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"Global Crises: Features, Extent, Victims, Cause, and Possible Solution" or
"Crises and their Solution" *Written by Jytte Nhanenge*

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Abstract:
This article presents four interconnected crises with which our world is faced. They include war and violence; poverty and inequality; environmental destruction; and human rights abuses. Some features, the extent, and severity of the crises are illustrated. It is also exposed that women, poor people, and nature continuously, consistently, and unjustifiably are the victims that must carry the agonizing effects from the crises. Since the crises are interlinked and reinforce each other they cannot be understood in isolation. All are rooted in a larger systemic crisis, which here is called õa perceptual and intellectual crisis.ö This root crisis relates to the modern worldøs outdated, reductionist, dualised world-view and its priority on all that is masculine (yang). Due to this limited and unbalanced perception of reality, proponents of the modern world-view subordinate all they perceive as feminine (yin). The result manifests as systematic political and economic domination of society and nature. In order to ameliorate the crises, we need an alternative non-dualist, holistic, and systemic world-view. One such model is the Chinese philosophy of changes, I Ching, with its harmonious yin and yang forces. The framework is presented as a possible solution.

Biographical Details:
Jytte Nhanenge is a Danish woman, who has been working with Third World development in Africa for many years. Being troubled about developmentøs inability to alleviate poverty, she decided to find out what is wrong with development. She then embarked on a lengthy study period at University of South Africa (UNISA). Her search was for an ethics in development. Using inputs from many insightful authors, Jytte compiled the outcome of her search in a comprehensive dissertation titled, õEcofeminism: Towards Integrating the Concerns of Women, Poor People, and Nature into Development.ö She rewrote the dissertation into book form, and in 2011 it was published by University Press of America. In this article, Jytte shares some of the insight she gained during her long search for limitations in development. Jytte lives in Chimoio, Mozambique.

Global Crises:
Features, Extent, Victims, Cause, and Possible Solution

õ*Man can hardly even recognize the devils of his own creation*.ö
Albert Schweitzer, German/French philosopher (1875-1965). (Carson 1995, 6.)

Introduction

People all over the world are becoming increasingly critical about the political and economic elitesø eternal pursuit of economic growth and profit-making. Although we globally on average generate ever more wealth, the riches are unequally shared. The outcome is that a minority becomes very wealthy, while millions of people suffer in poverty. The situation is specifically desperate in the South. Despite 60 years of development aid, rather than experiencing increased welfare, many people are facing serious hardships, including deprivation, repression, violence, and cruelty, which destroy their quality of life. Since the mid-1970s, the critique of global economic activities has deepened due to deterioration of the natural environment. Studies have clearly linked modernization, industrialization, and its economic activities with increased scarcity of natural resources, and generation of pollution and wastes. The end result is climate change and degradation of soils, lands, waters, forests, and air. The latter threat is of great significance, because without a healthy environment, human beings and other animals will not be able to survive. (Nhanenge 2011, 1.)

The political leaders in the North believed that modernizing the world would improve well-being for all. However, experiencing its negative side effects and the threat of extinction of life on Earth, one must conclude that somewhere, something went wrong. Instead of material plenty, the focus on economic development created a violent, unhealthy, and unequal world. The modern world view has allowed the political and economic elites to live a life in luxury, while marginalizing millions of people. Due to the eliteøs narrow economic ideology these people have become the victims of modernization. They are forced to live in abject poverty, with hunger, malnutrition, and sickness. They must survive in degraded environments and exist without personal or social security. Since they have no voice or platform they are not able to speak up for themselves and demand their rightful share of the worldøs resources. The majority of these people are women, children, traditional peoples, tribal peoples, people of color, and poor people (the group is here called *women and Others* or *women and poor people*). They are ó together with nature ó dominated by the global structure of economic development, which was defined and implemented by the Northern elite. By now, these economic policies have also been adopted and are enforced by the Southern political and economic elite. In this way, women, Others, and nature are forced to pay the price for global economic development, while not reaping its benefits. (Nhanenge 2011, 1-2.)

This article is meant to present some aspects of the negative side-effects from the exaggerated focus on economic profit-making. It gives a picture of what õprogressö and economic development has meant for women, Others, and nature. The discussion divides the various inter-connected, complex, and negative impacts into four main crises with the following headlines: war and violence; poverty and inequality; environmental destruction; human rights abuses. The division was inspired by Paul Ekins and his 1992 book, õA New World Order: Grassroots Movements for Global Change.ö (Nhanenge 2011, 2.)

The four crises are not absolute categories. Due to their interrelatedness it is difficult to separate the crises, thus some issues overlap. The account of the crises is not a thoroughly discussed and researched presentation. The purpose is rather to provide an overview of the crises; to give an idea of

the magnitude the negative side-effects from economic development have, and to raise awareness of how the cost from its activities continuously, consistently, and unjustifiably are delegated to and suffered by women, Others, and nature, both in the North and in the South. In sum, the intention is to give a general picture of how the modern system of progress ó which was invented, introduced, and still is promoted by the political leaders in the North ó dominates women, poor people, and nature. (Nhanenge 2011, 2-3.)

The article is in two parts. The first part elaborates some features of the global crises, showing its extent, and how the negative results consistently are borne by women, Others, and nature. The second part discusses the root cause of the crises, judging it to originate from a reductionist, dualized perception of reality. If the argumentation is accepted as being sound, then, due to consistency, it must follow that a holistic, systemic approach to reality would lead to alleviation of the crises. An alternative perceptual perspective is presented in brief.

Part I
The Global Crises: Features, Extent, and Victims

The Crisis of War and Violence
Funds Spent on Military and Wars
Global military spending was in 1978, 425 billion USD or 1.16 billion USD a day. In 1994 it increased to 800 billion USD, or 2.2 billion USD daily. In 2008 it totaled 1.464 billion USD, or 4 billion USD per day. Thus, although the Cold War ended, world military expenditure is still increasing. USA accounts for 41.5 percent of the 2008 global military costs. The high sum relates to õthe war on terror,ö which former President George W. Bush initiated and President Barack Obama continues. (Capra 1982, 2; Rowe 1997, 241; SIPRI 2009.)

Worldwide, governments invest more in military equipment, than in the social well-being of their citizens. In 2006, governments in the industrialized countries allocated 12 percent of their budget to the military, while providing only 4 percent to the education of their citizens. Ugandaøs government spent 26 percent of its state budget on military, and 2 percent on public health. Sudan used 28 percent on military, and 1 percent on health. What it means in real figures is not clear. However, it is known that African countries in total spent 20.4 billion USD on their military in 2008, while the 1998 figures were õonlyö 11.1 billion USD. (Ekins 1992, 5-6; Rowe 1997 241; SIPRI 2008, 2009.)

It was the North that began the system of large scale militarization and then introduced it to the South. In order to rebuild their economies after the Second World War, Europe and USA enlarged production, purchase, and export of military equipment. The rise in the Southøs military expenses contributed to their debt crises, which resulted in mandatory introduction of neo-liberal policies, causing further cuts in social investments. The focus on militarization also increased debt in the North. USA has currently a debt of over 14 trillion USD. According to US Senator Bernie Sanders, the bulk of the debt relates to loans taken out to pay for: a doubling of the US military costs since 1997; one trillion USD spent on Iraq and Afghanistan wars; 10 years tax cut that benefited mainly the elite; and the bailing out of bankrupt financial institutions and major industries. Paying the debt is difficult since the estimated 2011 budget deficit is 1.65 trillion USD and further cut in public spending may result in serious social crises. This deficit should be compared to a 236 billion USD budget surplus left by President Clinton in January 2001 ó just before the 9/11 attack, and the start of the war on terror. (Bunch and Carillo 1990, 80; George 1989, 29; Sanders, B. 2011; Wikipedia 2011a.)

The United Nations (UN) was established after the Second World War in order to preserve peace. Yet, UNøs budget is only 1.8 percent of the worldøs military costs. While the UN is not perfect, it is disturbing that governments spend so much on their military, while contributing little to the UN goals of global security, international cooperation, and peace. Nevertheless, based on facts and figures, we must conclude that political leaders prioritize to buy weapons for war, rather than investing in peace, or satisfying basic human needs like education, health, and social well-being ó especially the dire needs of people in the South. An obvious solution to end debts, wars, and poverty would be to scale down military expenses. (Shah 2009.)

The Burden of War on Women, Others, and Nature
Wars bring along colossal tragedies. One issue is the economic losses, which in Africa alone comes up to 15 billion Euros per year. That money could have provided much-needed social well-being, but instead wars cause appalling social disasters. The civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo has been the deadliest since World War II. In total 5.4 million people have perished. Although the Congo war officially ended in 2003, conflicts continue in Ituri and Kivu. An estimated 45,000 people are dying every month. The majority succumbs to diseases and famine; half of these are children. Wars often displace large numbers of people. The latest figures from UNøs High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported in õGlobal Trends 2010,ö estimate there to be 43.7 million refugees globally. The numbers are huge and rising. These human beings live in crowded, unhygienic, and poor conditions, which increase the risk of infectious diseases. It was such circumstances that caused an outbreak of cholera and dysentery in a refugee camp after the Rwandan genocide in 1994. Nearly 50,000 refugees died within a month. Thus, wars result in human tragedies. If people are lucky to escape the fighting, they may die later on from hunger or diseases. (DEVEX Global Development Briefing; Green Facts 2007; Humanitarian News 2011; Wikipedia 2011b.)

In traditional wars armies fought one another. However, in contemporary wars, civilians are the target and become the victims of wars, rather than soldiers. Seventy percent of the casualties in recent conflicts have been non-combatants; most are women and children. Soldiers also often deliberately prevent people from getting lifesaving assistance. In Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo medical staff experienced that soldiers attacked, bombed, and cut off civilians from aid. (DEVEX Global Development Briefing; Rowe 2000, 488, 490; UNIFEM 2007.)

UNICEF published a report in 1994 describing the effects wars and conflicts have had on the worldøs children during the decade from 1984 to 1994: 2 million children died, 4-5 million were disabled, 5 million became refugees, and 12 million became homeless. Over 300,000 children serve in armies or armed gangs; some are only 8 years old. A 2006 report from Save the Children adds that 43 million children are unable to go to school because of conflicts and wars. (BBC News December 2004, September 2006; Rowe 1997, 241; UNDP 2008.)

War is a gender-differentiated activity where women are the main victims. Perpetrators of war see women and their bodies as part of the battlefield. They abduct, abuse, rape, and enslave local women. Violence against women has been reported in every war-zone. Rape often is seen as a privilege of victors in war. During the 1990s, military mass-rapes of women and children took place in Rwanda, Somalia, Croatia, Kosovo, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Serbian forces in both Kosovo and Bosnia used rape as a strategy. That was also the case when the Hutus attacked the Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994. The same approach is used in the Darfur region of Sudan. It is extremely difficult to quantify wartime rape. The estimates vary widely. It is, however, known that the Hutus raped hundreds of thousands of women and children, who they subsequently murdered. UNICEF estimates that the Hutus killed 300,000 children during the 90 days long genocide (to compare, 319.000 children were born in Can-

ada in 2008.) According to Aljazeera News, 2 million women have been raped in the Congo war. The rape is ongoing. Women and girls living in refugee camps are also not safe. They have reported rape, beatings, and abductions when they leave the camps for necessities. Consequently, in wars women are the losers, no matter which side wins. The outcome is significant trauma for women with physical and psychological suffering, low self-worth, and inability to participate in society. The victims also face barriers to get medical help and justice: people blame them of making false allegation, having committed adultery, or having pre-marital sex. (Aljazeera News May 12, 2011; DEVEX Global Development Briefing; Heyzer 1995, 13; Rowe 2000, 369, 371; UNICEF 2005; UNIFEM 2007; Warren 2000, 208-209.)

The 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) is the first treaty to recognize sexual and gender-based violence as grave breaches of international law. Today half of those indicted by the ICC are charged with rape or sexual assault. To end war violence against women, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security from 2000 calls for women's equal participation in peace and security issues. (UNIFEM 2007.)

Wars also destroy nature by releasing toxins, pollutants, and radioactive materials into the air, soils, and waters. In the 1961-1970 Vietnam War, the US army sprayed the vegetation in South Vietnam with massive amounts of defoliants in order to reveal the hiding places of the Vietcong. The most destructive substance, containing dioxin, was one called Agent Orange. The legacy to the survivors includes malignant growths, deformed children, and various forms of cancer. Another example is the damage left from the 1991 Persian Gulf War. It destroyed urban water and sewage systems; polluted the air; created oil õlakesö; damaged marine wildlife, coral reefs, and coastal wetland due to oil spills. Even in peacetime is the military devastating nature. In USA the military produces over a ton of toxic waste per minute. It is estimated that its toxic output is greater than the sum of the top five US chemical companies. The military is unrestricted by environmental laws, thus it has dumped millions of tons of toxic wastes into the grounds at thousands of sites across the country. Outside Denver, Colorado there is a human made lake called Basin F. Research finds it to be the Earth's most toxic square mile. It contains 11 million gallons of wastes including by-products from production of nerve and mustard gas. These are chemical weapons whose lethargy is measured in milligrams. (Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 26; Warren 2000, 209-210.)

Conclusively, those who decide to wage wars do not have to carry the effects. They delegate the appalling consequences to civilians ó mainly women and children ó and to nature.

The Pointlessness of Wars
Our political leaders tell us that the military system is necessary in order to create peace. Yet, in spite of the huge sacrifices made, arms proliferation seems to increase wars rather than peace. From 1945 to 1989, 127 wars took place, killing 22 million people. Currently, we have globally around 42 armed conflicts. Reality therefore shows that arms proliferation only generate more wars. In spite of this, political leaders still argue that more and better weapons will bring global peace. To justify military increase they claim their weapons are for defense purpose only; but their arms attack. With increasingly dangerous and lethal weapons, also the destruction expands, intensifying the likelihood of a global holocaust. Conclusively, military spending do not prevent wars; they are therefore not justified. (Capra 1982, 2; Ekins 1992, 5-7, 156; Hot Stock Market 2008; UNICEF 2008.)

The reasons behind wars relate to our perceptions of threat, feelings of insecurity, and actions of aggression. When one country builds up its military, another country feels insecure and increases its arms. This creates a vicious circle of increased arms, resulting in reduced overall security, and the possibly for war. Hence, to increase security we must remove elements others perceive as threats.

These issues relate to well-being including poverty, inequalities, environmental problems, political oppression, ethnic and religious rivalries, terrorism, and crime. All are causing or contributing to conflict and violence. It is therefore not possible for 20 percent of the world's population to go on grabbing 80 percent of the world's wealth, without them having threatening arms. Global peace requires a fair distribution of wealth. Thus, the over-consuming Northern countries must lower their resource use. We can only create a peaceful and sustainable world when we change the present consumer and profit oriented economic model, to a resource conserver society. Hence, real security relates on non-military issues like economic well-being, social justice, material sufficiency, and ecological stability. We also need to talk. People must discuss their differences so that one group understands the other. When we compromise and make agreements on common aims, we can find peaceful solutions to differences. Thus, rather than using a military approach, we need to deal with the problems that are underlying war. Americans Amory and Hunter Lovins find these to include, õthe psychic premises of eons of homocentric, patriarchal, imperial culture.ö This article considers these premises to be the root cause of the four crises. (Ekins 1992, 7, 20-21, 58-59, 156; Rowe 1997, 234; Trainer 1997, 590-591.)

Although the above advice is sensible, political leaders seem not convinced. In their ideology, security comes from military threats and wars that can conquer the opponent into submission. Such a value has consequences. When the state makes the choice for violence, violent values easily become part of society. When leaders silence opponents by force, citizens may also approach each other by aggression.

Wars Increase Social Violence and Crime
With more wars, aggressive behavior in society becomes habitual leading to erosion of social cohesion. In USA, the number of 14-17 years old arrested has increased nearly 30-fold since 1950. From 1980 to 1987, child abuse cases doubled, and 10 percent of boys and 18 percent of girls attempted suicide. Suicide is the third leading cause of death among young Americans between 10 and 24 years, while homicide is the leading cause of death among people of color of 15-19 years old. Thirty percent of all youth have tried drugs. Over 75 percent of people arrested for criminal offenses also had a positive drug test. For the first time in US history, National Association of State Boards of Education found in 1990 that, õyoung people are less healthy and less prepared to take their place in society than were their parents.ö Hence, the American way of life, which its leaders present as an ideal model for all nations, seems to include crime, violence, drug use, and suicide. (CDC 2004; Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 21.)

Violence against women is also high in the USA. The rape rate more than doubled from 1970 to 1988. Women report a rape every 6 minutes, and many rapes are not reported. Rape inside marriage is not counted in the figure, but it is common. The number of women battered each year by their male partners is estimated to be close to 2 million. Gender violence is also increasing in other societies. United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) finds that global violence against women and girls is a crisis of epidemic proportion. They estimate that one in five women will become a victim of rape or attempted rape in her lifetime. At least one out of every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime. For women aged 15 to 44 years, violence is a major cause of disability and death. A 1994 study, based on World Bank data, rated rape and domestic violence towards women as higher risk factors than cancer, car accidents, war, and malaria. There is no place on Earth where women are safe from domestic violence. In 2005, UN's World Health Organization (WHO) made a study from 10 countries. It showed that more than 50 percent of the women in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Peru, and Tanzania had experienced physical or sexual violence done by intimate partners. In Ethiopia, the figure reached a shocking 71 percent. South Africa has probably the highest number of child rapes, where a child is the victim in forty percent of

all rape cases. One South African child is raped every three minutes. (Bunch and Carillo 1990, 80; Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 18; Geen 1995, 406; People Magazine October 2009; Tadria 1997, 169; UNIFEM 2007.)

In sum: increased militarization seems to run parallel to increased social violence. Men direct their aggression towards the physically weaker part of society ó women and children; they harm them, just because they can!

Conclusion on the Crisis of War and Violence
Most people would prefer to live in a peaceful world. Studies show that social justice is the best way to end aggressive behavior. When inequalities between rich and poor are prominent, and groups in society find their situation hopeless, some choose violence as a means of restoring fairness. Thus, most wars and violence could end by economic redistribution. Yet, redistributing of wealth is not a political priority. The current neo-liberal ideology, subscribed to by most politicians, does not include resource sharing, social cooperation, and environmental conservation. Nevertheless, these are the values needed to correct inequalities and improve the quality of lives for women, children, and poor people, and to regenerate healthy environments. Conclusively, rather than choosing wise actions, our political leaders prefer to increase competition for natural resources, maximize individual economic profit-making, leading to egoism and greed. The outcome is that poverty, inequalities, violence, and wars increase, with women, Others, and nature as the main sufferers. (Geen 1995, 409-410.)

The Crisis of Poverty and Inequality
Poverty is both an absolute and a relative phenomenon. *Absolute poverty* is a physical condition of deprivation, while *relative poverty* is more a matter of worth in society. Most relative poor live in the North, while the majority of the worldøs absolute poor are in the South. (Ekins 1992, 8.)

Statistics on Poverty, Hunger, Sickness, and Death
The data on the worldøs poor are devastating. The World Bank estimated in 2008 that there are 1,345 billion absolute poor people in the world, compared to a global population of 6.7 billion people. Thus, 1 out of every 5 is absolute poor. These people subsist below the international poverty line of 1.25 USD per day. Most live in the 49 least developed countries, of which 34 are situated in Africa. In 2007, the population in sub-Saharan Africa was 770 million. Fifty-one percent or 340 million of these people are absolute poor. Their lives are often short. They starve or die from diseases. There are 925 million hungry people in the world; 578 million live in Asia and the Pacific, while 239 million live in sub-Saharan Africa. Presently, we are 7 billion people on Earth, thus, 13.1 percent, or almost 1 in 7 is hungry. Roughly 790 million people are chronically mal-nourished; 1.1 billion people have inadequate access to water, and 2.6 billion lack basic sanitation. As an outcome 50,000 people die from effects of poverty every day. (Hunger Notes 2011; Naidoo 2009; Shah 2009-10; UNDP 2008; UNICEF 2009.)

The main sufferers from poverty are women and children. Women make up 70 percent of the worldøs absolute poor people. In 1984, Morgan described in õSisterhood is Globalö the ongoing discrimination against women: (Rowe 1997, 247; Global Poverty Info Bank.)

> While women represent half the global population and one-third of the labor force, they receive only one-tenth of the world income and own less than one percent of world property. They also are responsible for two-thirds of all working hours. . . . Not only are females most of the poor, the starving, and the illiterate, but women and children constitute more than 90 percent of all refugees of the world, as well as being the primary caretakers of the elderly. (Kelly 1997, 115.)

Poverty and hunger give diseases. There are on average 450 million cases of malaria per year, with one million fatalities; most occur in Africa. Malaria mainly harms African children, who count for 80 percent of the global victims. (Shah 2009-10; UNICEF 2009.)

Another pandemic is AIDS. Since AIDS was first recognized in 1981, it has led to the deaths of more than 25 million people. Annually it takes around 1.8 million global lives. With 2.6 million new cases per year, the number of people infected with HIV continues to rise, despite preventive measures. Worldwide, some 34 million people have AIDS, and half are unaware of it. HIV infection is endemic in sub-Saharan Africa, which is home to just over 10 percent of the world's population but have more than 60 percent of all infected people. Sub-Saharan Africa had in 2007 about 22.5 million HIV infected people. The southern part of Africa is the hardest hit region, with more than 20 percent of its adult population being HIV infected. Thirty years ago no one would have predicted the scope of the AIDS tragedy. Mathilde Krim, founder of the Foundation for AIDS Research, warned in June 2011 that with 7,000 new infections each day there is a huge battle ahead, õWe are still losing ground to HIVí . There are more infections than people put under treatment.ö (Terra Daily 2011; Wikipedia 2011c.)

In sub-Saharan Africa, more women than men are HIV positive, a gender gap that is growing. Among young people between 15 to 24 years, 36 women are infected with HIV for every 10 men. Patriarchal domination, early marriages, and other gender inequalities mean that women have little power over their bodies. Thus, women's low status makes them vulnerable to the spread of HIV. Mother-to-child transmission is another contributing factor in the transmission of HIV. Lack of testing, inadequate antenatal care, and feeding of contaminated breast milk infects 590,000 infants with HIV per year. In addition, AIDS produces 70,000 new orphans annually. Estimates are that the world has over 20 million children orphaned by AIDS. (Shah 2009-10; UNICEF 2005, 2009; Wikipedia 2011c; Wikipedia 2011d.)

UNICEF estimates in their 2008 report that globally 9.7 million children under the age of five die annually. Their 2010 figure is a bit below 9 million. Thus, every day 24,000 children die. In Shah's calculation it is equivalent to one child dying every 3.6 seconds, 16-17 dying every minute, and a 2004 Asian Tsunami occurring almost every 10 days. Two million babies die on the day they are born. Two million die in their first month of life. In total, some 70 million children died between 2000 and 2007. Nearly all these children live in the South. Only 1 percent of the deaths have unknown causes, and two thirds of them are preventable. Half die from mal-nutrition; some from respiratory infections, others succumb to early childhood diseases. Unsafe water, poor sanitation and hygiene also contribute to child mortality. It is difficult to grasp a huge figure of 9-10 million children dying per year. Thus, to put it into perspective: all the children under five years of age, who are living in France, Germany, Greece, and Italy, total 10.6 million. (Shah 2009-10; UNICEF 2005, 2008.)

Sub-Saharan Africa has the world's highest child mortality rate: while only 22 percent of the children born in 2006 were from Africa, 49 percent of infant death occurred in Africa. Out of 29.9 million African births, 4.8 million infants die. Thus, in Africa, each year, 1 out of 6 children dies before the age of five. Malaria is a main reason, but Africa also has 2 million children ó out of a global total of 2.3 million children ó below 14 years of age, living with HIV. To conclude, Africa has 46.6 million orphans. (Shah 2009-10; UNICEF 2008.)

In 2000, UN defined eight Millennium Development Goals for improvements in poverty, hunger, child mortality, gender equality, AIDS, and other pressing social issues in the South. Between 40 and 70 billion USD is required every year to meet these goals by 2015. It is less than 5 percent of the

2008 global military costs. Yet, transferring money from military budgets to social development is not popular politically. The rich G8 nations promised at their 2005 summit to double their aid to Africa by 2010, but actions are lacking. UN recommends that rich countries devote 0.7 percent of their GNP to development aid, but few have met the mark. African leaders promised in 2001 to devote 15 percent of their state budgets to health, but not many have achieved it. (UNICEF 2005, 2008, 2009.)

Relative poverty is concentrated in the North. In 2007-2008 UK had 13.5 million people living below the low-income threshold. This includes 1/5 or 22 percent of the population. It is an increase of 1.5 million in 3 years. The situation is worse in USA. In the richest nation on Earth a child dies every 53 minutes from causes related to poverty; and every 43 seconds a child is born into poverty. In 2003, 12.5 percent of the population or 35.9 million people were living below the official poverty thresholds. This includes 12.9 million children. It is 1.3 million more poor people than in 2002. In 2010 the number increased sharply to 46.2 million poor people. Not all relative poor people are starving, but they have little social worth. They often turn to drugs, violence, and crime. (Capra 2002, 126; CCHD 2003; Common Dreams 2011a; Ekins 1992, 8; Key Facts 2008; Rowe 1997, 409; US Census Bureau 2004.)

The Glaring Inequalities
The world has a number of inequalities. The two most conspicuous ones are the difference between the wealth, power, and consumption in the rich North and the poor South. The other is the old, complex, and unjust gender inequality. Both inequalities are here perceived as relating to an ongoing patriarchal domination of women, Others, and nature.

The North-South Inequality
Although we have enough wealth in the world to support us all, global resources are unevenly distributed. Around 1 billion people consume 80 percent of the resources, while the rest must share the remaining 20 percent. The North has steadily increased its resource use and by that its wealth. USA, with less than 5 percent of the worldøs population, consumes 30 percent of global resources. This unsustainable consumption pattern makes the country highly dependent on natural resources from outside its borders. Yet, the strategy has generated wealth: in 1950, people in rich countries could buy on average 10 times as much as those in poor nations; by 1988, it was nearly 30 times as much. The 2007 average per capita income in the industrial countries was 38,579 USD, while that of sub-Saharan Africa was 965 USD. That is a relation of 40 to 1. The income gap is also huge within countries. In Brazil, the richest 20 percent earn 29 times as much as the poorest 20 percent. The figure is 22 times in South Africa and 9 times in the USA. Besides, those who are rich have become extraordinarily wealthy. The 2006 Forbes magazine names 400 US tycoons, who together own 1,125 trillion USD. (Capra 1982, 229; Capra 2002, 126; Des Jardins 2001, 68-69; Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 32; Infoplease 2002; Schumacher 1993, 95-96; UNICEF 2009.)

Thus, the world has plenty of wealth; enough to ease global human misery. In its 2004 July/August issue the Ode Magazine had calculated that the industrialized countries only would need to spend 0.4 percent of their annual income to provide for the basic needs of the entire world population. Annually, the South needs 5 billion Euros to end hunger, 6 billion Euros to give education to all, 9 billion Euros would provide all with clean drinking water, 12 billion Euros would supply basic health care for all, and 40 billion Euros could alleviate poverty. However, people in the North choose to spend their money on other things. Every year they use 105 billion Euros on alcohol; 400 billion Euros on recreational drugs; 780 billion Euros on arms and military; 1,000 billion Euros on advertisement and marketing; and 2,500 billion Euros on currency speculation. Apart from not supporting the South, the North rather extracts its resources. The formal and informal transfers of resources from South to North are estimated to be around 200-250 billion USD annually. (Seabrook 1993, 12.)

North-South inequalities exist for a reason. The historical colonization and exploitation of the South by the North persists. It has only been disguised by ideas like õfree markets,ö õforeign investment,ö or õdevelopment.ö Conclusively, the modern worldøs greed seems bottomless.

The Male-Female Inequality

Studies from North and South show that women still work more than men do. In fact, the double working day of women is on the increase. Thus world-wide, women work full-time in economic production while also doing the unpaid housework, childcare, and family care. In most parts of Africa and Asia women work on average 16 hours daily. In the rural South, women do 60-80 percent of food production; 90 percent of food processing, provision of household water and fuel-wood; 80 percent of food storage and transport of food from farm to village; 90 percent of weeding; and 60 percent of harvesting and marketing. Yet, in spite of Southern womenøs impressive work in agriculture, informal trade, housework, and childcare economists still call them õeconomically inactive.ö Consequently, work is the longest lasting part of womenøs oppression. (Cornwell 2004, 51; Ekins 1992, 73; Kelly 1997, 115-116.)

The reproductive work of women is even worse. On average an African woman produces 6 children in her life. She is 22 times more likely to die in childbirth than a woman from the North. In sub-Saharan Africa there were 921 pregnancy related deaths per 100,000 live births in 2005; in the North only 8. That is 115 to 1. Part of the reason is that Southern women, due to family arrangement, are forced to marry and get children at an early age. Three quarters of all teenage girls are mothers. Early motherhood is risky for the health of the mother and the child. Besides, it diminishes a girløs opportunity for education, training, and employment, keeping her poor. When young girls are married off, they are often mercilessly exploited, beaten, and raped by the new family. Some even find the world a better place without women. A 1993 survey from India showed that due to preference for boys, female babies received less care and food causing 300,000 more girls than boys to die annually. According to a 1988 study, out of 8,000 abortions carried out in Bombay, 7,999 were female fetuses. To add insult to injury: a 2006 study found that more than 10 million female fetuses have been lost to abortion and sex selection during the last 20 years. (Adepoju 1994, 25; BBC January 2006; Cornwell 2004, 52; Ekins 1992, 73; Elliott 1994, 25-26; UNICEF 2008.)

Access to education is also gender unequal. Women constitute 66 percent of the worldøs illiterates. Research shows that farmers with 4 years of formal schooling may produce 80 percent more crops than those without. Yet, 62 percent of Africaøs women, the continentøs food producers, are illiterate. (Cornwell 2004, 52.)

Women in the South are oppressed by patriarchal traditions, which manifest in national laws. Introduction of the development program dominated women further. When rural development introduced profit oriented scientific agriculture, it increased womenøs workload and dependency. When the possibility for making money entered agriculture, men got interested and took over the most fertile land, leaving women with less land for food production. Women were also overlooked in access to technology, capital, and training. These inputs are directed to menøs cash crops, which often are non-food products for export. Thus, the focus on profit in agriculture has resulted in scarcity of food for the household leading to national food insecurity. As a result, women and children go hungry. Thus, rural development did not assist rural women. This is similar in urban development. Patriarchal values force women into the informal or lowest paid sectors, with poor working conditions. The governments support patriarchal values and enforce laws that worsen womenøs position. Conclusively, modern progress and development only introduced new forms of gender domination. Patriarchal traditions also institutionalized unjust gender treatment in the North. Women are still paid less than men

in the same jobs and they are still concentrated into lower-paying job categories with less job security. (Ekins 1992, 74-75; Heyzer 1995, 2-3; Kelly 1997, 116.)

No country on Earth is gender equal. This is the conclusion drawn by the Global Gender Gap Report from 2009. The index presents 134 countries, and more than 90 percent of the world's population. Of the four categories, health, education, economic participation, and political empowerment, equality in education exists in only 25 countries; in health, in 39 countries. Iceland is number 1, having closed the gap with 83 percent. Number 2 and 3 are Finland and Norway. South Africa is inside the first 10. The Arab and Middle East countries rank the lowest, with Yemen at the bottom, having closed only 46 percent. Inequalities exist mainly in political empowerment, but women are also deprived in economic participation. This is inefficient since studies have shown that reducing gender inequalities enhances economic productivity. Investing in girls' education reduces fertility rates, lowers infant and maternal mortality rates, increases women's earnings and their investment in children's education. These outcomes improve the overall quality of life for women and children. (World Economic Forum 2009.)

Discrimination against women is complex, including political, economic, social, cultural, and structural issues. It relates to systemic and historical concepts of patriarchal domination of all that is female and it negatively affects women in every aspect of their lives. (Ekins 1992, 75).

Conclusion on the Crisis of Poverty and Inequality
Poverty and inequality are widespread in the world. The focus on economic profit to the few makes life unmanageable for the many. Thus, excessive luxury lifestyles continue to co-exist with poverty, malnutrition, dis-ease, and death. The main victims are women, children, and poor people in the South. The over-consumption in the North and the marginalization of the South has consequences for the environment. When the fertile lands of the South are used for cash crops consumed by the North, Southern women are forced to use marginal land to produce their food. This exhausts the soils. Hence, Southern women may degrade nature out of need. Yet, the North destroys the environment out of greed.

The Crisis of Environmental Destruction
Our global natural environment contributes to human life in three ways: it provides resources for the economy; it disposes of the wastes from that economy; it gives services for people in various ways from survival to enjoyment. Global resource use has increased through the years, causing worries about future supply of minerals and fossil fuels. However, lately the focus has been on the negative environmental impact from human economic activities and its waste. The consequences include *climate change* due to the emission of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide or CO_2, methane, nitrous oxide, and chlorofluorocarbons or CFCs; the *acidification of lakes* and *forest dieback* due to emission of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and ozone; *depletion of the ozone layer* by emitted CFCs; global destruction of biological resources, which manifest as *deforestation, desertification, species extinction,* and *water decline*; and *pollution*, due to increased industrial, hazardous, chemical, and radioactive wastes. Because of its high level of industrialization, production, and resource use, most waste and pollution comes from the North. Yet, the effects are global. In the following some of the consequences are discussed. (Ekins 1992, 11-12; Elliot 1994, 42.)

Climate Change and its Consequences
The scientists of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published in 2000 a consensus statement that human release of greenhouse gases, "contributed significantly to the observed warming over the last fifty years." In their 2007 report, the IPCC declared with "very high confidence" that the global average net effect of human activities since 1750 has been one of global

warming. Atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gasses has increased markedly since pre-industrial times. In 2005, the measured increases in CO2 concentrations exceeded by far the natural range over the last 650,000 years. Between 1970 and 2004 alone, the increase was 70 percent, primarily due to burning of fossil fuel. (IPCC 2007.)

It is predicted that temperatures will increase with on average 6 degrees Celsius by the end of the century. This is exceptional in human history and it will likely mean huge changes in climate patterns. The climate change will influence and cause repeated incidents of floods, droughts, and storms. Hurricanes, typhoons, and cyclones may rise in frequency, intensity, proportions, and locations. To make things worse those ecosystems that provide us with protection from natural disasters are also pressed. This increases the impact from natural disasters. Hence, when we are destroying forests, damming rivers, filling in wetlands, and destabilizing the climate, we are destroying a complex, interconnected, ecological safety net. (Capra 2002, 182, 184; Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 15; Houghton1994, 86-87.)

The temperature increase will exceed the temperature change between the last Ice Age and today. Thus, also the oceans will become warmer, causing the sea level to rise. Sea levels have already been raising about 20 cm during the last century due to global warming. If current trends continue, the sea will increase another 50 cm by 2100. That would negative influence river deltas like the Amazon, the Mississippi, and the coastline of Bangladesh. Bangladesh lays low, thus flooding will inundate excellent agricultural land. Since 85 percent of the population depends on subsistence agriculture, it will have severe consequences for food production, hunger, and poverty. Due to increased ocean temperature also some glaciers will melt. However, changes in the ice-sheets in Greenland and the Antarctic will balance themselves out. Greenland will ablate i.e. melt ice, while Antarctic will accumulate more ice. Nevertheless, if the Arctic ice on Greenland would disappear, it would increase warming of the whole Earth, which would drastically change Europe's climate. (Capra 2002, 182, 184; Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 15; Houghton 1994, 92-94.)

Climate change will influence food supply. Plants depends on temperature and rainfall, thus if these change, one must alter crop choice. Increased CO2 will in general increase fertility of plants, especially wheat, rice, and soya beans. However, also weeds use carbon dioxide. For most of the world it may be easy to match crop to the new climate, but warmer weather may redistribute cropping zones and change farming practice. The suggestion is that the North will produce more food, while the South will decrease its agricultural output. This may led to food scarcity, increased food prices, hunger, and poverty. Sub-Saharan Africa will be hardest hit from global warming, as it depends almost entirely of rain to feed its agriculture. (Houghton 1994, 103-107; Krause, Bach, and Kooney 1995, 74-75.)

Forests will be seriously affected by climate change since the maturity and reproduction of trees are long. Under warmer conditions, forests would extend upwards in altitude and pole wards in latitude. Forests normally do this with the speed of 1 km per year. However, the rapid climate change seems to require a speed of between 2 and 5 km a year. The result would be that forests die. This has serious consequences for the traditional people who subsist from forest produce. Climate change will also affect wetlands and swamps. They may either move inland taking over agricultural land or, if the change of sea level is rapid, they may disappear altogether. Since 2/3 of human fish consumption comes from these areas, this would have serious consequences for food security, income generation, and in the South it may lead to increased poverty. (Houghton 1994, 96; Krause, Bach, and Kooney 1995, 74-75.)

Lastly, warmer climate will increase violence and wars, especially in the South. Dr. Marshall Burke, from the University of California at Berkeley, USA was leading a research, which found that climate change is a chief promoter of armed conflicts in Africa. Researchers established that conflicts may increase with 50 percent in remarkably warm years. Other studies suggest that conflicts arise because food supply is scarce during warm conditions. Since crop yields in Africa are sensitive to tiny shifts in temperatures, climate change could increase the number of wars. An earlier study has shown a link between lack of rain and conflict, but this research is the first clear evidence of a connection between temperature and conflicts. (BBC November 2009; DEVEX Global Development Briefing 2009)

Deforestation and Desertification
Seventy five percent of the Earthøs land area was once covered with forests. Due to deforestation the coverage was in 2005 less than 30 percent. According to United Nationøs Food and Agriculture Organization, FAO, there are few signs of a decrease in deforestation rate. One reason for deforestation is the business need for wood, but we also cut forests to give way for commercial farming. Forests are ecological systems essential to life on Earth: they are home to millions of diverse species; they balance the rainfall and prevent flooding, soil erosion, and drought; they give livelihood to millions of indigenous peoples; and they are absorbing carbon dioxide, thus clearing up the threatening greenhouse gases. Especially the tropical rainforests are life-giving ecosystems. The world originally had 6 million square miles of tropical forests that covered 14 percent of the land. Now more than 40 percent of rain forests have disappeared. People destroy over 11 million hectares of tropical forests every year; in 30 years it is similar to an area of the size of India. If the deforestation continues at its current rate, we will not have any more rainforest after 40-50 years. (Dankelman and Davidson 1988, xii; Des Jardins 2001, 94; Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 16; FAO 2005; Houghton 1994, 146; Rainforests.net 2005.)

Deforestation gives a number of systemic environmental problems. It increases global warming in two ways: first, because deforestation prevents trees from absorbing greenhouse gases and secondly, because tree cutting includes burning of wood, which increases the atmosphereøs CO_2 content. Deforestation also reduces water supply. With a reduction of vegetation, there is a decrease in evaporation and a tendency to reduced rainfall, which reduces vegetation further. Consequently, deforestation may increase droughts and water scarcity, contribute to desertification, and increased temperatures. (Houghton 1994, 100-101, 146.)

Drylands are those areas where rainfall is low and typically consists of small erratic, short, high-intensity storms. Drylands covers 41 percent of the Earthøs land and contains 43 percent of the worldøs cultivated areas. It is home to more than 2 billion people, half of whom are depending on natureøs services for their basic needs. Yet, 6 million hectares of drylands degrade to desert-like conditions each year. Over 30 years it amounts to an area like Saudi Arabia. Between 10 and 20 percent of drylands is already degraded. Desertification of drylands is a complex process. It relates to land degradation due to decreased vegetation, reduction of available water, decline of crop yields, and erosion of soils. The major causes of soil degradation are deforestation, excessive land use from over-grazing and over-cultivation, and water logging and salinisation from irrigation. The root cause of the problem is increased need for natural resources due to excessive consumption and high population density. In the South, there is often a political pressure for cash crops production in order to earn foreign exchange. This results in exploitation of land and displacement of subsistence people to fragile lands leading to soil degradation. Naturally occurring drought often intensify the actual desertification. The impact of desertification on people in the South is that fertile farmland becomes scarce, giving food shortage. Restoring soil lost by erosion is a slow process, thus one should prevent desertification. Nevertheless, much soil degradation can be reversed. Annually 4.5 billion USD, 1 dayøs global military spending, over 20 years is needed to control the problem. (Dankelman and Da-

vidson 1988, xi; Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 17; Ekins 1992, 11-12; Houghton 1994, 101; UNEP 2005.)

Water Scarcity
There is the same amount of water on Earth now as there was in the age of the dinosaurs. Thus, the world's population of 7 billion people must share the same quantity of water as the 300 million inhabitants in Roman times. Yet, population growth and modern ways of living has increased water use, leading to shortage. During the 20th century, global population increased fourfold, but freshwater use increased nine times over. Higher temperatures, increased water evaporation, sea level rise, and more droughts also contribute to water scarcity. Water must now be found deeper in the ground. In China, the water table is falling by 2 meters annually. When we remove ground water, land sinks (subsidence), which causes the sea water level to rise. When sea water rises, saltwater intrudes into fresh ground water resources. With a meter in sea level rise, saline intrusion would increase 300 km inland. In addition, stream flow, which is an important source of water for people, could diminish. Thus, overuse of water causes water to run out. (Houghton 1994, 93-94, 97, 100; Lean 2009.)

All life forms need fresh water. Modern agriculture counts for 2/3 of the global water use due to its method of irrigation. In order to direct water to agricultural uses, large water dams are constructed. Yet, this kind of water management is highly doubtful. Irrigation often destroys land with salinisation. Build-up of salt has damaged a quarter of the world's irrigated land. Construction of dams disrupts large natural areas, destroying essential ecosystems like forests and fertile agricultural land. This reduces rainfalls and hence food production. Dams also displace thousands of indigenous peoples, with deeply harmful social consequences. Besides, dams are redirecting water flow towards the elite's economic activities, away from the use of subsistence farmers. This diminishes poor people's food security and increases hunger and poverty. Moreover, damming diminishes availability of water. This is partly due to the interruption of the natural water flows, and partly due to the inundation of virgin forests for catchments area. Loss of forests reduces humidity leading to less rainfall. The systemic effects from redirecting and overusing water, together with temperature and sea level rise, increased floods and droughts, deforestation and desertification, result in water scarcity. Scientists predict that by the year 2025 one out of three people will live in countries with water shortage. Water scarcity also means declining output of crop. Since water gives life, the result from water scarcity is hunger, malnutrition, and finally death. (Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 17; Gaard 2001, 168.)

Water scarcity also increases human tension. The Nile runs through ten countries. Failure to agree on water management may bring conflicts. For Egypt the river Nile means survival. Thus, its government has already long ago stated that anyone who limits the Nile's water flow to Egypt declares war. This is becoming real with the building of dams in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda. (Aljazeera News 2011; Gaard 2001, 168; Houghton 1994, 97-98.)

Hence, environmental problems lead to increased insecurity. Overuse of natural resources and degradation of the environment intensify competition for scarce resources, which increase aggression, violence, and manifest as armed conflicts. With increased natural disasters, ecological degradation, pollution, and wars, the number of refugees will rise. As per 2010, there are 43.7 million refugees in the world. It is an increase of more than 10 million from 2008. The estimate is that the number of environmental refugees will rise with 3 million annually. The refugees are mainly women, old people, and children. (Adepoju 1994, 33; Houghton 1994, 113; Humanitarian News 2011; UNDP 2008.)

Two reports about the global water situation were published in 2009. The World Economic Forum issued one, while the other, the World Water Development Report, was compiled by 24 UN agencies, sponsored by UNESCO. Both reports perceive the current water situation as critical. Already

2.8 billion people live in areas of high water stress. By 2030 the number will rise to 3.9 billion, more than half the population of the world. By then, water scarcity could diminish world harvests by 30 percent, equal to all the grains grown in USA and India. Thus, water scarcity will increase food insecurity and hunger. The World Water Development Report adds that water scarcity is already starting to limit economic growth in areas as diverse as California USA, China, Australia, India, and Indonesia. The report also anticipates water conflicts to start in the Middle East, Haiti, Sri Lanka, Colombia, and elsewhere. (Lean 2009.)

Pollution is yet another reason for water scarcity. Asian rivers are the most polluted in the world. They have three times as many bacteria from human waste as the global average, and 20 times more lead than rivers in industrialized countries. Thirty percent of Ireland's rivers are polluted by sewage and fertilizer. The King River is the most polluted river in Australia. It is suffering from a severe acidic condition related to mining. Also the oceans are suffering. Sewage, garbage, and oil spills have begun to overpower the diluting capacities of the oceans, causing coastal waters to pollute. Thus, nature is also under threat from pollution and wastes caused by economic development. (Dankelman and Davidson 1988, xii; Shandilya 2007.)

Pollution and Waste
Industries worldwide release each second 310 kg of toxic chemicals into our air, land, and water. Per year it amounts to about 10 million tons of toxic chemicals. Of these, more than 2 million tons are recognized carcinogens (causing cancer). According to the United Nations Environment Program, UNEP, industries have during the last half century introduced 80,000 chemicals onto the market. There is concern that governments did not test many of these for their full range of health and environmental effects, including their potential to disrupt hormonal systems in animals and people. Some experts believe that chemicals also need to be better evaluated for their impacts on vulnerable groups in society, like children and pregnant or breast feeding mothers. (UNEP 2002; Worldometers 2011.)

The American chemical industry has expanded its production of synthetic organic chemicals from 1 million tons in 1940 to 125 million tons in 1987. It is a 12,500 percent increase over 47 years. Many of the chemicals are used by farmers as fertilizers, herbicides, fungicides, and pesticides. Due to the scientific method of food production, modern agriculture involves chemical inputs with serious negative effects. The chemicals have caused ecosystemic imbalances, polluted soils, poisoned ground water, endangered fish, birds, and insects. Chemicals are also a threat to people's health. Chemicals enter the body and because the immune system cannot dispose of them they remain in the tissues. Research suggests that most Americans have toxic compounds stored in their fatty tissues, some of which may be causing cancer, birth defects and other illness. The estimate is that pesticide in food may be causing 20,000 extra cancer cases per year in the USA. In addition, people are often unaware of the content of the chemicals they are using. Information was lacking on toxicity for 79 percent out of 48,500 different chemicals listed. Continuing use of pesticide also leads to resistant strains of pest, which can give crops losses of up to 30 percent. Consequently, introduction of chemical food production has been risky for society and nature; we should therefore doubt their benefit. (Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 17; Newman 1994, 47-48; Norgaard 1994, 24-26, 47.)

Disaster strikes when technicians are not careful with toxic chemicals. On December 2, 1984, 40 tons of mixed, toxic gases escaped into the atmosphere from the Union Carbide factory in Bhopal, India. The factory produces pesticide, and is owned by the American Union Carbide Corporation (UCC). The disaster could have been predicted. The factory produced toxic compounds, it lacked adequate safety measures, and it was placed in a crowded area. In the aftermath of the disaster, the Indian government protected the UCC, rather than supporting its citizens. This worsened the situation for the victims. No official information was released regarding the composition of the poison to assist treat-

ment, but doctors believed that victims were suffering from cyanide poisoning. When the Ministry of Health released medical files, they showed that the toxic gasses had caused multi-system injury with irreversible damage leading to progressive deterioration. There were also grave risks for genetic changes in the population. Official figures estimated in 1990 the death toll to be 3,677. Unofficial estimates go beyond 10,000, with another 80,000 people seriously affected, causing one death each day. Independent researchers could prove that 70-80 percent of the population was seriously and permanently injured. Thus, 400,000 suffered grave injury. It is likely that the disaster harmed millions of people permanently. Yet, since no survey of the entire exposed population was done, nobody really knows the number of injured. The Bhopal disaster should have changed the chemical industry, but it did not happen. Two years later, a fire at Sandoz factory in Switzerland caused 30 tons of chemicals to be washed into the river Rhine. The toxics killed about 500,000 fish and polluted the drinking water. A subsequent investigation brought to light 12 other major Rhine pollution incidents involving Ciba-Geigy, Hoechst, BASF, and more. Due to accidents, their serious consequences, and the increasing critique of chemical production, the chemical industry has started a trend towards moving their manufacturing from the North to Southern countries. However, experts are concerned about this. Many poor nations may not have adequate safeguards or emergency response systems in place to deal with accidents like the one that occurred in Bhopal. (Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 27; Jaising and Sathyamala 1994, 88-90, 92-95; UNEP 2002.)

Oil spills is another threat to society and nature. In 1967, when the Torrey Canyon wrecked off the Isles of Sicily, Europe experienced its first large oil spill. The dispersant sprayed on the 119,000 tons oil slick was more toxic than the oil and did unspeakable damage to marine life. In 1989, the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Alaska spilling 37,000 tons of crude, causing massive ecological damage. The worst ever spill happened in the 1991 Gulf War, when Iraqi military released 1.5 million tons of oil into the Persian Gulf. In April 2010, BPøs Deepwater Horizon oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico exploded and sank, killing 11 rig-workers. The accident ruptured the oil pipe, causing thousands of barrels of oil to gush into the sea daily. The oil slick and the toxic dispersant BP applied is causing huge ecological destruction, also affecting human health. The natural, social, and financial costs from the Deepwater Horizon spill are, at the time of writing, still unknown. Nevertheless, Transocean Ltd., which owns the rig, had it insured for twice its value; they made a 270 million USD profit from the disaster. (BBC 2010; Care2.com 2010; Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 26.)

Nuclear power plants are yet another hazard. Nuclear explosions, nuclear waste, and reactor spills have released thousands of tons of toxic materials into the environment. The risk of accidents polluting the air, water, and food, leading to increased risk of cancer and genetic diseases, is very real. A reactor accident happened at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania in 1979, discharging large amounts of radiation. Between 1979 and 1982, the area had a death rate for elderly people 3.6 times above the national average. As many as 130,000 people may have died prematurely. Seven years later the reactor accident at Chernobyl caused a massive release of radiation. The government permanently evacuated 200,000 people from the zone. More than 7,000 miners and soldiers died from radiation exposure during the cleaning up operation. In Kiev 3.5 million citizens received radiation doses hundreds of times the normal safety levels. Due to wind, most European countries were contaminated, causing agricultural losses of 250 million USD in Germany alone. The total cost is estimated to be 14 billion USD. Nuclear industry sources calculated deaths from cancer to be a few thousands, while Professor Gofman at the University of California assumed it to be more than a million people. We are currently experiencing the Fukushima nuclear disaster unfolding. It is a tragedy of such huge proportions that any sane person would expect political leaders to abandon nuclear power technology for good. (Capra 1982, 3; Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 27.)

Depositing of dangerous waste materials creates a threat to ground water, soils, crops, human and animal health in many industrial countries. Annually, around 275 million metric tons of hazardous waste is disposed of in USA. Contaminated sites continue to grow. One place is the Stringfellow Acid Pits. It is a permitted hazardous waste disposal site licensed by the state of California in 1955. The pits are situated in a canyon above the small rural community of Glen Avon. It receives more than 34 million gallons of liquid wastes from local corporations. In 1978, the area received heavy rains, causing the dam to fall apart. To relieve pressure the government decided, without telling people, to release 1 million gallons of toxic chemicals into the community. During a 5 days period the chemicals flooded streets, homes, and the school. Only when shoes started to fall apart and jeans disintegrated from the water did the people suspect something. Although the government immediately ended the exposure and cleaned up the site, the health of the community had been disrupted. Out of the 21 staff at the school, 17 either died or got severe, unusual diseases. Three out of four young men became sterile. Women had miscarriages or delivered premature babies. Children got asthma and allergic reactions. Many had blurred visions, dizziness, headaches, and skin diseases. (Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 17; Newman 1994, 44-47.)

The government tends to place environmental burdens on people in low social positions. Thus, they permit companies to locate their plants in rural communities, using up the water, polluting the land, and threatening the health of people, while transferring their produce to the wealthier urban residents. Greta Gaard calls it for *environmental classism*. Penny Newman finds that the US government and the industries have become accomplices, working against the interest of poor communities, making it legal to kill people with toxic chemicals. Instead of prevention, they discuss õacceptable risks.ö Hence, the law permits corporations to kill, as long as they stay within a set limit. In this way, economic greed is prioritized over life. An internal memorandum from a corporation shows how they calculate with peopleøs lives: the vice president of Gulf Resources and Chemical Corporation in Idaho estimated how much Gulf would have to pay if it continued to expose children in Kellogg to lead contaminated smoke. The estimated liability for poisoning 500 Kellogg children was 6-7 million USD. Although they knew the harm they were doing, they still increased the emission due to the high prices of lead in 1974. The corporation paid the fine, reaped the profit, while the children of Kellogg endured the pain. The elite also manipulate poor people into believing that the suffering is the price one must pay for living in a modern society. Yet, in reality the suffering is the price someone else pays: the rich people benefit, while the poor people suffer. Since poor people cannot move away, their communities carry the costs from the conniving between industry and state. (Gaard 2001, 166; Newman 1994, 48-50.)

Secondly, communities of color are deliberately targeted when placing polluting industries and toxic waste disposals sites. The government officially sanctions this activity. The people cannot complain because they are excluded from decision making groups and regulatory bodies that may prevent such activities. Greta Gaard calls it for *environmental racism*. Studies show that authorities relax enforcement of environmental laws in minority communities. A 1982 research done by the United Church of Christ Commission on Racial Justice in USA concluded that race is the best indicator to identify communities most likely to be the location of toxic waste sites. (Des Jardins 2001, 240; Gaard 2001, 162; Newman 1994, 50.)

Thirdly, women also carry a heavier environmental burden than men. In ecological fragile zones women and children are 75 percent of the affected people. Hence, according to Gaard, we must also be concerned about *environmental sexism*. Modern culture sees nature as an endless supply of resources and as a place that forever will clean up human made waste. This idea also applies to women. Women are seen as an instrument to satisfy the needs of husbands, children, and other family members, and clean up after them. This similarity has helped women recognize a connection be-

tween the way modern Patriarchy perceives women and nature. Women's involvement in the environmental movement started from identifying a link between the health of nature and the health of women, and their families. Since we live in nature, it affects everything in our lives. Thus, nature's health problems also give us health problems. There is therefore continuity between the Earth body and the human body. Many Southern rural women depend on natural resources due to their gender role in producing family sustenance. For them healthy nature is a matter of survival. Thus, when nature's health deteriorates, so does the health of women. Consequently, when economic activities cause natural degradation, they also negatively affect women. Therefore, with its focus on economic growth, development often makes women poor, while drawing men into its profit-seeking activities. (Des Jardins 2001, 240; Gaard 2001, 161; Heyzer 1995, 3; Shiva 1994, 1-2, 9.)

Linking the health of women and the health of nature has created new global movements with the aim to confront environmental problems and dangers. Women lead many of these movements. Penny Newman was part of forming the Movement for Environmental Justice in USA. The movement includes those who have suffered most: women and children, the poor, and people of color. They demand change. The politicians ridicule these women as being õhysterical housewives,ö a name the movement consequently took over. Thus, the õhysterical housewives,ö fight for a clean and healthy place in which to live and work. Their focus is on survival and they demand an end to pollution. The movement has expanded its network to prevent toxic dumping in the Third World as well, because export of hazardous wastes from the North has become a huge threat to people in the South. (Newman 1994, 43, 53, 56, 58.)

Due to public critique, Northern governments have introduced stricter rules concerning disposal of toxic wastes. This has caused companies to dump toxic wastes in poor countries with few regulations. The World Bank and the World Trade Organization support the trade as a wealth earner for the developing countries. Hence, the North offered 175 million tons of hazardous waste on the world market between 1986 and 1991. The waste includes toxic materials, flammables, explosives, carcinogenic, and nuclear materials. The main recipients are the Caribbean, Central and South America, and the former Soviet states. In Asia Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, and Indonesia have joined the trade. As have Benin, Guinea-Bissau, and Equatorial Guinea in West Africa. The economic benefits from importing toxic wastes are attractive. British firms offered Guinea-Bissau 120 million USD per year to bury industrial waste material. The amount is equivalent to the country's annual GNP. Yet, for the companies the price is small compared to the savings they make if they had to dispose the wastes at home. Poor countries are therefore more likely to suffer environmental problems and ecological degradation than wealthy countries are. This relates to the historical legacy of colonialism. The North exploited the southern countries' natural resources to fuel their own living standards. They paid no attention to the environmental consequences and the cost for the local communities. The legacy of colonial injustice lives on in the global economic system. Therefore, when economists conduct a cost-benefit analysis on toxic dumping, the result shows that it is most efficient to allocate environmental risks to people and places with least economic value. Des Jardins refers to a 1991 memorandum from the World Bank. Lawrence Summer, the chief economist, argued in the memo that it is economic logic to dump toxic waste in countries with low wages because it will give the lowest costs in case of compensation. When we know that the World Bank administers international debts and exercises huge control over the economies of many developing nations, such an attitude has serious ethical problems. There is consequently also a case for *environmental colonialism*. (Des Jardins 2001, 241; Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 17; Elliott 1994, 35-36; Newman 1994, 48.)

Depositing wastes in the South presents a huge risk to people and nature. The countries are ill equipped to deal with toxic waste. They rarely have relevant technology or knowledge for handling the dangers involved. In 1988, the Organization of African Unity passed a resolution calling for a

ban on the importation of hazardous wastes to the continent. Individual African countries have consequently reversed agreements, confining exports to South Africa and Morocco. While UNEP has given advice on how to deal with some core waste material, there are no international norms on what is proper waste treatment. And surprisingly, no industrial country or international institution has made any effort to ban waste exports. Consequently, the trade in hazardous materials continues to expand. (Elliott 1994, 37.)

Conclusion on the Crisis of Environmental Destruction
Governments worldwide have taken ownership of their countryøs environment. They have defined laws, making it legal to exploit natural resources for profit-making. They also permit utilizing nature as a dumping place for toxic wastes. Since such behavior is profitable, the state ignores the negative effects for women, Others, and nature. All are merely expected to contain their losses. This is a deterioration of democratic ideals. When the losses become too huge, people protest. To curb the protests, the state tends to introduce measures that limit the citizensø freedom further. Such actions constrain democracy or prevent it from developing. It often leads to human rights abuses. (Capra 1982, 4; Jaising and Sathyamala 1994, 97.)

The Crisis of Human Rights Abuses
All of the above crises relate to human rights abuses. War and violence, crime and rape, poverty and inequality, economic exploitation and environmental destruction are all leading to human repression. In wars civilians are not safe but treated cruelly and inhumanly. Poverty and hunger take away peopleøs rights to health, well-being, and life. Appropriation of natural resources for profit-making marginalizes subsistence people, denying them access to land and an adequate standard of living. Forcing people to live with pollution and toxic waste endangers peopleøs security, health, and well-being. In the following discussion, the focus is on human rights abuses performed by the political and economic elites, mainly for the purpose of economic profit-making and power. (Ekins 1992, 12.)

Priority: Profit over People
The non-governmental human rights organization Amnesty International produces an annual report that features human rights violations against people all over the world. The 2001 Annual Report specifies the kind of abuses committed: of the 192 UN countries, 61 carried out extrajudicial executions. In 30 countries people õdisappeared,ö or remained õdisappearedö from earlier years. It was reported from 125 countries that the state system was torturing people. Prisoners of conscience were held in 63 countries. These people have not used or advocated violence. Authorities imprison them due to their belief, sex, ethnic origin, language, or religion. In 72 countries people were randomly arrested and detained without charge or trial. In 42 countries serious human rights abuses were committed by armed opposition groups. (Amnesty International 2001.)

The Economist Intelligence Unit is compiling a õDemocracy Index.ö According to their 2008 Index, the world has 51 authoritarian regimes. Thus, 31 percent of the worldøs countries are allegedly authoritarian; hence 35 percent of the global population lives under dictatorial regimes. The Nordic countries take up 5 of the 6 first places, with Sweden being the worldøs highest ranking democracy. North Korea is found at the bottom, considered the worst among the totalitarian regimes. The Index also branded countries like Afghanistan, China, Egypt, Iran, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Zimbabwe as authoritarian. The Index only judged 30 countries as fully democratic. Accordingly, only 18 percent of the worldøs countries can be called democracies and just 14.5 percent of the global population lives in nations with full democracy. The Index rated USA as number 18 and UK as 21 in this group. Apart from the small African island of Mauritius, which was number 26, the Index did not rate any African country, neither any Arab nation, as having full democracy. (Wikipedia 2009a.)

According to Freedom House, global political rights and civil liberties are also doing poorly. In its annual survey õFreedom in the World 2010,ö Freedom House finds for the fourth successive year, that human freedom is waning globally. In the reportøs 40-years history, it is the longest unbroken period of decline in global freedom. The year 2009 saw increased repression against human rights defenders and civic activists, along with enhanced persecution of political dissidents and independent journalists. Human rights declines were recorded in 40 countries in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and the former Soviet Union. According to the Research Director Arch Puddington the decline affects both countries with military and economic power and countries that earlier showed signs of reform. Puddington added, õTo make matters worse, the most powerful authoritarian regimes have become more repressive, more influential in the international arena, and more uncompromising.ö (Freedom House 2010.)

Although the North supports human rights and democracy, they have not done much effort to improve global human rights violations. They seem to forget their ideals when their own economic interests are at stake. Thus, Western countries are collaborating with oppressive regimes. The US foreign policy states that it will not accept regimes that are uncooperative to American interests. Yet, if they cooperate, even dictators and military regimes may get US support. Everybody knew about the cruelty of Iraqøs former dictator Saddam Hussein, but Western governments still supported him in the Iran-Iraq war. They sold him military equipment, making it possible for him to build the fourth largest army in the world. They also supplied weapons of mass destruction into a power-sensitive region. In 1988, when Saddam Hussein used chemical weapons against unarmed Kurdish Iraqi citizens, the international community did not impose sanctions against Iraq. Yet, when the oil of Kuwait was at risk, USA went to war. Had they not supplied Iraq with weapons, we could have avoided the Gulf War and hundreds of thousands of people would still be alive. Besides, had USA done efforts to diminish their oil consumption and developed available alternative energy sources, the oil supply from Iraq and Kuwait would not have been important. (Ekins 1992, 12-13.)

China, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, South Africa, UK, and USA are the worldøs main arms producers. Apart from China, these countries call themselves democratic. In spite of this they still sell arms to regimes that use them to repress their own people. The UK sold arms to Indonesia, Nigeria, and Saudi Arabia. The Indonesian army killed 200,000 people in East Timor; the Nigerian regime killed Ken Saro-Wiwa and other opponents; Saudi Arabia has a poor human rights record. Democratic countries also manufacture and sell weapons of torture to repressive regimes. In 1991-1993 USA exported to Saudi Arabia the following items worth 5.4 million USD: thumb cuffs, thumb screws, leg irons, shackles, handcuffs, straitjackets, and specially designed electric instruments for sexual torture. Conclusively, democratic countries support oppressive regimes to commit human rights abuses, in order to earn economic profit. (Rowe 1997, 237, 240.)

United Nations also prioritize economic profit, at least in its Security Council, where the real power lays. It happened in Bosnia in 1992-93, in Rwanda in 1994, and it is happening again in Darfur, Sudan. The international community does not act to stop killing of ethnic people. The law on genocide, which UN members signed after the Second World War, says that if a situation is called genocide, countries are bound to act. In spite of that, genocide continues. Lack of UN intervention in Darfur is due to the veto powers from the Chinese and Russian governments. Both have economic interests in Sudan and are therefore opposed to sanctions. China imports half of Sudanøs oil. Hence, according to BBC News July 10, 2005, the UN representative from China had only one comment to the journalistøs question as to why, õBusiness is business.ö In addition, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council: China, France, Russia, UK, and USA export 88 percent of the worldøs conventional arms. It therefore improves their arms business to veto sanctions against countries with armed conflicts. Thus, since governments prioritize profit over people, no sanctions can be imposed to stop

government-sponsored attacks, rapes, and killings of citizens in Darfur. The conflict in Darfur has been described as õstaggering in scale and harrowing in nature.ö BBC reported in July 2005 that the war has displaced 2,171,000 people. Amnesty International estimated in 2006 that 285.000 people have died from starvation, diseases, and killings in Darfur since 2003. (Amnesty International 2006.)

Worldwide people are becoming aware that corporations only focus on economic profit-making. If it gives profit, corporation will do business with totalitarian regimes. Since regulations reduce profitability, it makes good business sense to eliminate them. Thus, corporations try to remove any obstacles for profit, including democratic control and human rights. Some US corporations even worked for Adolf Hitler, reaping large profits. The US business machine company IBM supplied the Third Reich with tabulation machines to do the calculations at Nazi extermination and slave-labor programs. IBMøs staff knew that the German government had placed the IBM machines in concentration camps where Jews were exterminated. The IBM technicians trained the users, and came to service the machines in the camps. IBM also supplied punch cards for the machines, until 1941 when USA declared war on Germany. Conclusively, corporations do not have any ethical standards; they only focus on economic profit-making. Hence, if there is profit in killing people, corporations will be helpful in providing the means. (Bakan 2004, 85, 88-89, 95, 101.)

The concern for maximizing profit means that corporations will engage in unlawful behavior, like the worldøs largest corporation General Electric Company, GE, does. Multinational Monitor compiled some of the companyøs major legal violations between 1990 and 2001, which included 44 criminal cases lost by GE. All of the cases were directly or indirectly a violation of human rights. They included environmental pollution, violation of workers safety rules, illegal weapons sales, fraud, money laundering, delivery of defective items, design flaws, deception of consumers, overcharging, and unfair debt collection practices. Most of the cases related to pollution of public drinking water, rivers, and soils. The defective items and design flaws were serious enough to cause airplane crashes and faults at nuclear plants. Thus, corporations do have obstacles when they disregard laws that protect people and nature. Yet, they just make cost-benefit analyses that included possible fines and compensations. For them it is cheaper to break the laws, than to play by the rules. Their only focus is on maximizing their profit, and at that corporations are successful. The 100 largest corporations in the world have a turnover that exceeds the Gross Domestic Product of more than half of the worldøs nation-states! (Bakan 2004, 75-77; Ekins 1992, 72.)

One must also consider it a human rights violation when government officials are stealing economic resources, which has been earmarked and meant to pay for public services like health, education, water, and sanitation. Transparency International is publishing a Corruption Perceptions Index, which measures domestic, public sector corruption. On a scale from zero to ten, the Index perceives countries rated zero as being highly corrupt, while countries rated ten are having low levels of corruption. The far majority of the 178 countries included in the 2010 Index, scored below five. Fragile, unstable states plagued by conflicts and wars are at the bottom of the Index. These include Somalia scoring 1.1, Afghanistan and Myanmar rated at 1.4, Iraq at 1.5, and Sudan at 1.6. The top three countries are Denmark, New Zealand, and Singapore rated at 9.3. UK comes in as number 20, rated at 7.6, and USA is 22, at 7.1. China is number 78 with 3.5, and Russia shares place 154 with Kenya at 2.1. It should be added that the Index is criticized for being subjective, lacking precise, standardized data and methodology. (Wikipedia 2011e.)

Conclusively, most governments, businesses, and institutions prioritize economic growth and profit-making, whether they achieve this by legal or illegal means, by ethical or unethical actions. They are conversely less concerned about the well-being of society and nature.

Priority: Men over Women and Children

As a result from experiences in the Second World War the United Nations adopted in 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is the first global agreement of rights to which all human beings are entitled. The Declaration has 30 articles, including the following: Article 1 asserts that all human beings are created free and equal in dignity and rights. Article 2 finds that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration, without distinction of race, color, and sex. Article 3 says that everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security. Article 5 declares that no person must be tortured or subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Article 7 promises that all are equal before the law and entitled to equal protection of the law. Article 16 says that men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality, or religion, have the right to marry. Marriage requires the free and full consent of the spouses, who have equal rights before and during the marriage, and in case of divorce. Article 25 promises all the rights to a standard of living adequate for their health and well-being, especially mothers and children. Finally, article 26 gives everyone the right to free elementary education. (Wikipedia 2009b.)

These are the promises; but when it comes to women, there is far between theory and practice. For many women the rights of freedom, equality, dignity, and security are not available. Instead, cruel, violent, and inhuman treatment is routine:

Brutal treatment towards women and girls is pervasive. At least one in three women are being beaten, forced into sex, or in other ways abused in her lifetime. Around 25 percent of all women experience sexual abuse, done by an intimate partner. Up to 70 percent of female murder victims, are killed by their male partners. About 163 million female children are õmissingö in Asia due to sex-selective abortions and female infanticide. In June 2002, a tribal court in Pakistan sentenced a 30-year-old woman of the Guijar tribe to be gang-raped as punishment for her younger brotherøs alleged õillicit affairö with a girl from another, superior tribe. Several hundred villagers stood by while a group of men carried out the sentence. Fifteen schoolgirls were burned to death and many others injured in a fire at their school in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Religious police prevented the girls from leaving the building because they were not wearing headscarves and had no male relatives to receive them. The police also reportedly prevented male rescuers from entering the premises. (Amnesty International 2004, 2006, 2008; Common Dreams 2011.)

Female genital mutilation is deeply rooted traditional cutting operations performed on women and girls. It is often part of fertility rituals and justified as a way to ensure chastity and genital õpurity.ö The estimate is that more than 130 million girls and women alive today have undergone female genital mutilation, and two million girls a year are at risk of mutilation. This traditional mutilation is taking place mainly in Africa and some Middle Eastern and Asian countries (Amnesty International 2006; UNIFEM 2007.)

Dowry murder is a cruel practice where the in-laws kill a woman because her family cannot pay her dowry ó a payment made by the brideøs family to the in-laws when she marries. Since the dowry is quite high, exceeding at times a familyøs annual income, they cannot always pay it, which leads to violent disputes. It mainly takes place in Asia. (UNIFEM 2007.)

Honor killing relates to the murder of women, who have been raped, who are suspected of engaging in premarital sex, or who are accused of adultery. The womenøs own relatives kill her, because they perceive the violation of a womanøs chastity as an insult to the familyøs honor. In order to improve the family honor, she must be removed from their lives. The estimated number of global honor killing victims includes per year 5,000 women. Honor killings take place mainly in the Mediterranean and Gulf countries. (UNIFEM 2007.)

Early marriage of girls happens throughout the world, especially in Africa and South Asia. It is a form of sexual violence, because it forces girls, as young as 7 years, into sexual relationship, which will jeopardize their health, raise their risk of exposure to HIV/AIDS, and limit their chance of attending school. Often parents marry off their girls in order to gain economic security and status for themselves and their daughters. (UNIFEM 2007.)

HIV/AIDS transmission is an additional form of violence towards girls and women. Due to womenøs subordination in society, they are unable to refuse unwanted and unsafe sex. Thus, often men are forcing women to sex, which results in bruising and bleeding, providing the transmission of the HIV virus. Especially young girls are vulnerable. Moreover, women often do not seek AIDS treatment due to fear of violence and abandonment if they disclose their HIV-positive status. Such women have been driven from their homes, left destitute by their family and community, and are subjected to extreme physical and emotional abuse. In 1998, men in South Africa stoned a woman to death, after she had declared her HIV-positive status on the radio and in the television on World Aids Day. (UNIFEM 2007.)

The victimsø young age show that also **children** are suffering human rights abuses. This happens even though the UN in 1989 adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In it the world promises its children the rights of freedom, protection, and family environment; education, basic health, and welfare. Tragically, for millions of children reality is different: although international law prohibits childrenøs participation in armed conflict, armed groups and government forces recruit *child soldiers*. Hence, adults are forcing children to kill or to be killed in combat. Soldiers may also use children as spies, messengers, servants, or for sex. A 2005 UNICEF report stated that 1 in 12 children are forced to work either as slaves, soldiers, sex workers, or in other dangerous jobs. Most of the children live in Africa. Some countries *execute children*, or they execute the adult person for an offense done as a child. Since 2004 China, Iran, Pakistan, and Sudan have put child offenders to death. Many children do also not enjoy a family environment. There is around 100-150 million *street children* in the world, a number that is growing. Children have a right to primary *education*, which the government should deliver free of charge. Yet, many children do not receive primary education for various reasons. Often primary school is not free as promised, and too expensive for poor families to pay. In such cases, girls are more likely to stay home since mothers often need their daughtersø workforce. Hence, the subordinate social position of girls and women continue as a vicious circle. (Amnesty International 2009; BBC News February 2005.)

Contemporary Slavery
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights says in its article 4 that no person can be held in slavery or servitude. Therefore, slavery and slave trade in any form is prohibited. In spite of this, there are more slaves in our world today than there were at the time of anti-slavery campaigning in the 17th century. Contemporary slavery takes various forms and it affects people of all ages, races, and both sexes. But, it mainly has a negative effect on women and children. (Anti-slavery International 2009.)

Bonded labor is a form of modern slavery that involves millions of people around the world. It starts when someone is forced or tricked into taking a loan. In order to repay the debt, a member of the family must work it off. Often the debt is irredeemable and the family must pass it on to the next generation. Children of such families are born into slavery. According to a 1981 study, India has at least 5 million bonded laborers; of these 500,000 are slave children. There are around 100.000 young boys working in the carpet-making industry of Uttar Pradesh; many of them are effectively slaves. They are working 15 hours daily, seven days a week, in dark, airless, and extremely warm huts, with no real meal breaks. They are also forced to sleep in the work premises. It was estimated in 1992 that

more than 200 million children worldwide work under similar conditions in different industries. (Anti-slavery International 2009; Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 122.)

Human trafficking is the most well-known form of contemporary slavery. It involves the recruitment and transportation of persons, with the aim of placing and keeping them under circumstances of forced labor, slavery, or servitude. The general objective of trafficking is exploitation of women, girls, and boys for the sex-industry. However, trafficking also occurs for other uses such as slavery in sweatshops, domestic work, and agriculture. Moreover, it includes adoption, forced marriage, street begging, and even organ extraction. Traffickers often deceive victims by promises of employment, a better life, or other lies. In addition, they use strategies like coercion and threats; or they simply kidnap and abduct girls and boys. In some regions parents sell their children, boyfriends sell their girlfriends, and relatives sell their women into the trafficking trade. The majority of the victims are female. (Foreign Policy Digest 2009; UNFPA 2002; UNIFEM 2007.)

In 2005, ILO estimated there to be roughly 27 million victims of slavery worldwide. They relate to four groups: *the first* includes forced labors, numbering 12.3 million people; half are children. *The second group* comprises those who are trafficked, counting 2.4 million; half are exploited for commercial sex. *The third group* consists of 9.8 million people exploited by private agents. *Finally*, government and rebel military groups force 2.5 million people to work for them. *In sum:* the criminal private sector is guilty of exploiting 80 percent of the 27 million victims. The state and rebel military groups are enslaving 20 percent. Ninety-eight percent of those forced into commercial sexual exploitation are women and girls. (ILO 2005.)

Contemporary slavery is a highly profitable organized crime. Figures vary, but ILO projected in 2005 that the human trafficking industry alone generated a shocking 31.6 billion USD in annual profits. UNIFEM estimates 1/3 of this amount. In the UN it is believed that human trafficking is the third most lucrative criminal or illicit industry, after drug smuggling, and arms trafficking. It is difficult to prosecute traffickers, even in Europe. Countries have diverse laws and the involved nations have not established coordinated mechanisms. Moreover, corruption among civil servants exacerbates the illegal trade. Human trafficking also thrives on nations in conflict. Gigantic opportunities open up to traffickers given the breakdown in law and order, disintegration of family units, and the collapse of entire economies. (Foreign Policy Digest 2009; ILO 2005; UNFPA 2002; UNIFEM 2007.)

Human trafficking is founded on the patriarchal ideology. This form of abuse is therefore based on domination, exploitation, and disregard for the dignity of women and girls. The underlying causes for human trafficking relate to feminization of poverty, unequal gender relations, female ignorance, male greed, political instability, and conflicts in the home country. These situations may force women to seek jobs elsewhere or families may decide to sell their children. Since women and girls are less valued, families more often use them as commodities. Thus, poverty, inequality, and greed are *supplying* the victims. Increased economic growth is another reason for increase in sexual trade. In East Asian countries improved economic circumstances has created a middle class with men able to buy sexual services. Thus, wealth has increased the *demand* for sex slaves. Especially young, healthy virgins are in high demand. Studies done on the buyers of sexual services find that they are normal men, often married or in stable relationships. These men are representing all nationalities, all ages, and all lifestyles. (Foreign Policy Digest 2009; UNFPA 2002.)

Conclusion on the Crisis of Human Rights Abuses
From the above discussions, it should be clear that poor people, traditional people, people of color ó usually women and children ó suffer much of the human rights abuses. It should also be clear that

those people who sit in positions of economic and political power directly or indirectly do the abuses ó they are usually men. (Ekins 1992, 12.)

Part II
Global Crises: Cause and Possible Solution

Cause: A Reductionist Perception

In Paul Ekinsø opinion, the four crises are difficult to resolve individually because they are inter-linked and reinforce each other. Wars usually bring poverty, environmental problems, and abuse of human rights. Poverty leads to environmental degradation, revolts, and repression. Destruction of nature may end in poverty, social upheaval, and oppression. Abuses of human rights are entangled in all the other crises. Thus, the four crises function in a web-like fashion and are difficult to improve individually. If we should hope to make positive changes we must look beyond a cure of each crisis towards a process of overall healing. Hence, the crises must be seen as symptoms of a systemic õdis-ease.ö (Ekins 1992, 13.)

Hazel Henderson and Fritjof Capra agree with Paul Ekins. We cannot understand the crises in isola-tion. How they manifest is not important. War, poverty, environmental degradation, and human rights abuses are all rooted in a systemic crisis, õa crisis of perception.ö It derives from the Western obsolete, reductionist worldview. Modern science, economics, technology, government structures, and academic institutions are using a fragmented methodology that is inadequate in dealing with a systemically interlinked world. With the reductionist method many scientifically educated people cannot understand and hence resolve systemic crises. Most political leaders also fail to see that prob-lems are inter-linked. They cannot grasp that favoring one part of the system, i.e. economic growth, will negatively affect other parts of the system, leading to social crises and environmental problems. Politicians cannot comprehend that economic profit-making is only possible by exploiting society and nature, causing harm to women, Others, and nature. (Capra 1982, 6; Capra 1989, 248; Capra 1997, 3-4.)

In his book, õDevelopment Betrayed: The End of Progress and a Co-evolutionary Revisioning of the Future,ö Richard B. Norgaard has arrived at a similar conclusion. The reasons behind the environ-mental problems relates to the Western philosophy of life. A good life is seen as modern and pro-gressive. Modernity promised that humanity with its superior science could control nature; that all could have material abundance through its technology; and that life could be administered effectively by rational social organization. Applying this combination to development, would lead to peace on Earth where all could be part of a new, collective, modern culture. However, modernity betrayed de-velopment. Instead of unity, it led to materialism, inequalities, depletion of natural resources, de-struction of the environment, increase in numbers of wars and refugees, and a bureaucratic deadlock where governments cannot find rational solutions to the crises. (Norgaard 1994, 1-2.)

Modern culture was founded on false beliefs about science, technology, society, and nature. Scien-tists assume that progress happens in a linear, progressive fashion. Thus, improved science will ad-vance technology, which will lead to more rational social organization, increased economic growth and material well-being. This is perceived as an eternal activity, determined by science. However, this view is too simple. Progress cannot continue forever since the means ó our natural resources ó are finite. We do not have an endless supply of natural resources with which economists are calculat-ing. Thus, in the name of progress, we are depleting our natural resources and destroying planet Earth. Eventually, modernity will end human existence. (Norgaard 1994, 32-34, 54-56.)

Our false beliefs relate to the premises underlying the Western worldview. Norgaard calls them for atomism, mechanism, universalism, objectivism, and monism. In brief, they translate reality as follows: social or natural systems consist of unchanging parts, the sum of which equals the whole. The relationship between the parts is fixed and possible changes are reversible. Although systems may be different and complex, they are all based on a limited number of underlying universal laws, which are unchanging and eternal. One can understand these laws by observing a system from the outside. The knowledge derived at is objective and universal, being the only way to understand the system. When we know the laws of a system, we can predict its actions, and control the system. In this way, the system can be manipulated to benefit human beings. (Norgaard 1994, 62-66.)

It is important that we understand these premises because they determine mainstream political discourse as well as public information gathering, decision-making, and implementation of activities. These premises have made it possible to perceive nature as a mechanical and static system that can be managed and controlled from the outside, leading to exploitation of natural resources. Thus, the premises have led humanity to mismanage the environment. Nevertheless, reductionist thinking and the static perception of the natural system are based on a false theory. In reality when an element is changed in one place, it has impact on multiple other elements elsewhere, on their relationships, and on the whole. Hence, in a system nothing remains the same when any one element is changed. Thus, nothing can be excluded from the context; not the observer, neither any human action. Therefore, believing in these premises is part of the crises with which humanity is faced. Consequently, the global crises are rooted in õa perceptual and intellectual crisis.ö Since reality is complex, applying these simple premises will lead to crises. Each crisis is seen as an anomaly, but when they accumulate, scientists have a paradigmatic crisis, demanding change. Conclusively, the modern worldøs reductionist perception of reality blinds us to different ways of seeing reality, and prevents us from applying alternative solutions. The modern paradigm is therefore limited and limiting in dealing with complex systems like nature and society. (Norgaard 1994, 62, 70-73.)

Ekins agrees and adds that science is the most dangerous manifestation of the Western worldview. Being founded on a mechanical, reductionist, and anti-ecological perception of reality, it cannot deal with wholes, relationships, living organisms, human consciousness, and meaning ó all of which are part of our reality. Being in this way limited, science is inadequate as a knowledge system and cannot help us creating well-functioning societies. Instead, the elite used science as a tool to dominate society and exploit nature, leading to the above crises. Being a scientific project, also Third World development is based on domination. The program was meant to modernize Southern societies by the means of economic growth. But due to scienceøs reductionist thinking with focus on quantitative values only, development overlooked what matters to people, and destroyed the quality of live for women, Others, and nature. The state system helped with this. In the modern worldview, the government is the ultimate legitimate authority. It therefore exercises absolute power over the lives of its people, its natural environments, and determines the rules that make economic development possible. This has been disastrous for millions of people. Governments have mercilessly enforced upon them the economic growth model. They have wasted resources on arms, prestige projects, and their own luxury life styles. They have caused wars and repressed their own citizens. They have destroyed natural resources meant for peopleøs subsistence. Hence, science, economic development, and the state have been a cruel experience for women, Others, and nature in the South. Its reductionist values have created a violent world with human repression, poverty, and environmental disintegration that may lead to the death of all. (Ekins 1992, 202-207.)

Solution: A Systemic/Holistic Approach
If we should hope to comprehend and resolve the current crises we need to apply alternative premises. Norgaard calls these for holism, determinism, contextualism, subjectivism, and pluralism. In sys-

tems, parts cannot be understood separate from their wholes, and the wholes differ from the sum of their parts. Parts and their relationships are continuously changing and adapting to each other. Some changes may be mechanical but more commonly they are evolutionary. Moreover, changes in systems depend on multiple factors. That makes change chaotic, discontinuous, and not predictable. Besides, systems cannot be understood isolated from human perception, values, experience, and actions. Thus, systemic knowledge is not universal, nor objective. Conversely, we may comprehend systems in diverse ways depending on the values we apply. Based on these alternative premises we must perceive nature and society as complex systems, which continuously change according to various causes and in contradictory ways. In Norgaardøs opinion systems do not only change individually, they also co-evolve, making the outcome complex, chaotic, and non-comprehensible for people. Thus, dealing with dis-orderly, co-evolving systems limits our ability to predict effects and control events. In fact, we can only explain afterwards. As Norgaard expresses it, the co-evolutionary explanation sees how nature is social and how societies are natural. We can therefore not call a co-evolutionary explanation for õprogress.ö It is a change. A change takes place when an element fit with other elements. Thus, change is a process of experimentation. The elements that work are selected, while those that do not fit are rejected. Since we cannot predict and control social and natural systems we must, in order to minimize unwanted change, learn new rules. Hence, we need to experiment cautiously and monitor the chain of events carefully; to limit risks, we must choose small-scale activities over large-scale ones; to quickly undo unwanted changes, we must prioritize short-term actions over long-termed ones; finally, diversity gives a better chance for success. Such wisdom may give us a new foundation for solving the global crises. (Norgaard 1994, 23, 28, 36-37, 46-47, 62.)

If the above explanation about the causes of the crises is acceptable, then it necessarily must follow, that modern society need to make a paradigm shift. To be consistent, the crises must be examined within a systemic paradigm and from the insight this gives, actions can be suggested. One adjustment we urgently need is to change our perception of economics. Global political leaders prioritize the economy as the only important issue. They perceive economics as a true, neutral, and rational science they can deal with separately from other aspects of life. Thus, political leaders run the economy with no concern for society and nature, causing crises in both. When we use systems thinking, then reductionist thinking becomes absurd. In the real world, economic activities take place inside social and natural environments, and all parts interact. Only when we realize this and hence include society and nature, we can develop a suitable economic model. Conclusively, successful solutions to the global crises require a radical shift in perceptions, thinking, values, and actions. We must limit reductionist thinking and give a prominent space to systems thinking. (Capra 1982, 6; Capra 1997, 3-4; Ekins, Hillman, and Hutchison 1992, 40; Norgaard 1994, 47.)

Changing the Crises
Many Western scientists have realized that the mechanical, reductionist philosophy is inadequate in explaining reality. This has resulted in an evolution of alternative holistic worldviews. During the 20th century organismic biology developed. Organismic biologists emphasize that living organisms are integrated wholes. This developed into *the general systems theory*, which sees the world as being interrelated, and all phenomena as being interdependent. õA systemö means an integrated whole, the understanding of which cannot be reduced to the sum of its parts. Or said differently, the whole is more than the sum of its parts. The reason is that essential properties of the whole occur from the relationships between its parts. It consequently is a holistic perspective, which has become known as systemic and the way of thinking involves systems thinking. Systems thinking consequently relates to the understanding of a phenomenon within the context of a larger whole. Living organisms, ecosystems, and societies are all systems. The concepts systemic and ecological are therefore similar. Although biologists initiated systems thinking, it was further enriched by the gestalt theory in psychology and the new science of ecology. Further input came from Gregory Bateson and the ecosys-

temic school in psychology, which is considered a brand of holism. A different type of holism called the Santiago theory was developed in the 1970s by Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela. After its publication, one of the oldest statements of holism, developed by the South African General and Field-marshal Jan Christiaan Smuts, was re-viewed and gained new significance. Smuts published his book, õHolism and Evolutionö already in 1926. *Smuts' holism* came at a time when there was an increasing realization that the reductionist thinking, of the mechanical worldview, had a limited usefulness when it comes to exploring and explaining reality. Smutsø holism was therefore proposed as an alternative statement. In his book, Smuts attempted to define the essential characteristics of holism and to differentiate it from reductionist thinking and mechanism. Smutsø holism consequently deals with self-determined wholes, parts, their relationships, and their context. It remains one of the most comprehensive statements of holism to date. It was also one of the first ó probably the first ó perspectives of holism presented as a worldview. (Capra 1982, 26; Capra 1997, 17-18, 26-27; Capra 2002, 29; Kotze and Kotze 1993, 15-17, 21; Merchant 1980, 292.)

There is a third philosophy, similar to the general systems theory and Smutsø holism, which can perceive reality holistic and promote ideal systemic change. It is the Chinese cosmology, I Ching, with its yin and yang forces. In the following, the I Ching worldview is presented.

The I Ching Worldview

I Ching means Book of Changes. It is based on Chinese cosmology (the study of the origin and nature of the universe). Ancient Chinese philosophers believed that all manifestations of reality are generated by the dynamic interplay between two polar forces, which they called yin and yang. The I Ching is therefore concerned with yin and yang and their relationships. Thus, yin yang is a philosophy of change. (Loy 1987, 41; Palmer 1997, 31-32.)

The I Ching was developed from the wish to ensure success in change. The Chinese concept of change was shaped by observing natural events: the course of the sun; the passing of clouds; the flow of water; the change of day and night; the succession of seasons. Confucius found that, õLike this river, everything is flowing on ceaselessly, day and night.ö Therefore, change is what life is all about. Change is a constant aspect of existence. The reliability of change lays in the paradox, õChange that is the unchangeable.ö One can count on the stability of change. Consequently, in Chinese philosophy activity is a vital feature of the universe. The universe is engaged in a ceaseless motion the Chinese call õTao,ö which means õthe way.ö Since change is natural its reverse is to go against nature. Hence, the opposite of change is not end of movement, it is rather growth of what ought to decrease; downfall of what ought to rule. (Capra 1982, 9, 19; Wilhelm and Wilhelm 1995, 26, 29-30; Palmer 1997, 31-32.)

Change does not happen suddenly and irrationally. Change has its set course in which the tendencies of events develop. Like we expect the sun will rise tomorrow and that spring will follow winter, we can also anticipate that the process of change is not chaotic, but is pursuing fixed courses. Change is not external. It is an inner, impulsive inclination according to which development takes place. Change does therefore not take place due to an outside force. It is natural and innate in everything. Thus, change is not a dictate to which one must surrender; it is rather an indication, showing the direction one ought to take. A change is therefore natural but to identify it and follow its course is a free choice. Having a choice means that we can influence change. Yet, successful influence is only possible by going with the direction of change, not against it. Therefore, within limits, we are both masters of our own fate and able to interfere in the course of events beyond our own sphere. Nevertheless, one must recognize the limits and remain within them. The Book of Changes was written in order to promote such understanding. (Capra 1982, 19; Wilhelm and Wilhelm 1995, 26-27, 30-32.)

The Yin Yang Forces
I Ching perceives reality (Tao) as a process of ongoing, repeated rise and fall of the two archetypical poles, yin and yang. Everything joins in the cosmic process. Thus, the nature of existence (Tao) is a cyclical, ceaseless motion. Hence, yin and yang are elements of change. If they were destroyed, there would be nothing by which changes could be perceived, and without change, also they would cease. (Capra 1982, 17; Wilhelm and Wilhelm 1995, 40.)

Yin and yang put the boundaries for the cycles of change. While they are opposites, they are not of a different kind. They are rather two extreme poles of one whole. Nothing is only yin or only yang; everything is both. Although each wants to dominate, they cannot, because each includes within itself a part of the other. Therefore, when one arrives at its peak, it starts to decline, permitting the other to rise. It is a dynamic relationship. One is increasing, while the other is decreasing. When yang is taking form, yin is disintegrating, returning to the state of formlessness. Life and death, growth and decay, the cycle never ends. The ongoing flux between the two poles exists in everything. The yang forces of day, give way to the yin forces of night, and vice versa. It is a natural order founded on a dynamic tension between yin and yang. Thus, the yin and yang symbol is the essence of this equality, balance, and harmony. Dynamic tension results in balance. Handling the tension ends in harmony. Harmony is consequently not the absence of tension; harmony is created by balancing differences and handling conflicts. With balance and harmony, changes take place steadily and in continuous progression. (Capra 1982, 18; Loy 1987, 42; Palmer 1997, vii, ix; Sizoo 2000, 46.)

It is believed that yin and yang appeared at the beginning of time, when a flash of lightning split the cosmic darkness bringing light. Since then yin and yang are the only two cosmic forces that exist. Nothing has life except through them and all that is, contains both of them. Yin and yang relates to the first known world religion, shamanism. It perceived two worlds: a material and a spiritual world. The spirit world often threatened the material world, hence the shaman needed to balance the two worlds. In the 5th century BC, a revolution in thought disputed the two worldøs unequal relation, and a new model with two equal worlds emerged. At the same time, the Chinese developed technology to tame the rivers and the risk of floods, and the earthquakes and the risk of drought. Chinese people have historically suffered serious floods caused by the Yellow River bursting its banks, inundating their homes and fields. However, with the new model humans no longer were at the mercy of the gods. People could, through their own efforts rightly applied, interact with nature and influence the spirit world. Thus, the yin and yang theory emerged from human interaction with nature. This interaction is consequently the basis for understanding the traditional Chinese view of how harmony and balance are created. (Palmer 1997, viii, 1-5.)

The theory had two traditions: *Confucianism* finds that yin yang balance is achieved by human action. *Taoism* sees the human role as one of õactive in-action,ö which is not the same as no-action since absolute rest does not exist. Active in-action is in Chinese called õWu-wei.ö It means avoiding acting contrary to the way of the Tao. Hence, if people go with the flow of nature, their actions will be successful. If they go against the flow of nature, they create troubles. Thus, Taoists believe that things should be allowed to run their own course, and that all can be done by non-action. The tension between active Confucianism and inactive Taoism parallels the tension between yang and yin. Confucianism lacks humility and is too arrogant. Taoism lacks action and is too inert. The solution is a dynamic tension between humility and pride, non-action and action, going with the flow of nature and holding back the tide. This interaction forms the basis of the Chinese worldview. There are consequently two kinds of activity; activity done in harmony with nature; and activity going against the natural flow of things. Passivity is not available. Yin is the responsive, consolidating, and cooperative activity; yang is the aggressive, expanding, and competitive activity. Yin action relates to the

surroundings, representing ecological and social action; yang action focus on the self, representing individual and egocentric action. (Capra 1982, 19-20; Palmer 1997, 6-7, 10, 12.)

The yin yang forces are linked so that the welfare of one affects the welfare of the other. If the universal yin yang balance is upset, the Earth is distressed, resulting in natural disasters that negatively influence all. If peopleøs yin yang balance is disturbed, they will negatively influence the balance of their surroundings, causing harm to all parts of the universe. It is therefore important to maintain balance personally and cosmically. Thus, the Taoist saying, õYou are the universe and the universe is you,ö makes sense. Everything in the universe is interconnected, thus yin and yang are a whole. Yang relates to form and the process of taking form, while yin refers to matter/energy, which takes form and dissolve into formlessness. Matter/energy cannot exist without a form and there can be no form without matter/energy. When we experience our everyday world, mentally perceiving it to have an objective self-existing form, it is the phenomenal yang world we see. However, when we stop projecting our form upon the world, we become aware of yin and its formlessness. It is a change from observing forms to see that of which they are forms. Thus, yin and yang are diverse ways of experiencing and knowing the same world. Yang is based on rationality and reason, while yin is based on intuition and emotion. (Loy 1987, 42-44; Palmer 1997, 15, 18-19.)

Yin and yang are not good or bad; they just are, and as a consequence, the cosmos exists. This perception differs from the Western worldview, which sees dark yin as bad and light yang as good. However, it is a dualist and bias perception. It falsely presents a value choice between two opposites: men are superior to inferior women; white people are better than people of color; and humans are more important than nature. This dualist view has permitted white man to dominate women and people of color, and exploit nature, causing cosmic imbalance. To recreate balance, we must include opposites as equals, without any value assumption. In the holistic Chinese philosophy, opposites simply exist and reflect the eternal yin and yang fluctuation. Yin and yang are therefore not moral values. One is not better than the other. What is good is a dynamic balance between the two, while imbalance is bad. The aim is to balance the two forces, because any excess causes crises. We consequently cannot separate yin and yang. We cannot understand them independently. We cannot perceive day without night. Conclusively, everything in the universe is made up of yin and yang. Yang relates to that which is hot, dry, light, and active. It manifests in fire, sun, mountains, spring, summer, day, surface, gods, heaven, men, life, and south. Yin relates to that which is cold, dark, passive, and wet. It manifests in water, moon, rivers, floods, trees, autumn, winter, night, interior, spirits, earth, women, death, and north. Yang implies what is expansive, aggressive, and demanding. Yin corresponds to what is contractive, responsive, and conservative. (Capra 1982, 18; Loy 1987, 41; Palmer 1997, viii-xiii; Sizoo 2000, 46; Veith 2002, 17.)

People also have both yin and yang forces, but men are more yang, and women more yin. In Chinese belief, certain things are given at birth, but nothing else is fixed. Thus, our fate is in our own hands. If we take control of our lives by improving our personality and behavior, we can change who we are. Since not all would choose the same, it will generate differences. Hence, Chinese philosophy celebrates diversity. This is opposite to the Western obsession with making all alike. The West needs one model that explains all. When they meet diverse models, they ignore, suppress, ridicule, or eradicate the alternative. Yet, the drive for unity or oneness will lead to an even greater diversity, since the opposite force will reappear as a natural part of reality. (Palmer 1997, 20, 23.)

Due to differences among people, there is always the potential for disagreement leading to conflicts and violence. Instead of removing disagreements, we must try to create balance by holding powerful opposite forces in a dynamic tension. Such tension gives energy. If the energy is not used to find a balance, it can be destructive. Yin and yang is therefore about conflict resolution. It is unwise to pre-

tend that conflicts do not exist or they will go away. The rise and fall of powers is as natural as the rise and fall of summer. Trying to allow yang to suppress yin, is foolish. It leads to chaos and crises, while ultimately the yin will rise. It is equally destructive to be totally yin. To use or to be only one aspect of the twin forces is unhealthy. Denying the opposite is to store up troubles for the future. (Palmer 1997, 107.)

Conclusively, everything in reality is both yin and yang. To deny this is unwise and can lead to crises. Handling contradictions within, by seeing them as a natural part of who one is, is often a great relief. It helps us realize that these issues are not inconsistencies, only aspects of two opposing forces at work within all of life. Accepting this as being natural is a way out of the dualist either-or trap and the inner contradiction. (Palmer 1997, 108.)

The Feminine Yin and the Masculine Yang
Consequently, there are within each of us two forces: yin and yang. They are opposites and must be kept in balance. Yin relates to feminine and yang to masculine traits. They occur in varying proportions in both men and women. The outcome of the interaction between the yin and yang forces decides a person's character. Thus, a person is the sum total of his or her yin yang mixture. We were all born balanced, but we can adversely affect this balance. Macho, aggressive men have too much yang. Overly subservient women have too much yin. Often men loose the balance. Domineering attitudes mean that much of the yin within is being ignored. If women never argue or are overly distant, they may have lost most of their yang. If we allow either yin or yang to overstep a certain point, we become unbalanced. Although yin and yang result in differences of temperament between men and women, it does not follow that women can only do domestic work, while men must work outside the home. That is purely a patriarchal division of work. (Capra 1982, 19; Palmer 1997, 13-14; Veith 2000, 15.)

In the patriarchal culture the yin yang balance is missing. Instead there is a rigid, dualized order where men must be masculine and women feminine. It has given men the leading roles and most of society's privileges. Especially dangerous is the patriarchal bias relating women to emotions and passivity and men to rationality and activity. This distinction has placed men in charge of women, resulting in men becoming controlling, dominant, and even violent towards women. This was opposite in early Chinese society where male and female were equal. Yet, in 1500 BC, also China became a patriarchal society. This means that much of the relationship between men and women in traditional Chinese society was oppressive towards women. Thus, the harmony sought by men, was at the expense of women, who were kept to their submissive role. (Birkeland 1995, 56; Capra 1982, 19; Palmer 1997, 69, 71.)

Modern society, including the Chinese, is a masculine yang world. This unbalanced focus is causing crises. Thus, the revolt of the yin is inevitable. The peak of the yang phase has passed, and the rising of the yin is beginning. The outcome will make the world a different place for women, poor people, traditional people, people of color, and nature. Working towards a more equal world, we have a lot to learn from the concept of yin and yang. Its conflict solving model can teach us not to deny either the masculine yang or the feminine yin, but to see them as different and complementary parts of a unified, balanced whole. (Palmer 1997, 73.)

In the following some yin and yang manifestation are mentioned. The yang or masculine force is in each case mentioned first:

Yang-yin; parts-whole; culture-nature; human-nature; male-female; white-black; master-slave; civilized-primitive; mind-body; reason-emotion; rationality-intuition; mental-manual; theory-practice;

universal-particular; science-experience; science-spirituality; analytical-synthetic; linear-cyclical; reductionist-holistic; quantity-quality; subject-object; self-other; egoistic-relational; individual-social; production-reproduction; public-private; aggressive-responsive; domination-subordination; competition-cooperation; expansion-contraction; active-passive; strength-weakness; creative-receptive; joy-sadness; exploitation-conservation; self assertive-integrative; mechanistic-ecological; exterior-interior; beautiful-ugly; time-space; visible-invisible; square-round; dry-wet; hard-soft; large-small; heaven-earth; sun-moon; day-night; summer-winter; warm-cold; fire-water; growth-decay; life-death; form-matter/energy.

Living Harmonious Lives

There are consequently two types of consciousness, knowledge, and activity typical of a human being. The masculine yang is rational, while the feminine yin is intuitive. They are complementary functions of the human mind. *Rational, yang consciousness* is linear and analytic. It analyses, discriminates, measures, and categorizes. Rational yang *knowledge* is therefore fragmented. It relates to science and tends to generate individual, competitive, large-scale, mechanistic, and productive *activities*. It focuses on quantitative growth and expansion, according to a theoretical model with a reductionist scope. Being highly active and ego-centered, the activity may, in its extreme form and without a yin restraint, become aggressive, violent, exploitative, and domineering. *Intuitive, yin consciousness* is a direct, non-intellectual experience of reality in an expanded state of awareness. It is holistic, synthetic, and non-linear. Intuitive *wisdom* is associated with spirituality. It is the basis for qualitative, social, cooperative, ecological, and reproductive *activities*. It is done practically, at a small-scale, with a holistic scope. The activity may in its extreme form, and if unchecked by yang, become diminutive, and subordinate to other activities. Psychologist Robert Ornstein notes that the rational, quantitative, reductionist cognition is a function of the left hemisphere of the human brain. The right brain hemisphere is conversely the source of intuition, qualitative, and imaginative modes of cognition. Both modes are equally important, and both need to be applied in order for a human being to live a balanced life. We can consequently live harmonious lives, when we ensure a dynamic tension between both types of consciousness, knowledge, and activity. (Capra 1982, 21; Henderson 1978, 15-16, 329.)

The Crises of Modern Yang Culture

When we apply the yin yang framework, it becomes clear that the Western culture is founded on patriarchal ideology. It has glorified the masculine, yang forces, and subordinated the feminine, yin energies. It favors rational knowledge over intuitive wisdom; science over spirituality; competition over cooperation; men over women; individuals over society; and exploitation of natural resources over ecological conservation. This modern worldview is the root cause of our global crises. It has imbalance in thoughts and feelings, values and attitudes, encouraging unstable economic, social, and political structures. It has overvalued individual freedom, self-interest, and competition; ignoring cooperation, community needs, and social integration, which are relegated to the unpaid work of women. Janis Birkeland finds that the masculine yang features are not only glorified, they are presented as the essence of human beings. Conversely, the experience, wisdom, and needs of anything that relates to the feminine yin, manifested in women, indigenous people, and nature, are considered of little relevance in the public arena. Thus, modern culture has isolated the left-brain cognition from the right-brain one and made rationality overall superior, while devaluing all feminine concepts. Such dualized, one-sided view is reflected in the organization of modern culture where scientism and its quantitative methods dominate all social, political, and economic institutions. According to Chinese wisdom, neither the masculine nor the feminine force is intrinsically bad. What leads to crisis is trying to isolate one force from its opposite. This is exactly what the modern culture is doing, and it has caused the current crises. In Henderson's opinion, the imbalance will eventually kill humanity. (Birkeland 1995, 55-56; Capra 1982, 22; Henderson 1978, 15-17, 48, 400; Versfeld 1979, 52-53.)

This dualized, reductionist theory, which is the basis for the dominant yang values in modern society, was reinforced during the Scientific Revolution. It changed the early organic view that a society develops in cycles, into the idea that society evolves in a linear forward progression. The aim of progress is to go beyond practical social and natural limitations, towards unlimited, individual freedom and self-realization, ending in absolute certainty. Thus, by applying pure yang reason, and the rational scientific method, human beings can reach certain knowledge needed for progress. In Birkelandøs view, the yang premises manifest as follows: human nature is masculine. Thus, to become human, one must be free from dependency on inferior feminine energy, including women, society, and nature, and make them tools for the use of the superior yang person. Via liberty from practical constraints and use of rational self-realization, a person becomes a free, self-interested individual with universal knowledge. The more one can distance oneself from the feminine, the more successful the person will become. The yang world measures success according to quantity of wealth and power-over-others. Thus, the successful, independent, rational, and selfish individual will be wealthy and powerful. On the other hand, dependency, powerlessness, and poverty are inferior traits, which justify unequal treatment. Conclusively, the glorification of yang forces makes modern political leaders able to disregard and distance themselves from the suffering of women, poor people, and nature. (Birkeland 1995, 59.)

Society has been socialized into believing that yang forces are superior and few question this absolute truth. Such manipulation stops us from grasping the causes of our crises: when man is egoistic, independent, competitive, power-seeking, and aggressive, then control, coercion, and hierarchical structures become necessary to manage conflicts and maintain social order. This legitimizes militarism, capitalism, sexism, classism, colonialism, racism, and other deplorable õismsö of modern society. Conversely, caring, trusting, cooperative, and social yin relationships are seen as belonging to a sentimental, distant, and unrealistic past, thus they are dismissed. In this way, politicians remove power relations from social debate and implement dominant institutions. Their reason is obvious: when a group of greedy and maximizing individuals are living in a world with limited resources, then controlling structures are needed. It will otherwise end in õdog-eat-dogö survivalism. Militarism is therefore presented as being unavoidable, regardless of its obvious irrationality. The outcome of such a yang world is war and violence, poverty and inequality, environmental destruction, and human rights abuses ó global crises where nature and society cannot survive. (Birkeland 1995, 59.)

When the crises extends, global leaders try to improve the situation. Yet, applying their yang worldview means they fail. Every time economists compare the rights of modern man against those of indigenous peoples, the needs of the living against those of future generations, the interests of human economic profit-making against that of nature, the latter will always lose. It is impossible in a yang perspective to balance the needs of indigenous people, future generations, and nature against the interests of modern, living, economic man. Only when we balance yang with yin can we include the needs of society and nature and resolve the crises. Hence, dynamic tension between yin and yang forces would give as much value to care for society, responsibility for nature, and concern for future generations as it would to individual rights. The outcome is harmony. (Birkeland 1995, 69-70.)

The one-sided yang evolution has now reached an alarming stage, manifested in our serious global crises. Due to the extent and size of the crises, it has become a biological survival to reintegrate yin. Thus, we need to create balance by building a dynamic tension between yin and yang, leading to universal harmony. According to the Chinese philosophy, yang cannot go on forever without self-destruction. Thus, having reached its climax, yang must retreat in favor of yin. The evidence of yangøs retreat is seen in the increasing number of movements promoting alternatives to the current modern culture, its politics, economics, and technology. They demand peace, cooperation, equality,

and ecological sustainability. These movements insist on a revival of the yin forces and manifest what Capra calls for õthe turning point.ö As Henderson says, õThe old instrumental yang is now turning into a re-emergence of the subtler yin, intuitive consciousness, to restore the balance.ö The metaphor of turning the tide, restoring dynamic tension between yin and yang, recreating universal balance and harmony for society and nature, is what supporters of ecofeminism are advocating. (Birkeland 1995, 56; Capra 1982, 30; Henderson 1978, 15-17, 330, 384, 400.)

Conclusion - a synthesis

There is today a profound global concern for the natural environment, and intense opposition against the ever-increasing pollution from economic activities. There are anti-war and anti-nuclear movements wanting an end to the aggressive and violent yang behavior and its technology. There is strong global support for democracy and upholding of human rights. There is serious critique of governments and their increased integration into the corporate business world, while disregarding the concerns of their citizens. There are world-wide actions against the devastating suffering from hunger and poverty and the eternal exploitation of indigenous, poor, working-class, and middle-class people, and people of color by the political and economic elites. There is also a shift from material consumption to simplicity and from economic growth to spiritual growth. Conclusively, people world-wide want to recover the quality in their lives; they want freedom from patriarchal domination; and they want to live with adequate means in peaceful and healthy social and natural environments. These developments manifest the rise of yin awareness. Fritjof Capra calls them for õthe rising culture.ö They often operate separately, but since they have common aims, the movements will eventually combine and become a powerful force of social transformation. Some have already formed coalitions. The ancient link between women and nature has caused the ecology movement and the feminist movement to join forces. Women want to be free from views that have kept them subordinate to men, while ecologists want to establish a worldview that respects humanityøs integration in nature. Ecological feminism or ecofeminism is a result of this coalition. The ecofeminist perspective focuses on patriarchal domination of women and nature. Ecofeminists are, however, also critical of all other dualized concepts created by patriarchal domination. Their critique is therefore directed towards any yang domination of any yin forces. This includes the customary priority of reason over emotion; rationality over intuition; quantity over quality; humans over nature; science over experience; modern over tradition; white over black; master over slave; developed over undeveloped, and other discriminatory dualisms. Ecofeminism sees the reductionist, patriarchal worldview, or yang perception, as causing the global crises. Ecofeminism has, like yin, an alternative, ecological, integrative, and feminist way of perceiving reality. It is a view, which often is not clearly understood due to its holistic way of thinking. It is neither appreciated in a fragmented yang reality. Since ecofeminism challenges the patriarchal establishment and its monopoly on political and economic power, much has been done to critique, diminish, or simply to erase ecofeminism from existence. Nevertheless, this only shows how important ecofeminism is as a counter-culture. Ecofeminism is the necessary challenge that can bring creative and life supporting changes back to the mechanical, self-destructive, masculine world. It is the yin that can re-establish the lacking limitation of dominant yang; it is the balancing factor that can restore the needed dynamic tension between yin and yang. Conclusively, ecofeminism represents the turning point; our possibility to build global harmony and resolve the global crises. (Capra 1982, 30-31; Kotze and Kotze 1995, 25.)

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Observe: some figures used here have been changed and updated over time; new figures may therefore differ from those stated in this article. However, those stated were the figures at the time of writing this article.