utopian in our times. What many belittle as idealism – noble but irrelevant – increasingly emerges to be the only realism. Ever more people believe that a 'great transition' is needed, more than mere business as usual limping along with the help of some reforms (Raskin, 2012; Lindner, 2012a). Political economist Gar Alperovitz has worked for better regulations for decades; now his verdict is that deeper change is needed. After decades of experimenting with reform, his verdict is that instability and inequality is not a short-term aberration but the long-term consequence of the essence of our current economic arrangements (Alperovitz, 2009).

The notion of sustainability entails two core aspects, a social and an ecological aspect. The social aspect pertains to what we do to each other, whether we create peace or war, while the ecological aspect stands for what we do with our natural environment.

There is veritable progress with respect to social sustainability. New and important human rights conventions have been adopted. Many human rights defenders work extremely hard and have grown to become a real challenge to power. Predictably, however, power fights back. 'The space for human rights defenders to act and participate openly and actively in the society is reduced (Dahle, 2008:2). 'As civil society groups have become more sophisticated and effective in their advocacy efforts, many governments have also become more sophisticated in responding to their critics' (Dahle, 2011:2). Even worse, as the Human Rights House Foundation in Oslo reports, throughout the past years, it has become increasingly difficult and even dangerous to be a human rights defender. And if we posit that peace means disarmament, then the balance is even more negative: The volume of international sales of conventional weapons has risen by 17 per cent in the period 2008–2012 as compared to the period 2003–2007 (SIPRI, 2013, www.sipri.org).

As to ecological sustainability, or what we do to our habitat, plundering the resources of our planet looks like a clever strategy to be proud of only as long as these resources are not yet depleted. Easter Island comes to mind. Short-term progress is not long-term progress. Successes such as improved health and life expectancy are built on sand if we do not reverse this.

Let me share two examples that illustrate present-day approaches to ecological sustainability. Kosheek Sewchurran, Associate Professor in Innovation Management and Information Systems, and director for the Executive MBA program at the Graduate School of Business in Cape Town, invited me on 5th July 2013 to present my book *A Dignity Economy* (Lindner, 2012a). He just was back from

the First Innovation for Sustainability Conference convened by the Academy of Business in Society in Copenhagen, Denmark, 12-15th June 2013. He reported the following: 'At the conference, the marketing directors of Unilever excitedly pointed to the huge opportunities to sell products to a growing population of consumers in India, Brazil, Africa, and China. While this utopian view of profitability is a reality, the CEO also pointed out that this will imply that we need six to nine extra planets, as well as growth levels with an environmental impact that goes far beyond the current planetary boundaries' (Kosheek Sewchurran, *Reflections on the First Innovation for Sustainability Conference run by the Academy of Business in Society*, 29th July 2013).

As we see, in the case of Unilever, a multinational corporation has in fact understood that, as more consumers strive for the basic luxuries of so-called developed nations in the developing world, planetary boundaries will be surpassed. Yet, as Sewchurran pointed out, 'the business imperative seems still to be to do it [reach the boundaries] before somebody else does it.' Sewchurran urges for a move from *compliance* to *responsibility* as both a societal and a business rationale.

So far, voices like Sewchurran's may be heard at certain local levels. Sadly, however, they are not heard at relevant global levels. Hitting planetary boundaries as quickly as possible appears to be the predominant strategy. What currently unfolds is a kind of global hostile takeover, largely proceeding unnoticed by those who will be affected by it, namely, all of us. What I refer to, for instance, is the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP): 'A new treaty being negotiated in secret between the US and the EU has been specifically engineered to give companies what they want – the dismantling of all social, consumer and environmental protection, and compensation for any infringement of their assumed rights', writes Lori M. Wallach, director of Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch, in her article 'The Corporation Invasion' in *Le Monde Diplomatique* on 2nd December 2013 (mondediplo.com/2013/12/02tafta).

In balance, we, the human family on planet Earth, are triumphantly marching into a dead end, faster than alternative directions can be established. A meta-transition is needed, away from rigid paradigms, away also from rigid strategies for change, away from finger-pointing and blame-games, toward co-creating a new kind of continuous reflexive process, a globally collaborative dignifying process (Lindner, 2012b).

Global Plundering

Certain kinds of global awareness and global citizenship make things worse. The Trans Pacific Partnership is a prime example. We do not even have to speak of global crime or terrorism. If we want to believe journalist David Rothkopf, a small number (circa 6,000) of largely unelected powerful people (largely male) around the globe, what he calls the 'super class', shape the world (Rothkopf, 2008). One can meet them at gatherings such as the annual meeting in Davos in Switzerland. Also the average *frequent traveller* may do considerable damage. He (it is often a

man) dashes from one international hotel to the other, uses the planet as a leisure park for the few chosen ones, served by the unlucky rest. Otherwise he targets the commons of our world as unexploited market opportunities. And many in the Global North, wealthy Thais included, prefer to imitate the superclass, rather than wake up and invest in a radical turnaround. Many yearn to live in a 'shopping-mall Kindergarten bubble', which includes a selection of holiday resort beaches, and as soon as they have achieved this, they mistake this bubble for the 'normal' reality of our world. And all around the globe many academics, rather than resisting this trend, currently turn themselves into its lackeys.

I come out of both conferences both more hopeful and more concerned than I was before. As mentioned earlier, the courage of Chulalongkorn students in Bangkok to take up sensitive social issues impressed me. I can't repeat often enough how much I appreciate how the organizers brought together such a fascinating conference and that they edit such an influential journal. Likewise, Chayan Vaddhanaphuti, at Chiang Mai University, is a beacon of dignity. Both conferences brought together the spoken word with visual images and personal experiences in masterly ways. At the Chiang Mai conference, we also had the privilege of being invited to two excursions into rural Northern Thailand. First, on 10th–11th March 2014, the third and fourth day of our conference, we visited Suan Lahu, a Lahu village. Then, after the conference, on 13th and 14th March, we paid a visit to the Karen (Ngak' Nyau) village of Ban Nong Thao. These visits deepened the understanding that Victoria Vorreiter and Jeffrey Warner had already brought to us through their excellent exhibitions that were part of the Chiang Mai conference.

In Suan Lahu, Carina zur Strassen was our host. She has a background from Peru, Germany, and Asia. In her house, a famous poster was on display, a poster that depicts Native American leader Sitting Bull and quotes the legendary Cree prophecy: 'When all the trees have been cut down, when all the animals have been hunted, when all the waters are polluted, when all the air is unsafe to breathe, only then will you discover you cannot eat money.' Carina zur Strassen gave me hope. I immensely admire her for her courageous commitment to heeding the wise Cree warning.

Likewise, the dedication of Joni Odochaw and his family in the Karen village of Ban Nong Thao gave me hope. They eloquently explained to us how traditional community learning works – everybody in a traditional Karen village had skills to be student and teacher – and we were introduced to their 'Lazy School' concept. See the videos that we made to document the important hours of learning at www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/videos.php#thailand.

Joni Odochaw is a wisdom teacher in the field of natural resources and environmental management. In 8-10th August 2012, he participated in the 'Inaugural International Symposium on Local Wisdom and Improving Quality of Life,' in Chiang Mai and he is described on one of the conference's posters as follows:

> Born and raised in a Karen village of Northern Thailand, Kru Joni Odochaw witnessed major changes in the highlands and became concerned about the erosion of Karen culture and the rapid degradation of the environment. Elected as headman of his village, Kru Joni led 13 other hill tribe groups in a campaign to protect forests and wild animals and map out collective action for watershed management in harmony with nature. Together they promoted ecological farming and consecrated 50 million trees. He also led an effort to form the northern farmers' alliance, to set up the Mae Wang River Basin conservation network, and to open a rice bank. As a Karen elder, he strongly believes in Karen wisdom and stresses relationship with the environment. Kru Joni was instrumental in developing local curricula for hill tribe people's education emphasizing their own culture. He is also actively involved in knowledge sharing and has served as an advisor and resource person for several NGOs and government agencies.

Sadly, I come out of both conferences also more concerned than before. Thailand is a country that never was colonized. It is immensely saddening for me to see this lovely country be sucked empty now by global economic pressures just in the same ugly way as everywhere else. It shocked me to witness the brutality of the onslaught of unsustainable so-called 'modern' market forces on sustainable traditional life styles. Even the Karen wisdom might not survive for much longer. Thailand is in decay. After living in Thailand in 1981, I believe I have the authority to say that. From my time in Thailand in 1981, I remember the sweet sides of traditional Thai culture. I see it survive only in small niches now, as it faces the onslaught from a Western dominator culture. The *dominator model of society* is a term coined by social scientist Riane Eisler, 1987. This dominator culture represents an extreme form of psychological, social, and cultural impoverishment compared with the complexity of social cohesion in many traditional societies, not just in Thailand. Unfortunately, it is inherent in domination that it trumps partnership if left unchecked by collective resistance. Todd Saurman works with minorities in Chiang Mai and he presented his work in both conferences. He reported that egalitarian indigenous communities are being pushed out by hierarchical majority groups. In present times, it is Western dominator culture that colonizes the world more than ever before, and I observe this on all continents. Only the justification is new, no longer to 'civilize savages', but cloaked in the language of 'business' and 'development.'

Agribusiness can serve as an illustration. Black tarps cover the rural landscape, as we witnessed during our visit to Suan Lahu. Underneath these tarps is commercial flower agribusiness, pesticides poison the farmers, and they are all in debt. The price for 'development' is too high if it is paid for with the plundering of social and ecological resources and the poisoning of what is left.

Tourism is another example. As Chayan Vaddhanaphuti formulated it poignantly when we first met on 7th March 2014: commercial tourism is worse than prostitution. It looks for 'unspoiled' spots on the globe, spoils them, and then moves on.

Advertisement boards litter the highway to Pattaya, where big corporate developers promise a 'glamorous lifestyle' to young couples, the imagined glamorous lifestyle of Western individualism. The country hopes that this promise will attract enough 'believers' and that this will help generate 'healthy economic growth and development', as well as 'poverty reduction.' Yet, reality is brutal. It is the brutal destruction of quality of life for the sake of quantity of profit, the destruction of quality at all levels: psychological, social, cultural, and environmental. Whatever growth is achieved in this way, to my view, is poisonous. It may seem 'healthy' for a few investors, in the short term, and if poverty is calculated in terms of participation in a profit-driven system, some may be 'lifted out of poverty' just for a while, before everything is polluted. Development and poverty reduction through these methods reveal themselves to be cover-ups that draw unsuspecting people into toxic bargains, bargains where short-term, short-sighted gains that enrich a few are achieved through practices that poison the lives of many for generations – a price too high for all involved. There are better ways to dignify the world, less costly ways.

A beach paradise like the coast of Southern Thailand is idyllic and therefore attractive. However, it is attractive only as long as it is pristine and unpolluted. Yet, there is no profit for investors to be made from romantic indigenous fishing villages and beaches left untouched. If at all, only the villagers themselves may earn a little extra money by integrating a few backpackers into their village, as happened on the island of Ko Samui when I was there in 1981. By now, the villagers have lost their island to big money. Because at this point, 'developers' have stepped in. Their role is to make the impossible possible, to square the circle so to speak, namely, to gloss over the destruction of a paradise for profit by replacing the attraction from pristine nature by the attraction from so-called luxurious and glamorous life-style. The huge bill boards reads: 'The ultimate beachfront High-rise.'

I would translate this into: 'The ultimate beachfront High-destruction.' Because in reality, the promised luxurious life is a nightmare. Not only are these beachfront high-rise buildings an eyesore, their ugliness thrown into particularly stark contrast by the sad left-overs of the former paradise surrounding them. They also consume energy and water resources at highly irresponsible levels, and they would require an immense amount of maintenance to even faintly resemble their glossy bill boards. In reality, these constructions look shabby and dilapidated even before they are finished, even if one were blind for the ugliness of their design.

In short, here, investors invest in real-estate, believing this to be a shrewd move to protect their wealth, and they justify this as their contribution to job creation and poverty reduction. Yet, they undermine their own aims by their narrow focus on short-term profit from spoiling, and then glossing over the spoilage, and at the end, everybody will lose out, including the investors. As mentioned before, the brutality of this new form of colonization, clearly, is rampant everywhere on our planet; it is only more visible in places such as Pattaya. In 2012, I happened to personally witness a similar situation at the sea front of Recife, Brazil.

Antalya in Turkey is an interesting lesson to study for all countries with idyllic paradises that attract investor interest: first there is the paradise, then come a few backpackers, then tourists who walk in the streets, eat out and shop, thus bringing some income to the local population. Finally, before everything collapses, comes 'all-inclusive.' This happens now in Antalya. Small local hotels can no longer compete with the huge hotel machines which offer 'all-inclusive' packages to tourists. These big operators have the power, due to the masses of tourists they attract, to press local personnel into quasi-slavery. And since the tourists stay inside their hotels all day, the shops and restaurants in town have to close. Watch the documentary 'Schnäppchen-Urlaub Türkei - Sonne, Strand und Billiglohn' (www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4dsYI-7Gok).

My message to countries with paradises that attract investor interest is as follows: Beware, you will be sucked empty! Stop worshipping investor-driven development! Stop selling out your country's quality of life! Work for alternative constitutive rules for the global economic affairs of our human family! (See also my book A *Dignity Economy*, Lindner, 2012a.)

My message to tourists is as follows: Stop being complicit in social and ecological destruction! Stop 'relaxing' for the price of destruction! Travel on your own, meet with people respectfully, and turn tourism into a tool that manifests the fact that we are one human family who has to become the steward of our planet, rather than its destructor.

Agribusiness and tourism are just two examples of what happens also in other segments of society, both in rural and urban settings. Plunder is being introduced, justified, and made possible in myriad ways, leading to the decay of the social and ecological fabric. From the educational system to media, every segment of society is involved.

Indeed, education and media provide another illustration. I have become more aware than ever how education contributes to the race to the bottom toward self-inflicted quasi-slavery of whole societies and communities. Traditionally, children in the Karen village learn by being part of daily village life. Now, as they go to school, they fail to learn what is needed in a comprehensive sustainable self-sufficient village. Instead, they train to stiffen their bodies and become obedient cog-wheels feeding a larger unsustainable system. When we visited Joni Odochaw, he had just returned from a community meeting on the rise of domestic violence in Thai communities. Starting from school-age, education is geared to make people believe that it is 'natural' to obediently compete for dominance, that is it great to enthusiastically run in the rat race, glorifying it as the 'success of the brightest', but ending in rising drug-abuse and domestic violence at micro and meso levels and the collapse of entire ecosystems at macro levels.

Television in the evenings underpins this trend: we were dismayed to see how everybody in the village now is passively glued to images of advertisement creating new 'needs', interrupted by violent films that capitalise on people's

fascination with demons and glorifying fighting. There is no space anymore for listening to elders and integrated mutual community learning. This is the destruction of humanity's social resources, and it prepares the ground for the destruction of our ecological resources.

What we learn is that the building of schools has nothing to do with education. Rather, our aim must be to go from traditional community learning to modern community learning. This means leaving behind, as fast as possible, the present-day dead-end approach that destroys community learning through education being fashioned in ways that introduce the uniformity and obedience of military camps and Fordian factories. The dominator model of society is built on values of male competition; it needs to give way to the *partnership model* of the traditionally female role script of relationship building in cooperation.

This means also giving priority to what anthropologist Alan Page Fiske calls *communal sharing*. Fiske found that people, most of the time and in all cultures, use just four elementary and universal *relational models* for organizing most aspects of sociality (Fiske, 1991). These models are: (1) *communal sharing*, CS, (2) *authority ranking,* AR, (3) *equality matching*, EM, and (4) *market pricing*, MP. Family life is often informed by communal sharing. Trust, love, care, and intimacy can prosper in this context. In a good family, everybody gives according to ability, as a gift, and receives according to need. Authority ranking involves asymmetry among people who are ordered along vertical hierarchical social dimensions. This can express itself as good parenting or as brutal dictatorship. Good parenting can go together with communal sharing, while brutal dictatorship destroys communal sharing. Equality matching implies a model of balance such as taking turns, for instance, in car pools or babysitting cooperatives. The understanding of promise as a depersonalized contract occurs here. Market pricing builds on a model of proportionality with respect to ratios and rates.

Nurturing the partnership model means taking communal sharing as primary guidance, defining authority ranking as respect for the wisdom of elders and the innovative spirit of youngsters, and relegating equality matching and market pricing to the necessary minimum rather than allowing it to impoverish society and destroy communities.

To nurture the partnership model has never been as important as in our modern era. When the world was not yet as interconnected as it is today, competition for domination led to 'victory' in some cases. Now, in an interconnected world, it leads to collective short-sightedness, which, in turn, may lead all of humankind into collective suicide. What is neglected in the rush for elusive victory, are the advantages of prevention over damage-control and the benefits from slow thinking (see, among others, the book *Thinking, Fast and Slow,* by Daniel Kahneman, 2011). I am very glad to have met the 'Lazy Man' and having learned about the Lazy School at the Karen village Ban Nong Thao. How gratifying that these villagers were hesitant ('lazy') to jump on the bandwagon of collective destruction, cloaked as 'modern ways.'

While I write these lines, I receive an email from activist Charles Eisenstein that shows that the Lazy Man is not alone. Eisenstein writes on 3rd April 2014:

> I just got back from a trip to India that was both heartening and alarming. Many of the things I write about are rooted in ancient tradition and living practice there; meanwhile, the pace of ecocide and culture stripping is appalling. Billboards everywhere display a North American style nuclear family Pepsi-drinking brand-worshipping car-dependent high-tech lifestyle, as if its desirability were beyond dispute. I spoke a lot about how we in the West are beginning to disbelieve in that kind of development. I said that the days of the guy from America coming to tell you what to do are almost over. 'I don't know what you should do,' I said, 'but let me tell you where "development" has taken my society and the planet.' Of course I also described how the global financial system pushes India and everyone else toward the standard development model, which usually corresponds to making the social and natural commons maximally available to global capital.

After the conferences, I spent a few days in Cambodia. Poi Pet and Siem Reap which resembled Thailand as I loved it 30 years ago. I got the feel of community – each little building I saw had its very own particular individual touch. Only seldom did I see 'developers' at work with their anonymous multiplied prototype approach which empties communities of their diversity and soul and turns community members into the consumers of prefabricated space for outside investors to profit.

Not just in Asia, not just on its beaches, world-wide, wealthy investors look for ways to protect and augment their wealth, and they look for projects that would give them a return on their investment. This inspires developers to search for places where outsiders can extract profit from local communities. So, developers create projects for investors that destroy local communities to extract profit. They do this in Thailand and have almost destroyed the country's traditional social fabric by now. Sadly, Cambodian slave-like labour contributes to this destruction, and draws Cambodian society into this weakening of the social fabric itself in the process. I was told that the same process of sucking out profit for outsiders from local neighborhoods has begun in Phnom Penh now, too. Investors want to bulldoze communities with small houses to build larger buildings.

Global awareness and solidarity is needed more than ever. The citizens of the world are called to follow Stéphane Hessel and to stand up. Yet, sadly, there is more bad news. Certain aspects of globalization intensify local navel-gazing and hinder the emergence of global responsibility. The reason is that humans share a tendency to split into in- and out-groups. Unfortunately, even the most innocent 'we', if it means 'we, as opposed to them', may end in the desperate question of 'why do they hate us?' This trend is intensified in a world that becomes ever more confusing and fear-inducing for people who were accustomed to secure cultural roots when they feel that the ground beneath them is falling away through globalization. Globalization makes the world frightfully *liquid* (Bauman, 2010). Displaced people, refugees and many indigenous peoples have always tasted insecurity, the very insecurity that globalization now brings to the rest.

The *contact hypothesis,* or the hope that mere contact can foster friendship, is not necessarily true (Allport, 1954, Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). On the contrary, where there is no contact, there is no humiliation. Contact can unsettle, it can motivate people to rigidify their in-group identifications rather than to open up, and the more people know about each other, out-groups will feel insulted and respond in kind. The Danish cartoons brought this new reality to the world most vividly (Hartling & Luchetta, 1999, Lindner, 2006 and Lindner, 2009a). A vicious cycle can be set off, starting with insecurity and escalating to hostility and humiliation. The world can turn into a powerhouse of hostility, a hotbed for terrorism, when contact creates new dynamics of humiliation.

Humiliation becomes particularly painful when human rights are preached with noble words that create high hopes, only to turn out as empty rhetoric: 'To recognise 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 communication; see also Hartling & Luchetta, 1999, Lindner, 2006 and Lindner, 2009a).

Must we therefore forget about global citizenship of care and responsibility?
This question will be furthered explored in part 2 in JUCR volume 9.

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