

Human Rights in an Unequal World Economy: Difficulties and Opportunities

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Summary:

Some Human Rights of the UN Declaration cannot be universalized without a radical change to the present world economy. By 1948, the UN assembly already neglected two divides: the gap between the poor and the rich countries and people, the latter believing in natural law: the gap between the Liberalists, believing in free market and natural law, and the Marxists, believing in the interdependency of law and the socioeconomic situation. The rich and Western educated part of the World and the Christian Liberalists had won. Since that time, even climate change has aggravated the problem of economic inequality.

The difficulties to improve the Human Rights' situation are illustrated with the Pashtoon tribes in Afghanistan: People living outside the world economy cannot survive with freedom rights, offering the individuals rights without duties. Unluckily, people, and most scientists included, living in the capital centers are blinded to the preconditions of their own existence. It is the formal integration into capital circulation that allows the splitting of the individual into a private person, with rights first and foremost, and into a professional person, with a lot of binding duties. Humanity is challenged with a great learning process on the societal and on the individual level. An improvement of intercultural communication has to begin with the inclusion of both: the light and the shadow sides of societies and human personalities.

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My main thesis: Some Human Rights cannot be universalized without a radical change to our world economy. Focusing on our unequal world system, I have to begin my presentation with a remarkable reflection by the physicist Erwin Schroedinger¹:

“The reason why our sentient, percipient and thinking ego is met nowhere within our scientific world picture can easily be understood in seven words: because it is itself the world picture.”

Focusing on inequalities, I will work with two highly disparate world pictures - the one of ourselves, related with the globalized culture of the scientific community, and the one of those living at the edge of our world economy and far away from our universities.

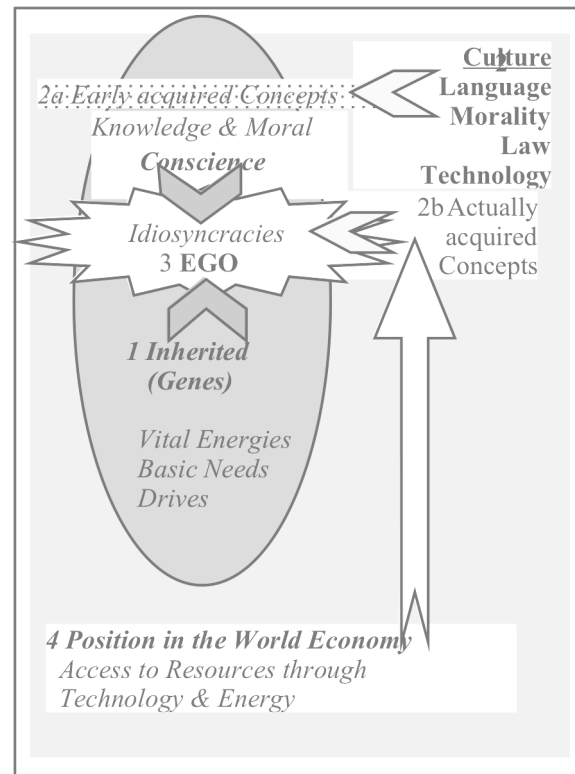
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For a better understanding of my proposition, I have to make three preliminary remarks:

- *First remark:* Pressed for time, I will have to reduce the complexities of the societal and the individual meaning systems as well as to make some shortcuts. Please, forgive me!
- *Second remark:* To compare disparate world pictures, we must start by identifying a trans-cultural model of a human person (see pict.1). And when asking what are the constitutive factors for our ego and its world picture, I concentrate on the most important, and simplify the approach. But brain research² supports three factors of my model:

- (1) *Inherited elements* are the most important: your genes - or in other terms: your nature with its instincts or drives, basic needs and vital energies.
- (2) *Acquired elements* are of nearly similar importance. And culture matters in two respect:
- (a) The early acquired knowledge and moral rules, together with genes and biographic experiences, form our personality and conscience in a deep and unconscious way.
- (b) Actual cultural concepts must also be acquired, but additional learning mostly happens in the shape of the inherited nature and the early acquired personality.

Pict. 1 **An Ecological Model of a Person**



- (3) Still, our Ego is full of idiosyncrasies shaping a unique way of being. We constantly reinterpret and reconstruct our self- and world picture in the light of new experiences and newly acquired professional and scientific knowledge. And I guess, that's the main reason why you and me are here to today.

Differences in world pictures may have an idiosyncratic as well as a cultural explanation.

But for a comparative intercultural perspective, my model has to include a fourth factor:

- (4) I claim that the *systematic* differences between the world pictures, learned by the individuals in their cultural context, have to be explained by a further element: It's our unequal world economy which generates systematic disparities between the collective meaning systems and, even more important, between the collective systems of ordering.

• *Third remark:* In view of the thesis, I will discuss, we need a kind of shared culture, because connecting human rights with economy is still a taboo and by breaking this taboo, I may disturb your ego with its self-picture and its world picture. To be in the mood for calmly looking at the global disparities in the world pictures three virtues are needed:

- *A high tolerance for ambiguity* – to bear the cognitive contradictions and affective ambivalences related with the complexity of the world economy;
- *an openness for a deeper self-understanding* – enabling us to see the light and the dark side of societies, cultures, and humans - including ourselves;

- *a lot of humor* - to meet the first two requirements, because our urge for a pure conscience is often highly authoritative.

I shall come back to my model of the personality at the end.

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But endowed with these virtues which are essential for a better intercultural understanding, we may now proceed to our main subject. To make my thesis concrete, I will concentrate on the UN Declaration decided by the General Assembly in 1948 and highlight the problems and challenges of the universalization of these rights in three parts:

- I What was the situation at the initial declaration of Human Rights in 1948?
- II Which Human Rights are difficult to universalize in our World Economy?
- III Difficulties and opportunities - a summary, hopefully with a future.

I What was the situation at the initial declaration of Human Rights in 1948?

The initial situation has been characterized by two - somehow interrelated - divides:

- Divide Nr. 1 was between rich and poor countries and people.
- Divide Nr. 2 was between the Liberalists and the Marxists.

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Let's first have a look at divide Number one - between the rich and the poor:

Back in 48, the UN had 59 members: The Western states, 14 in number, were all rich, at least high above average. Of the 21 states of Latin America, some were poor, some rich - but all of them were ruled by their rich Western colonizers - a mainly white elite. We had the socialist soviet block with 6 states; 6 Asian States – half of them only recently released from British Colonization. Of the 8 states in Near and Middle East, 3 were dominated by Western Oil Companies. Among the 5 African states, South Africa was under the rule of the Africans and the Apartheid, and Liberia in the grasp of firestone and the returnees from United States.

In short: At the time, the UN charter for Human Right was established, large parts of poor regions were still under the colonial power of the West and had no say at all. And most government officials coming from the few independent poor states had been educated and salaried within the modern system. Few of them knew what it meant to survive outside the Western market economy as was the case for the majority of their compatriots and of the world population in 1948.

To make a balance regarding divide Number 1: The declaration of Human Rights was decided by the representatives of rich countries and the rich, mostly modern, and Western educated elite of the then small number of poor states. Could it be that the Human Rights declaration is biased by the world pictures of these two groups? - *and you and me are a part of them.*

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Now, let's look at divide number 2 - between the Liberalists and the Marxists:

In 1947, UNICEF organized a preparing symposium for the declaration asking some famous personalities for the philosophical implications and contradictions of Human Rights. The French philosopher Jacques Maritain³ summarized the following two positions:

- *The classical liberal view accepts natural justice:* Humans are endowed “with certain fundamental and inalienable rights antecedent in nature and superior to society.”
- *The Marxist view* “suggests that man’s rights are relative to the historical development of society and are themselves constantly variable and in a state of flux; they are a product of society itself as it advances...”

Scrutinizing the 1948 declaration, we realize that the preamble begins with an endorsement of the natural justice position and includes the four freedoms as formulated by US-President Roosevelt: The freedom of speech and belief, a legacy of the French revolution, and the freedom from fear and want, inspired by the New Deal - the then sweeping interventions to overcome the economic depression in the USA. Article 1, „All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights“, clearly clings to the naturalistic reasoning of the United States Independence Declaration in 1776.

On the declaration as a whole Maritain, a strong believer in Christianity and at that time ambassador in the Vatican, had the greatest influence: The deeply in our Western history rooting Natural Justice was for him the unquestionable foundation of freedom, justice and peace.

From the 26 rights Jacques Maritain was proposing, 22 were incorporated into the declaration. But already by 1947, there was one warning voice! Mahatma Gandhi⁴, asked by UNICEF for his opinion on human rights, replied that is uneducated but ingenious mother taught him:

"All rights to be deserved and preserved came from duty well done (...) Thus the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world. From this fundamental statement perhaps it is easy enough to define the duties of man and woman and correlate every right to some corresponding duty to be first performed".

And I'm happy to tell you that meanwhile Africa has developed a interesting Charter on Human and People's Rights specifying not only rights but also a long list of duties on three levels: the state, the people and the individual.

Let's make the balance for the second divide: The marxists and the believers in social structures have not been given a voice. 28 articles of the UN Declaration concern rights; one single article is mentioning duties. That has created an insurmountable problem for societies in which the majority of the population is not or only informally integrated in capital circulation. The believers in Natural Justice won! And Article 28 is a formula for spreading out our Western world picture: „Every one is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this declaration can be fully realized.“

But look at this formula: It ignores the most essential factor for survival - economy.

I'm neither a classical Liberalist nor a classical Marxist or a simple cultural relativist!

But structural factors and the availability of resources *do* matter for culture. My work with people living on or coming from the margins of the world economy has even taught me that economy and justice are interrelated in a threefold way:

- (1) Every society has a kind of collectively defined morality, in the form of values and norms, as well as a kind of law, in the form of binding and sanctionable rules. In my approach, this system of ordering is named „core culture“^{“*} as far as it is focused on the reliable fulfilling of the basic needs of its members. All human beings have, independently from their cultural affiliation, three inelastic basic needs: Physical needs, the need for security and protection, and the need for affection and solidarity.
- (2) Every society tries to fulfill its core culture in form of four core tasks: production/consumption; security/protection; solidarity/distribution, and education/training – the latter not meeting a basic need but being a social necessity. Everywhere, the four core tasks are organized on the basis of core roles constituted by binding rights and duties for individuals. But both, core culture and core roles, are related to the social structure of a society with its specific economic conditions.
- (3) A society's core culture, core roles and socio-economic structure depend first of all on its - context- and technology-based - access to natural resources.

All three factors are essential for the concretization of human rights and for the conceptualization of freedom, dignity, and rights in any society. But I suppose that the type and the availability of resources is the most important one. In part 2, we will look at these three factors at closer range.

II Which Human Rights are difficult to universalize in our World Economy?

Let me answer this question in three steps: First, I will compare the economy of a welfare state with one of a poor state; second, I'll illustrate the difficulties to universalize some of the Human Rights; third, we shall make a comparison of the core roles and you may test your newly acquired self- and world picture in a humorous way.

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First step: What are the economical disparities between a welfare state and a poor state?

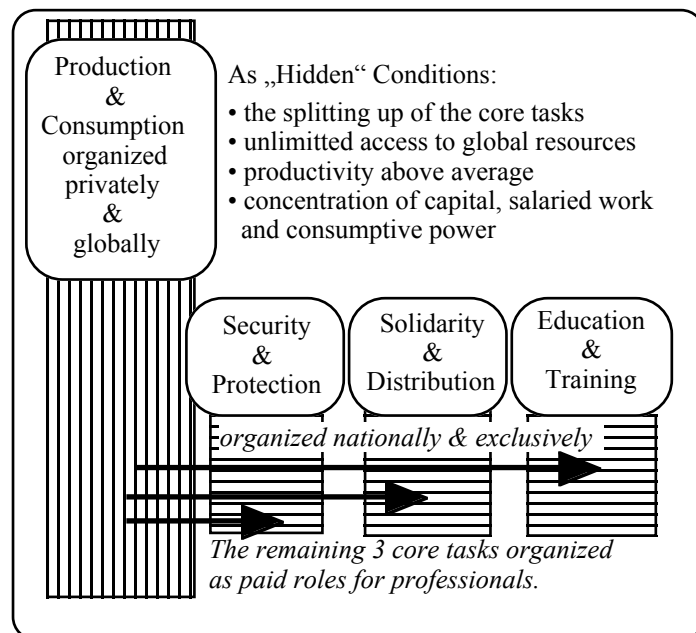
Starting with what you know best, our own economy and world picture, there is no doubt: The free market economy has been a tremendous success! It made the welfare state possible - *for us Westerners*.

Picture 2 shows that our welfare state rests upon three preconditions – *at least*:

- *Money* - allowing the global circulation of capital in terms of production and consumption.
- *Productivity above average*: Within our free and competitive world economy, capital and labour with higher productivity beat those working with less capital and less productivity.
- *A nation state* - seeking for an exclusive accumulation of profits as well as an exclusive concentration of salaried work on its territory.

Pict.2

Structural Basis of a Western Welfare State



These three conditions have been fulfilled for industrialized countries over the last one-and-a-half centuries and have contributed to the welfare and wellbeing of Western citizens.

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At the same time the Western welfare states have a threefold shadow side:

- *Shadow number 1: the splitting of the core tasks as an important rule of the world economy*

Whereas production and consumption are organized privately and globally, the other three core tasks are organized nationally and exclusively. Our welfare states are based on profits generated within the global economy but redistributed within their national territory only.

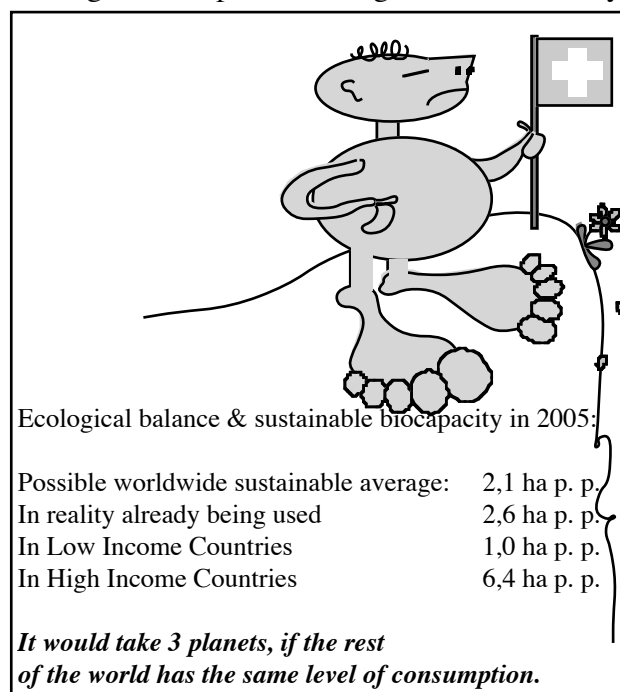
- *Shadow number 2: Western welfare states are based on a globally unequal distribution*
Productivity above average, concentration of capital and consumptive power are preconditions for the monetarizing and for the professionalizing of the remaining three core tasks.

- *Shadow number 3: Our welfare states are based on a highly unsustainable economy*

Picture 3 indicates the ecological footprint⁵, a global measure for sustainability.

Pict.3

Ecological Footprint of a High Income Country



In 2005, the ecological footprint could have been 2.1 ha p.p., if biodiversity had been observed. In reality, mankind already used 2.6 ha p. p. But the comparison of the ecological footprints of poor and rich states shows: 2005, Low Income Countries had an underconsumption of 1.0 ha p. p, whereas High Income Countries had an average of 6.4 ha p. p. Our unlimited access to global resources through machines, energy and weapons is related to a level of consumption which is unsustainable and not at all universal: It would take more than three planets if the poor part of the world claimed a

similar level of consumption as the rich countries indulge.

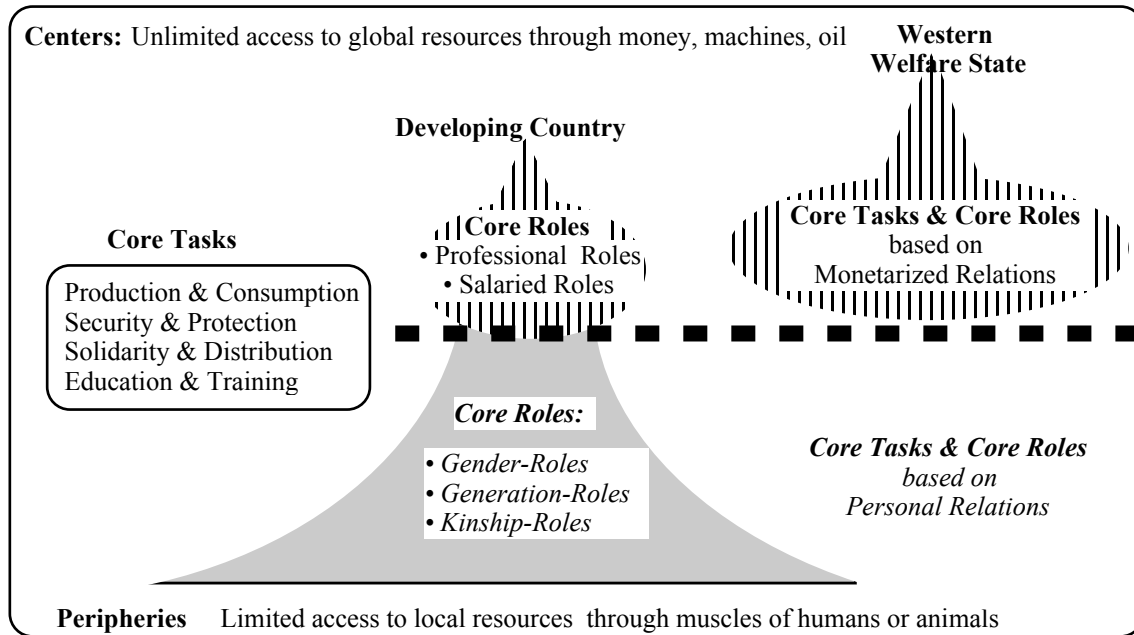
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Now, let's come a bit closer to the implications of this unequal world economy - again with a preliminary remark: Money and markets meanwhile exist nearly everywhere in the world. But it is a big difference between money - as a means to exchange, and money - as a means to growth: only the latter is capital.

In picture 4, you see a Western welfare state on the right, and a poor country on the left side:

- The upper part shows that both of them have a center that is integrated in the world economy. In a Western welfare state everybody is included, even invalids, drug addicts and prisoners, whereas in a poor state, only the upper and middle classes are part of it. But the

Pict. 4 **Disparate Organization of the Core Tasks in the World Economy**



members of both centers enjoy an unlimited access to global resources. And because money is used as capital, they have rich possibilities to monetarize and professionalize all four core tasks. That means: Not only farmers, workers and bankers are part of the game, also judges, barristers and the police are paid for their daily work. Revenue officers, social workers, nurses, doctors are getting a salary and, with the exceptions of parents, it's also true for teachers and professors. At the same time, prisons, schools, hospitals - everything and everybody has to be paid by money either directly deducted from salaries or taxed and redistributed by the state. Finally, and most important for the individuals, there are guaranteed old-age pensions, unemployment benefits, health insurances, and social money for the poor. But most of the money redistributed by our welfare state is generated through a global economy fostering those with the most powerful productivity and accumulation capacity.

- The bottom part of picture 4 shows the periphery of a poor state: Those who are not formally integrated in the global capital circulation with its profit generating productivity. Within such a poor state, there are always two extremely disparate economies: A monetarized and modern one for the rich and educated part of the population, and a premodern, scarcely or non-monetarized economy for the uneducated and unemployed part living either in the cities or surviving within rural subsistence.

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I will now focus on those in the rural peripheries and their corresponding core culture:

They organize the core tasks in ways which are difficult to understand for those living in the monetarized part of the world: People relegated to the margin of our world economy have to rely on family-, clan- and ethnic group-relations. Actually, you may still find a rich variety of different world pictures at the rural peripheries, and I strongly regret that I can't illustrate the most frequent types⁶. But all of them show one commonality: the gender roles, the generation roles, and the kinship roles are the core roles, compulsory for the individuals. Wherever a majority has to survive outside the world economy, the so-called primary roles are declared as obligatory by and for the members of families and clans. That means: Survival is based on three factors – (1) personal relations in terms of primary roles, (2) limited muscle energy of humans or animals, and (3) limited local resources.

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To put the problem in concrete terms, I select the example of Afghanistan: Afghanistan - a country suffering from war during the last thirty years; Afghanistan - a state existing mainly on paper and only for the few integrated in the modern system. Afghanistan - a state with a lot of different peoples or nations, amongst them the Hazaras, the Baluch, the Pashtoons – mostly living in the poor southern part. And to illustrate the problems related with the universalization of Human Rights, I have selected the largest Afghan tribe: the Pashtoons.

For hundreds of years, the pashtoon people have been organized on the principles of a generalized reciprocity, valid for personal relationships within families, clans and the pashtoon people as a whole. Many pashtoon tribes - all of them living in remote areas far away from the state's control - survive with herding, pastoralism, transhumance or some ploughing. Keeping stocks in the form of animals or grains means that these properties can be stolen or robbed and have to be defended: The pashtoons have developed a martial and belligerent core culture.

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A short look at the organization of the core tasks and core roles shows:

Out-door production was and is still mainly done by males: They fulfill a hard and heavy and often dangerous workload, whereas most females are occupied with in-door work.

Also, security and protection have to be provided by the male members of a tribe: Men have to protect not only the animals, the grazing areas and the water supplies, but also the elderly, women, children, barbers and musicians. In short: Men have to defend all those persons who are n o t carrying a gun!

Solidarity and redistribution are compulsory amongst the members of families and clans, including reciprocity between parents and children as well as between husbands and wives.

Education and training are informal, but strictly done in accordance with gender and age. And nobody, neither men nor women, are paid for the accomplishment of their workloads, but the dignity of an individual is strictly bound to the fulfilling of her or his duties. In the pash-toon society, the survival of the large majority has so far not been based on money and freedom, but on binding rules which are stabilized by honor and shame. And it's true, the pash-toon society is a very patriarch one. Simone de Beauvoir⁷ has disclosed the secret for us: „For it is not in giving life but in risking life that man raised above the animal; that is why superiority has been accorded in humanity not to the sex that brings forth life but to that which kills“. To be clear: 25 years ago, in the refugee population coming from Afghanistan, 98% of the female adults and 95% of the males were illiterate. In the meantime, they had two wars: the first with the Russians, the second with the West. And meanwhile, a lot of money has been flowing into Afghanistan, coming from outside and top-down - the best way to establish corruption. There was a bit of modern schooling, but no economic improvement at all which is an important precondition for releasing individuals into modern freedom and democracy.

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Second step: Illustrations of the difficulties related to some of the Human Rights

I'll select those two Human Rights which probably are the most contested:

- (1) „Freedom of thought, conscience and religion“;
- (2) „Free marriage“ - including some aspects of gender equality.

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(1) Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

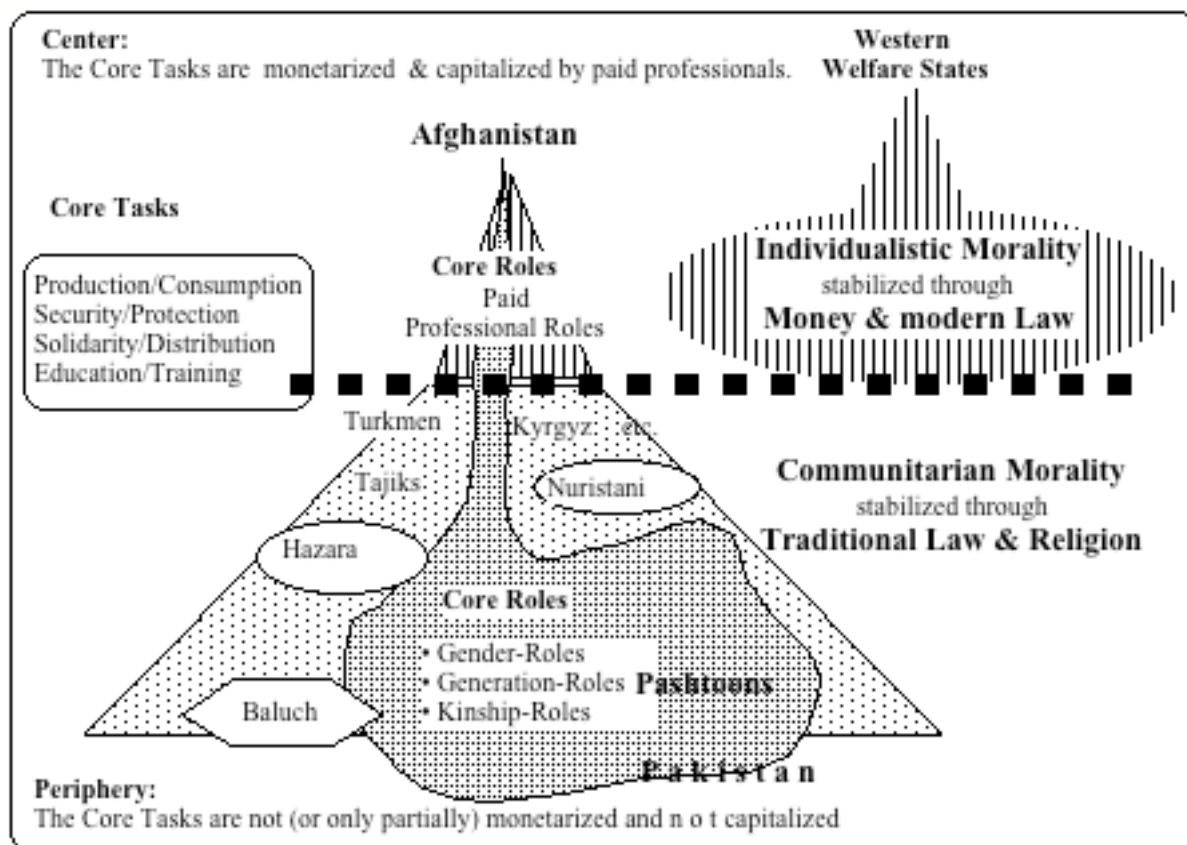
Picture 5 allows a look at the meaning of freedom of thought, conscience and religion:

In all societies – including the ones in the upper and bottom part of the picture - law is set by the ruling majority. And core culture is not “the good by itself” – it is only what the mighty majority considers and implements as a good and lawful way of behaving. In others terms: the lawful organization of the core tasks. But the gap between the rich and the poor in our unequal world economy is connected with a disparity in justice: with an individualistic and a communitarian conceptualization of the law.

- In the upper part and on the side of the individualistic conceptualization, we have the believers in money, individual freedom and free market. For those, integrated all over the world in the capital centers, money makes the world go around. Their readiness to observe the rules is rooted in income, consumptive power, and prestige, as well as in the fear of fines and the threat of imprisonment. And in our Western Societies, sanctions for failures are lenient but

also very costly: Locking up a highly dangerous criminal costs about 1 400 Fr. per day in Switzerland. But a monetarized core culture also means: Whenever somebody fails, there is a problem-solving professionals at hand and, if necessary, paid by the state.

Pict.5 **Conflicting Perceptions of the Core Tasks in the World Economy**



• In the bottom part of picture 4, we have communitarian law: It can be observed wherever the majority is not integrated in capital circulation and not yet paralyzed with anomy. Because "anomy" means the breakdown of the traditional value and orientation system and makes people plunge from poverty to misery.

As already mentioned: There is a rich variety of communitarian laws, but having in common the one aspect: Core culture is not focused on the individuals and their rights. The opposite is true: Communitarian core culture emphasizes the collectively set rules and forces the individuals to serve and to observe them – be it by physical or by symbolic violence or strength. To take now the example of the pashtoon law: The Pashtun Wali is based on traditional rules and was only recently articulated in religious terms. But both, custom and religion prescribe a morality which is binding for the individuals and limiting their freedom of thought. Shortly: the pashtoons are resolutely on the side of the believers in tradition and god.

And that means: Custom and Religion are not a question of an individual's private choice or conscience. As a prototype of the law, they state binding rules as it was the case for us before capitalism and enlightenment freed us into the modern world.

• *A first illustration:*

Shocked by the execution of three criminals, I quarreled with a tribal chief. He asked me scandalized: „How can you expect us to imprison criminals? That would force us to feed the wrongdoers as well as their supervisors. At the same time, we can hardly nourish our own families.“

My fear an innocent person might be killed once, received the following retort: „Each death sentence has to be agreed by three honourable witnesses.“ And then they asked me: „And you, with your car, don't you risk to kill an innocent person yourself - one of these days?“

I left them thoughtfully asking my-self: What would happen in Switzerland with a majority without money? There would be no police for the public, no fines for those breaking rules, no prisons for those committing crimes and considered dangerous.

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Let's have a look at the second human right which is difficult to universalize.

(2) *Free partner choice and related sexual and gender equality.*

In societies where old-age pensions are not generated by capital circulation, as it is the case in our Welfare States, we have a completely different situation. Where offspring are considered to be pensions for their elders, parents insist their children have a so-called normal sexual life: sons and daughters have to procreate. And as soon as parents bequeath some accumulated property to their children, they want to have a say in their marriages. Therefore, arranged marriage is the norm with the Pashtoons - *as it was in the past with us*. But in communitarian societies, arranged marriage was not arbitrary, it happened according to traditional rules.

• *A second illustration:*

The Pashtoons told me, they knew romantic love too. But they asked critically: „For how long does it last – three weeks, three months or three years?“ And they had their argument against romantic love: „We can not afford to found such an important thing like a family on such feeble grounds.“ And they patiently clarified this point to me: „Our ideal marriage is based on mutual respect. With the pashtoons, male *and* female have their corresponding rights and duties. But as everywhere in the world, not all marriages correspond with this ideal.“

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Third step: a comparison of the core roles

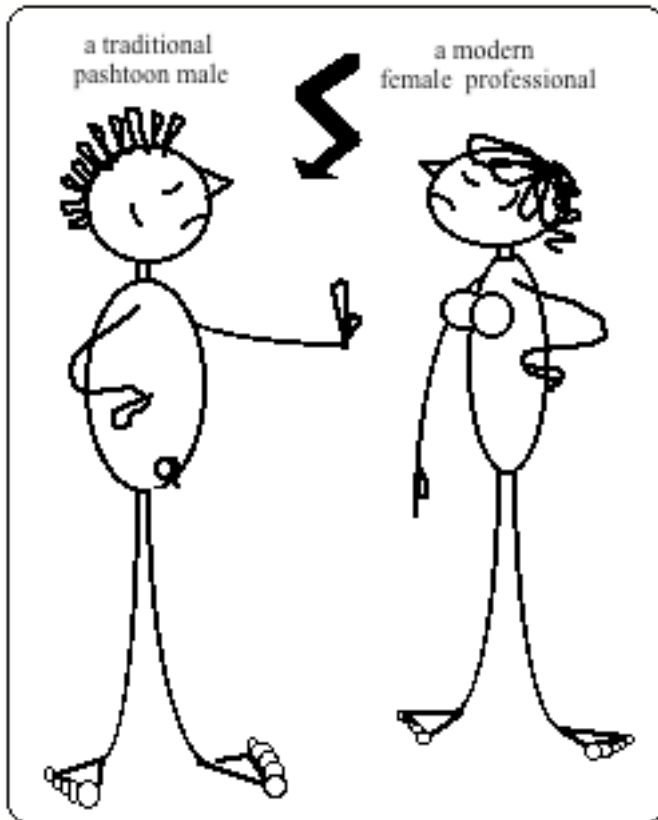
Let's test now how successful you have been in upgrading your picture of the world and of your-self in a humourous way. Picture 6 shows a traditional pashtoon and a western female and you may guess: What are the foundations of the roles the two of them are so proud off?

Try to fulfill the task in two steps:

First, you search for the structural commonalities related to the two roles; second, you look for the structural differences related to the two roles!

Pict.6

Which structural foundations of their roles?



Before looking at some solutions, I will add a short comment to picture 6:

On the left, you see Mohamad Ghul Niazi, a Pashtu Tribal Chief. In 1982, he was supported by the USA. Fighting against the Russians, he was considered as a freedom fighter. After the Russians left, the US changed their mind. Ghul, becoming a Taliban, and was now redefined as a terrorist. 2003, he was hunted by a US Army helicopter and finally killed by gunfire together with 10 innocent nomads.

On the right, it could be any modern educated female working with an NGO or with the UN.

At that time, it was me refusing to provide Ghul with rations based on inflated figures, at that time, the practice of UNHCR to support the then so-called freedom fighters. Therefore, I had a dangerous argument with Mohammed Ghul, but he made me quickly progress my intercultural communication capacity – a necessity to survive under the given circumstances.

Picture 7 offers you some possible answers to my little test:

On the upper part, first the commonalities: Mohammed Ghul made me realize that all societies define binding core roles, declaring them obligatory for the majority of their members.

Even more important: All societies bring their core roles into a hierarchy with a corresponding but asymmetric distribution of power and prestige. And that is as appropriate to their gender roles as it is to our professional roles.

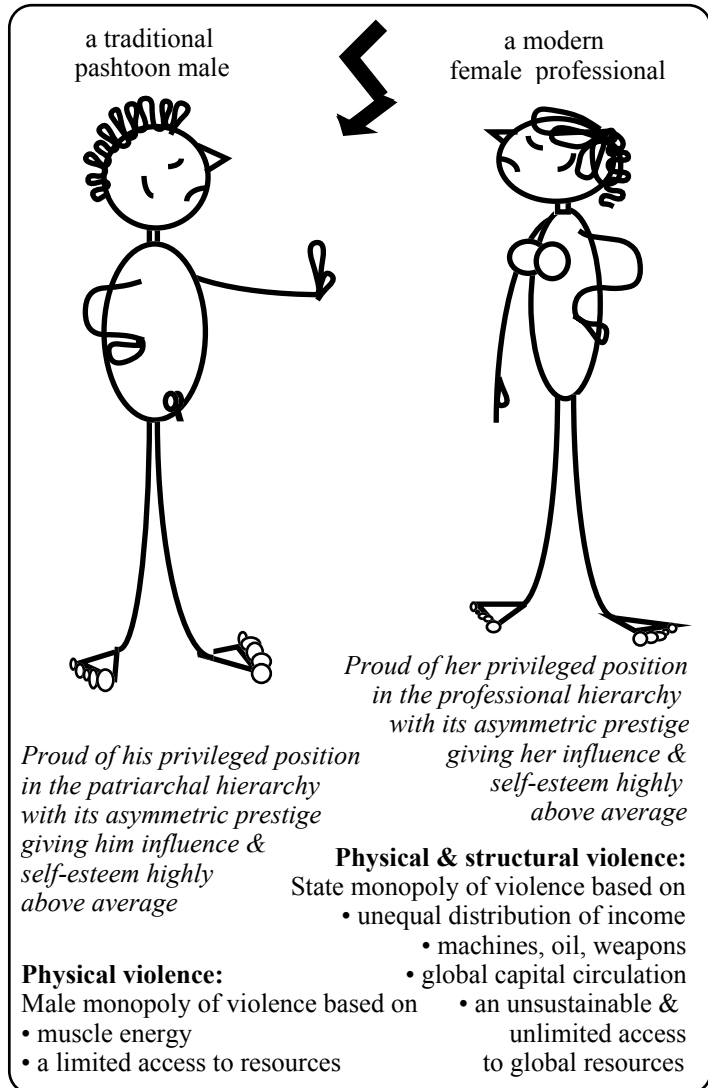
To illustrate this point, we can take any Western university⁸: By comparing the position of a female professor with the one of a cleaning woman, we realize that equality does *not* exist for their professional roles. Modern core roles are brought into a hierarchy, with extremely unequal salaries, going along with a highly asymmetric professional prestige, and even more regrettably, they are bound up with highly asymmetric personal esteem.

Now, on the part below, the crucial differences behind these transcultural

commonalities: Our professional roles are based on the unlimited access to resources and going along with the states monopoly of violence. The monetarization of professional activities is moreover based on global capital circulation, machines and oil. In societies powered by muscle energy and with a limited access to resources, the role of monopolizing and controlling violence is the unpaid duty of the men.

Anyone who has discovered some of these commonalities and some of the crucial differences, may become fit for a true intercultural communication with individuals coming from or with people living on the margins of our world economy.

Pict.7 **Structural foundations of the two roles**



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I will close part 2 with a summary focusing on the question of Human Rights:

Wherever people have to survive with their primary roles defined to age, gender and kinship, it's in the interest of the collective and most individuals to have balanced rights and duties.

The main reason for this: They have no payment for the fulfillment of their core roles. Instead, their primary roles are formally related to social esteem and personal dignity: Role accomplishment is rewarded with honour, role neglecting is punished with shame.

It is in the capital centers only, that humans have generated the idea of an individual having rights without duties. But looking more closely, we have two roles: a private one and a professional one. And it's true, in our private roles, we enjoy equality and freedom, but for our paid professional roles this is not the case. Surely, salaried roles are based on a contract we may quit. And it seems that professional roles are no longer gendered.

But with capital concentration we develop a split perception of individuals: as a private person with extensive individual freedoms on the one hand, and as a professional with a lot of binding duties on the other. But we mustn't forget: Our core roles are unequally paid and related to highly unequal prestige and personal esteem.

III Difficulties and opportunities – a summary

Let's consider the difficulties first, then the opportunities. Finally we will have a second look at our ecological model of a person and its implications for intercultural understanding.

(1) The difficulties

Most important: We don't need wars for or against human rights! Most violent resistance against globalization comes from fighters caring for populations living outside of our world economy. But the Great Divide is not between rich and poor countries; the Great Divide is within poor countries and between Western states and the poor factions of poor states.

In the centers, we have a globalized professional middle and upper class oriented towards money, individual freedom and rights, including the whole Western population.

At the periphery, we have the excluded ones with their culturally diverse orientations, including on the one hand, the rural regions with their traditions and religious beliefs, on the other hand, a part of the urban population. And let me remind you of something I had no time to mention and we mustn't forget: The population factions in the Mega Cities dealing with urban misery have to develop their own ways to survive and, amongst them, we may find the

shadow economy with its realms of shade as well as deviant behaviour, mafia-like organizations and youth gangs.

I could only show you why people, living in remote regions of our world economy, continue to cherish religion as law and to defend themselves by holding on to their traditions.

Could it be that we are in the height of a tragedy?

The powerful West and its paid professionals continuously deprive people at the edge of the world economy of their traditional duties and rights – and that is the tragedy: *without* offering them the structural possibilities which generate the capacity to finance modern rights.

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To be clear, some Human Rights should be globalized right now and as a must:

This includes elementary rights protecting the individuals from the abuse of power by the state, from its arbitrariness and infringement, from torture and humiliating treatment.

However, the universalization of some other Human Rights has to take into account what both Marx and Hayek said: Money brings freedom in the first place.

But financial assistance won't solve the problem: Have a look at the native Indians in the USA or at the aborigines in Australia. Money continuously coming from outside and flowing top-down worsens things: It's not only a neocolonial project creating corruption; it also makes peoples and persons dependent and more miserable.

Instead, we'll have to develop a new context sensitivity for centers *and* peripheries, look for a kind of morality and law balancing rights and duties for individuals, and create a symbolic system offering its members sufficient opportunities to get a satisfying status in which they may get a meaning for themselves *and for others*.

And it finally has to be a context sensitivity in the ecological *and* in the social sense.

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(2) The opportunities of a policy for universalized Human Rights

In my opinion, it is the humanity's biggest learning opportunity so far.

At the structural level, I have already given some hints: At first glance, for a pluralistic democracy with individual freedoms to exist, gender equality, social rights and redistribution of wealth are a must. On second sight, we realize that a modern redistribution - and that means a money-based and a democratic one! – requires at least 3 things:

First, a sufficient productivity with the possibility for the state to skim off the profits; secondly, a population majority with a formal money income allowing taxes and payroll deductions

and a common mainstreaming of the basic interests; thirdly, an incredible variety of professions and a lot of them paid by the state.

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But the pending learning opportunities are an even greater challenge for individuals:

As individuals who make their studies and money in one of the centers of the world economy, we have to consider and to realize two solutions:

On one side, we have to learn a true intercultural dialogue with those humans surviving in societies or populations at the edge of our world economy. Listening to them, we make a surprising discovery: For them, human dignity is not only a passive inheritance of rights. Human dignity is also a duty - something any healthy adult has to fulfill to be esteemed by others and to get and to maintain necessary self-respect. And on the margins of our world economy, this kind of dignity is still considered a necessity to make human life meaningful.

Otherwise, we will have to reconsider our own money-centred law and morality. I'm convinced: As individuals with a modern and monetarized culture we will have to reconstruct our world and our self-pictures! And that will hurt us - you and me!

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Let's look at the reason: Why? and cast a second glance at the slightly enriched ecological model of a person in picture 8.

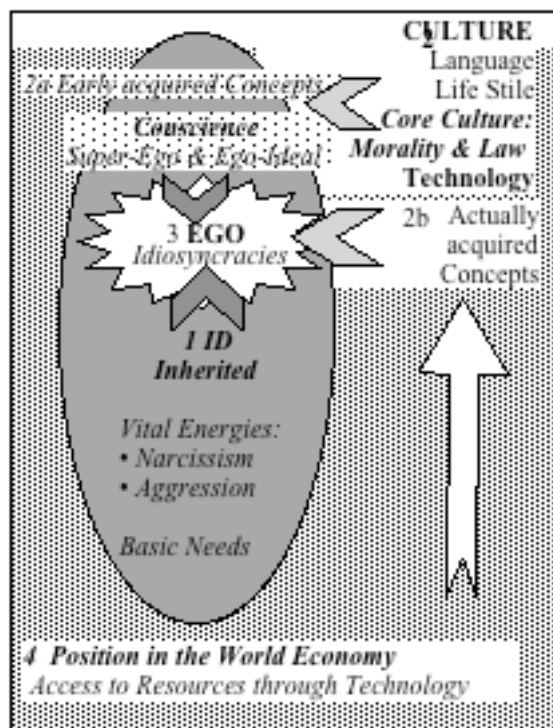
In my opinion, the universalization of Human Rights has to start with a model focusing on the commonalities shared by *all* humans.

Irrespective of race, sex and culture all humans basically have, at least at the categorical level, the same capacities to act, to think and to feel.

Love and hate, hope and fear are felt by all humans, though these feelings may be attached to culturally diverse meanings of situations and institutions. Avarice, greed, generosity and reciprocity exist in every culture. Human nature, transculturally equipped with needs and drives, is powered by the same vital energies, indispensable to survive. Amongst them and

most important: narcissism and aggression – both of them often misjudged, because they may

Pict.8 An Ecological Model of a Person



end in pathological behaviour. But aggression is the energy to destruct as well as to cope with problems. And narcissism, the wish to be great⁹ in the eyes of oneself and of meaningful others, is related to the impetus to repress aggressions against these loved ones. Both of these vital energies are indispensable for the animate nature to survive and both of them have their light and dark sides. But these vital energies make it difficult to recognize the crucial point of my presentation, because they constitute a tragic Blind Spot in our human personality.

A Blind Spot, resulting from the fact that our personal moral is not only related to a specific cultural context with its morality, but also deeply rooted in the early and close interactions of a child with its parents. We acquire our personal moral by internalizing rules and by idealizing meaningful others - for instance: our parents, as well as a part of our-selves. Equipped with a Super-Ego, the punitive part of our conscience, and with an Ego Ideal, the idealizing and idealized part of our conscience, we may be forbidden to make faults and seduced to repress or to deny them.

Highly moralistic persons are often not allowed to recognize the shadows of their existence – for instance their own contribution and commitment to the unequal and unsustainable world economy. At the same time and as consequence, they cannot recognize that peoples and persons living outside of our world economy rarely have no moral or no morality. Mostly, they only have an o t h e r morality - enabling them to survive.

And may be, it's hurtful when I say: Even love has its light and dark sides. Love, generated by and within intimate interactions, is a beautiful feeling and most probably the true ground on which human conscience can develop. But human conscience is ambivalent, for its narcissistic and aggressive aspects are related to honor and shame.

• *I will close with a last illustration*

Lets bid farewell to the pashtoons and the light and shadow of their personality: A pashtoon man has to be a nangialai as well as a turialai. As a nangialai, he is expected to be the brave protector of the weak, as a turialai he must fulfill this role with courage and, under certain conditions, with the necessary strength and violence. But pashtoon men are ready to fulfill the most honorable and heroic acts to protect and to defend their family and ethnic group.

And let's have a last precise look at our own society which has developed the idea of a private individual. Kant, the first philosopher of our world economy, bestowed upon this individual „a value beyond any price“. But what about our professionals: Doesn't our elite fixate their honor on getting a Nobel prize?

My work taught me to look at narcissism in a very special way: I see it as a kind of religious feeling, deeply rooted in human life, and seeking in a most fabulous and artistic way, for a meaning which may hopefully transgress one's individual life. Could it be that narcissism is a longing for eternity shared by all human individuals and at all times?

*

Let me close with the following remark: Fighting for Human Rights now requires our openness on two levels: Privileged as we Westerners and highly modern educated people are, we have to take into account the light and the dark sides of societies and personalities – including our own. This is the psychological precondition to understand the disparities in the actual world pictures and to finally reach the second level with its capacities to overcome the structure-blind self-fulfilling prophecy of The clash of civilization¹⁰, and to finally inaugurate an era of mutual dignity and reciprocal respect.

Some bibliographical references:

* For additional articles and pictures concerning “core culture”, see: www.kernkultur.ch

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⁴ Gandhi M., *Mahatma Gandhi's Letter to J. Huxley*, Director-General of UNESCO, in reply to Huxley's request for Gandhi's opinion on Human Rights, 25th May 1947.

⁵ Ecological Footprint: www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/footprint_basics_overview

⁶ Müller, H.-P., Ziltener, P., *Die Vergangenheit in der Gegenwart – Traditionelle Landwirtschaft und vorkoloniale soziopolitische Differenzierung als Entwicklungsfaktoren in Afrika und Asien: Ein statistischer Ländervergleich*. In: B. Heintz/R. Münch/H. Tyrell (eds.), *Weltgesellschaft. Theoretische Zugänge und empirische Problemlagen*, Sonderheft der Zeitschrift für Soziologie; Stuttgart 2005: 442-478.

⁷ de Beauvoir, S., *La deuxième Sex*, Paris 1949.

⁸ Tobler. V., *Wenn Frauen in Männerrollen steigen: von der Geschlechter- zur Berufsrollenhierarchie*. In: S. Brander u.a. (eds.), *Geschlechterdifferenz und Macht. Reflexion gesellschaftlicher Prozesse*. Freiburg Schweiz 2001: 187 - 207

⁹ Westen, D., *Self and Society. Narcissism, collectivism, and the development of morals*. New York 1988.

¹⁰ Huntington, S. P., *The clash of civilizations*. New York 1996.