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Global Justice Actions from Non-dual Consciousness
Dissertation Concept Paper (2/27/2012—post approval adjustment)
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20 Global Justice Actions from Non-dual Consciousness

21 I. Introduction: motivation

22 “How do the global integration and structural inequality look like from non-dual state of
23 consciousness?” This question emerged and has been with me ever since I first participated in a
24 satsang by a non-dual spiritual teacher. As I slowly came to understand, the core of non-duality
25 is the sense of oneness and the non-attachment to one’s identity, ideology, or even thoughts.
26 Various non-dual teachers (for instance, Adyashanti, 2005) suggest that when non-dual state of
27 consciousness is attained, one lives with an embodied sense of interconnection with all,
28 including the social evil and “the enemies.” They claim that persons of non-dual consciousness
29 may believe in certain ideology or hold particular opinions and thoughts about world events. But
30 they are unattached from them.

31 Having trained in critical worldview and exposed to global justice movements based on
32 dualism, non-duality was a hard concept to accept. It puzzled me even more when I heard non-
33 dual teachers say embodied sense of oneness and non-identification with one’s thoughts and
34 ideas do not mean to do nothing in face of social injustice. How do people of non-dual
35 consciousness conceive global injustice in present day of economic globalization and what
36 actions do they take for the creation of more just world? Over time, this personal question has
37 developed into my academic curiosity to study global justice actions from non-dual
38 consciousness.

39 In a way to understand global justice actions that come from non-dual consciousness, I
40 am proposing a study with the past participants of the Way of Nature programs. The Way of
41 Nature is a wilderness-based spiritual practice program developed and taught by John P. Milton,
42 an ecologist (Sacred Passage & The Way of Nature Fellowship). I believe studying with this

43 population is suitable to address my academic interest for two reasons. First, Milton's teaching is
44 fundamentally non-dual drawn on "the world's most profoundly enlightening, earth-connected
45 traditions" (Milton, 2002) that include Buddhism, Taoism, Dzogchen, Tantra, Vedanta, and
46 Native American traditions. His teaching advocates that the act for social justice is a natural
47 progression of one's spiritual development toward non-dual state of consciousness (Milton,
48 2006).

49 The second reason why studying with the past participants of the Way of Nature program
50 seems appropriate to explore my topic rests with the positions some of them hold in today's
51 globalized world. For instance, one of them, Darcy Winslow (retired Nike executive) was the
52 driving force behind Nike's global policy change toward sustainable practice. An internationally
53 recognized management scholar Peter Senge (with Otto Scharmer of Theory U, Joseph Jaworski,
54 and Betty Sue Flowers) and the leadership scholar Joseph Jaworski both wrote about their Way
55 of Nature experiences in their books, *Presence* (2004) and *Synchronicity* (1996, 1998)
56 respectively. In Otto Schamer's work (2009), as I became familiar with Milton's teaching, I
57 recognize obvious correlations between his theory and Milton's. When I questioned another past
58 participant, Brian Arthur, the former dean of economics department at Stanford University, how
59 he could teach mainstream economics that reproduce current economic inequality, he responded
60 that he saw his work was to help next generation of economists see possibility of alternative
61 economic systems (Arthur, 2011).

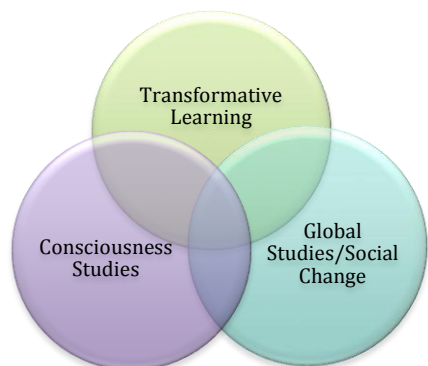
62 While each past participant may not identify himself or herself as a global justice activist,
63 I see their works in various fields as collective acts of global social change for more just world.
64 My perception was confirmed in my conversation with Milton in which he said his ultimate goal
65 is "global transformation" (Milton, 2010).

66 Above five paragraphs outline the reasons why I am motivated to conduct this study and
67 how the topic and the proposed study are tied. The inspiration to study with this group of people
68 came shortly after I myself participated in the Sacred Passage, the introductory Way of Nature
69 program. Having personal experience of the program and direct access to John P. Milton are
70 added advantages in operationalizing this study.

71

72 II. Academic fields and theorists that inform my work

73 The subsections of the following three academic areas seem to inform my study: 1)
74 Transformative Learning, 2) Global Studies/Global Social Justice, and 3) Consciousness Studies.
75 My topic is located in the area all three overlap. Transformative interconnection is the common
76 thread that ties all three subsections together.



77

78 The following is the tentative and beginning list of theorists I intend to review. For the beginning
79 bibliographic list, please refer to Appendix A.

- 80 1) Transformative Learning
- 81 - Edward O'Sullivan (Planetary Transformative Learning)
 - 82 - Marilyn Taylor (Planetary Transformative Learning)
 - 83 - John Dirkx (Psycho-Analytic Transformative Learning)
 - 84 - Laurent Parks Daloz (Psychodevelopmental Transformative Learning)
- 85
- 86 2) Global Studies/Global Social Justice
- 87 - William Carroll, Leslie Sklair, William Robinson (Transnational Capitalist Class
88 Formation Theory and transnational alternative movement theories)

- 89 - Arjuna Ardagh (global consciousness shift and social change)
- 90 - Peter Russell (global consciousness shift and social change)
- 91 - Paul Hawken (global consciousness shift and social change)
- 92 - Paul Ray & Sherry Ruth Anderson (Cultural Creatives)
- 93 - Charles Eisenstein (Sacred economics)

94

95 3) Consciousness Studies

- 96 - Joanna Macy (Deep Ecology)
- 97 - Thich Nhatt Hanh (Interbeing, Engaged Buddhism)
- 98 - Jean Houston (Conscious Creativity)
- 99 - Annabelle Nelson (Consciousness Studies)
- 100 - Allan Combs (Consciousness Studies)
- 101 - Donald Rothberg (Engaged Spirituality)

102

103 III. Research Question

104 “How do the past participants of the Way of Nature programs describe their experience of
105 negotiating their worldviews and putting them into global justice actions?”

106 This question implies that the focus of this study is on the manifestation of non-dual
107 consciousness/worldview in people's action for global justice; it is not the impact of the Way of
108 Nature experience. My assumption is that their negotiation of worldview may or may not have
109 been triggered by the Way of Nature experience, but rather it is an on-going transformative
110 learning process that was deepened through the experience.

111

112 IV. Methodology

113 Open-ended qualitative research

114

115 V. Participants and Research Setting

116 Number of participants: 12-15

117 Selecting criteria:

- 118 - Participated in one or more of the Way of Nature programs in last 10 years.

119 - Holds a position of global influence (to be determined... I am envisioning some
120 people who are in positions of making structural changes for global justice).

121 - Have demonstrated concrete actions for global justice (to be defined).

122 Research setting: (TBD)

123 - Individual interviews, preferably face-to-face, possibly remote via audio or video
124 technology.

125

141 Appendix A: A Beginning Bibliography

142 Transformative Learning

143 Dirkx, J. M. (2000). Transformative learning and the journey of individuation. *ERIC Digest*, no.
144 223. edo-ce-223.

145 Kovan, J. T. & Dirkx, J. M. (2003). "Being called awake": The role of transformative learning
146 in the lives of environmental activists. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 53-2, 99-118. Doi:
147 10.1177/0741713602238906.

148 Mezirow, J. & Associates. (2000). *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory*
149 *in progress*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. (This volume includes chapters by Laurent Park
150 Daloz, Robert Kegan, and Stephen D. Brookfield.)

151 O'Sullivan, E. V. & Taylor M. (Eds.). (2004). *Learning toward an ecological consciousness*.
152 New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

153 O'Sullivan, E. V., Morrell, A. & O'Connor, M. A. Eds. (2002). *Expanding the Boundaries of*
154 *Transformative Learning*. New York: Palgrave.

155

156 Global Studies/Global Social Justice

157 a) Transnational Capitalist Class Formation Theory

158 Carroll, W. (2010). *The making of a transnational capitalist class*. New York: Zed Books.

159 Sklair, L. (2001). *The transnational capitalist class*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

160 Robinson, W. (2004). *A theory of global capitalism: production, class, and state in a*
161 *transnational world*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

162 b) Shift of Consciousness as a means for global scale social change

163 Ardagh, A. (2005). *The translucent revolution: How people just like you are waking up and*

- 164 *changing the world*. Oakland, CA: New World Library.
- 165 Russell, P. (2008). *The global brain*. Edinburgh, Scotland, UK: Floris Books.
- 166 Hawken, P. (2008). *Blessed unrest: How the largest social movement in history is restoring*
- 167 *grace, justice, and beauty to the world*. New York: Penguin Books.
- 168 c) Concrete Social Change Practices
- 169 Eisenstein, C. (2011). *Sacred economics*. Berkeley, CA: Evolver Editions.
- 170 Ray, P. H., & Anderson, S. R. (2001). *The Cultural creatives: How 50 million people are*
- 171 *changing the world*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
- 172 Senge, P., Smith, B., Kruschwitz, N., Laur, J., & Schley, S. (2008, 2010). *The necessary*
- 173 *revolution: Working together to create a sustainable world*. New York: Broadway
- 174 Books.
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- 176 Consciousness Studies
- 177 Combs, A. (2009). *Consciousness explained better: Toward an integral understanding of the*
- 178 *multifaceted nature of consciousness*. St. Paul, MN: Paragon House.
- 179 Hanh, T. N. (1998). *Interbeing: Fourteen guidelines for engaged Buddhism* (3rd. Ed.). Berkeley,
- 180 CA: Parallax Press.
- 181 Hanh, T. N. (1993). *Love in action: Writings on nonviolent social change*. Berkeley, CA:
- 182 Parallax Press.
- 183 Houston, J. (1997). *The possible human: A course in enhancing your physical, mental, and*
- 184 *creative abilities* (2nd. Ed.). New York: Penguin Putman.
- 185 Macy, J. (2007). *World as lover, world as self*. Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.
- 186 Nelson, A. (1993). *Living the wheel: Working with emotion, terror, and bliss through imagery*.

- 187 York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser.
- 188 Rothberg, D. (2006). *The engaged spiritual life: A Buddhist approach to transforming ourselves*
189 *and the world*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- 190 Sivaraksa, S., Bhikkhu, S., & Rothberg, D. (1997). Structural violence and spirituality: Socially
191 engaged Buddhist perspectives. *ReVision* (20.2), pp.38-42.