

# Current Concerns

The international journal for independent thought, ethical standards, moral responsibility, and for the promotion and respect of public international law, human rights and humanitarian law

English Edition of Zeit-Fragen

## “The armed neutrality is the right system for Switzerland as a small state”

### Reflections on the situation of Switzerland

Interview with National Councillor Ruedi Lustenberger

In the following interview last year's National Council President Ruedi Lustenberger presents his reflections on the situation in Switzerland. They are about the significance of the 1 August for him and our country, especially at a time at which we face major challenges. He attaches particular importance to direct democracy and armed neutrality, which – together with other foundations of our state – are responsible for the successful model Switzerland.

*Current Concerns:* How important is the 1 August for you?

*National Councillor Ruedi Lustenberger:* For me, this federal holiday is the most important recurring national event of the Confederation. As far as I remember back to my earliest childhood, the 1 August has always meant a lot to me. In 2014 it was my wish as the acting President of the National Council to hold my 1 August-speech in Romanesque Switzerland. The commune of Disentis invited me spontaneously and it was a very nice event, there in the Surselva. Back to your question: the 1 August has always had a high priority in our family and commune. This can probably be explained by my parents' biography and the local history.

*Could you explain that a bit more in detail?*

I was born and grew up in the house at Romoos, where I still live today together with my wife and family. Romoos, a large mountain commune in the Entlebuch, covers an area of 37 km<sup>2</sup>, which is about the same size as the Canton of Basel-City, but it has only 700 inhabitants compared to 180,000 inhabitants living in the city. This is a nice example of how varied our country is. The Confederation needs both, Basel because of its economic and financial power, and Romoos as the recreation area, which the commune provides for the people from the metropolitan area. Probably it is this very unity in diversity that makes the



National Councillor Ruedi Lustenberger on his 1 August-speech at the Ballenberg. (picture thk)

success of Switzerland, which is why we are still doing relatively well today.

*To what extent have your parents influenced your view of the 1 August?*

My father graduated from the military training school in 1943 and then rendered active service. When I was a little boy, he told me many stories about that time. He had a good patriotic attitude and revered *Henri Guisan*, not only as a general, but also as a statesman. Influenced by his patriotic attitude, my father was convinced that the armed neutrality was absolutely the right system for Switzerland as a small state.

My mother grew up as a farmer's daughter in Hergiswil on Lake Lucerne. From their farm they had a beautiful view on Lake Lucerne. When I was a little boy she told me the Swiss history and myths about Lake Lucerne. From her I learned at pre-school time, what and where the *Rütli* is, where the *Tellsplatte* and *Hohle Gasse* are. In parallel to my father's image of Switzerland, I learned from her about the mythical side of Switzerland. And these myths of *Schiller's* “William Tell” fascinated me incredibly as a boy. As a 6-year-old I knew this story and could show, where the *Rütli* and the *Hohle Gasse* are on the map of Switzerland. The thought of the lovely, peaceful and united Swit-

zerland was instilled in me by my mother. My father's image of the Confederation, which is willing to defend its freedom as a neutral country, this defensibility, fitted excellently to my mother's view. The parental civic education at pre-school age has influenced me and accompanied me all through my whole life.

*How do you feel about it today?*

When after 24 years in politics, I analyze the situation at that cantonal and federal level, today I conclude the longer the more that my parents have given me a good image of our country. My father had a one-man carpenter's business in the mountain village of Romoos, and there I experienced a beautiful, free youth without any luxury, which indeed was quite normal at that time. Our modest, overall satisfaction is no longer prevalent in the society of today. It gave way to a kind of carefree arbitrariness and convenience. These are auspices that are worrying me.

*When we think about Switzerland, today, what can we say about the state of the country? Where are we today?*

In this regard, two statements are important, which have always been helpful in my political work. One comes from the French philosopher *Claude Levi-Strauss*, who once is said to have remarked: “A nation which does not know where it comes from, does not know where to go.” It is a kind of retrospective for the future. The other quote is from the former Councillor of States *Franz Muheim*, a thoroughly liberal, conservative mind from the Canton of Uri. In his book “Die Schweiz, Aufstieg oder Niedergang” (Switzerland, rise or decline), he wrote, “In all cases, it would be unrealistic to try to escape the realities of the great world, whatever their nature may be.” *Levi-Strauss* and *Franz Muheim* did not say the same. *Muheim* has clarified *Levi-Strauss*

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**“The armed neutrality ...”**

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in some respect. When I put together both statements, this means that we are well advised if we reflect our origins and this way become aware of the quality and the ideals of our own national history. Then we also know where to go. This also expresses in a sense, where we should not go.

*What is the significance of these ideas for your political work?*

In my political work I have followed both guidelines, although it was not always easy. Especially with respect to the point where the nation Switzerland should go and where it should not go. At the moment we have indeed a desirable debate about our past. One can argue about the details of the formation of the Confederation. The fact that the related myths have actually impressed the memory of the Swiss population actually only after 1848, when the loose confederation of states became a state, leads to the conclusion that one ironically may leave the intellectual dispute about jota and spot to the scribes. Much more important is the national message that every country has its heroes. If they are more than 800 years old, then the dispute is more a *L'art pour l'art* discussion about periods and commas. *Peter Maurer*, the president of the ICRC, has put it in a nutshell during an interview when he said, “Myths unfold a tremendous history-shaping effect. They are a reality and create identity.” In today’s mindset dominated by globalisation, man reaches out for something that creates identity for the country that he loves and in which he lives. And so it would be unwise to talk away myths because this would do the country and its people a disservice.

*What are difficulties that we face in our country and which path should we go given our historical experience?*

Well, I would like to return to *Claude Levi-Strauss* and *Franz Muheim*. The really big challenges that Switzerland faces lie beyond our borders.

Domestically, we have our country quite well on course, although we are constantly criticising ourselves. As compared to international standards, we are doing quite well. The biggest domestic challenge is that we must renew our inter-generation contract and that we must become increasingly aware again, what a genuine inter-generational contract is. That will not be brought about without painful cuts on both sides. The second problem is our domestic security policy, which is a guarantee for our armed neutrality. Today, it is traded under its state-political value. We would do well to give back our army the status it had 30, 40 years ago. Our children and descendants will one day be grateful for doing so.

*What about foreign policy?*

In foreign policy the problems are greater. We cannot escape the effects of modern migration. There are very many migrants, but only a small part of them can claim asylum status in the original sense, according to the asylum concept of World War II. The current global migration has become economically motivated to a major part.

*What does this mean for the individual, but also for the country at which the refugees are now arriving?*

One cannot be angry with individuals who migrated and are now looking for a better home or a more pleasant location in the world than they have at home. The question is, how does Switzerland handle this problem, and how do we interpret the stipulated term “asylum”. Only in a few individual cases can one compare asylum seekers who come to us from Africa today, to Jewish refugees, who fled the Nazi regime and stood at our borders. Many politicians refuse to admit that this situation is different, against their own better judgment, because in their view the situation must correspond with the social gospel that has been announced for more than half a century. From a national political view point there is another problem, namely that the Swiss state of law isn’t capable – or not willing – of enforcing its laws when it comes to the many thousands of undocumented migrants. In addition, the treaties of “Schengen” and “Dublin” prove to be blue-sky papers, the longer the more. Schengen is worth as much as its outer borders were actually protected, and Dublin as much as the states actually fulfilled their obligation to re-admit refugees.

*In foreign policy we are facing further challenges. The relationship with the EU, the euro crisis, which also afflict our economy badly. How can Switzerland go its own way while observing independence and sovereignty?*

The recent past has taught us clearly that we have to defend and maintain our own currency. Basically we are not suffering from the Swiss franc’s strength but from the euro’s weakness. The citizen of course does not realise any difference whether we now call it strength of the franc or weakness of the euro, when regarding the final effect, it is exactly the same. Considered from a political point of view, from the standpoint of national banks and the economies it is clearly a euro weakness. That is not God-given, but homemade. The construct “euro” was highly controversial even before its introduction. Today there is evidence that *Mitterand* had urged Germany to adopt the euro. The deal was that in turn, *Mitterand* did not oppose the German reunification. We must acknowl-

edge frankly, that this was a master stroke that *Kohl* and his predecessors accomplished, at that time. It is questionable whether *Mitterand* would claim paternity for the euro today with the same fervour. His “baby” has definitely not advanced as well as *Kohl*’s German reunification.

*If we stick to your image – what has gone wrong with the “education” of the euro?*

*Mitterand* and his Socialist fellow Europeans did neglect a simple national economic doctrine: They thought they would be able to unite a dozen different kinds of economic systems with different economic capacities and different political mechanisms under a single currency, without providing clear guidelines for the access criteria. Let alone the fact that in case of non-compliance reasonable sanctions were stipulated and then applied.

There are three key points, which they paid too little attention to:

1. The access criteria that were handled completely differently.
2. The necessary standardisation. If you have one currency, there must also be compatible economic systems throughout the currency area.
3. The worst mistake was that they could not sanction, they let the whole thing go as it liked and ultimately run to ruin, that way. I would neither attribute *Mitterand* nor his colleagues so much national economic naivety. In fact, they neglected important issues only to follow a higher premise, and that was: unity, unity, centralism.

This might be explainable taking one aspect into account, then and today: It was and is the geopolitical or geo-strategic situation in which specifically Greece, but probably also Spain or Portugal are, today. One can say that the euro fathers had visions, and they put their visions above the economic laws. This may be an apology today, but ultimately I come to the conclusion anyway that it was an error of judgment and a wrong strategic decision. Today, those nations are happy which are not held hostage by the euro.

*What does all that mean for our country?*

If you look at the constellation in more detail, the Confederation nevertheless finds itself in a coupling and dependence in two respects that one must not underestimate. First, we are members of the IMF in which we participate with 1.4 per cent of the capital and actions. With every billion that Greece or any other country is rewarded by the IMF and is not able to repay, the *Swiss National Bank* is in fact involved with 14 million francs, after all. Thus Swiss national wealth is getting lost. That is the one

# “Switzerland – a rather unique model of success”

by Thomas Kaiser

At first glance the title of the subsequently reviewed book “Die Schrumpfschweiz (Switzerland in shrinkage)” does not bode well. Will a further dismantling of Switzerland take place here on more than 100



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pages, delivered in the style of, for example, *Thomas Maissen*, whose “historical work” is surely designed solely to dismantle Switzerland as a sovereign, directly democratic nation state, and presumably so with the aim of making Switzerland EU-compatible? Or is it an open criticism of ominous developments in and around our country, a process described by the ancestors of Switzerland as the “malice of the time”?

*Simon Geissbühler*’s book is more and it is also worth reading. The author tries to contrast current trends in Switzerland with fundamental values of our state. He points to where a cutback in the democratic structure is discernible and shows what we can do to oppose this trend. “Der Schweizer Sonderfall – im grossen und ganzen ein ziemlich einzigartiges Erfolgsmodell – erodiert immer mehr. Das ist zum Teil auf externen Druck zurückzuführen, vor allem haben wir Schweizerinnen und Schweizer die negativen Trends selbst zu verantworten (Switzerland – on the whole a rather unique model of success is progressively eroding. This is partly due to external pressure, but principally we, the Swiss citizens, are responsible for the negative trends).” (p. 11) At the beginning of the book negative developments

which result in the breakdown of democracy and a loss of freedom are first discussed. They will lead to a gradual decline of our state if we continue on this path unchecked. “Die Freiheit wird weiter reduziert werden, und die ‘Entmündigung des Einzelnen durch Übertragung von immer mehr Aufgaben an die anonyme öffentliche Hand und entfernte Supra-Behörden’ wird weitergehen. Der Wohlstand wird schrumpfen. Bei Bildung und Innovation wird die Schweiz an Boden verlieren (Freedom will be further reduced, and ‘by means of transferring more and more tasks to anonymous administrative bodies and far off supra authorities individuals will continue to be ever more incapacitated.’ Our wealth will shrink. Switzerland will lose ground in the fields of education and innovation).” (p. 22) Geissbühler gives a voice to various apologists of “the downfall”, who are busy undermining the political and social system of Switzerland and predict its demise. The reasons they give for this are to some extent noteworthy, to some extent, however – which means, they attack the substance of our state – our direct democracy, our concordance system and our federalism,

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thing, the second is even more crucial. The more problematic the euro-conglomerate is represented in the international monetary system and the weaker the euro is, the stronger becomes the Swiss franc. We have been experiencing the impact of this for some time, now. That is why we are de facto also affected, although we are not members of the euro zone.

*What would the path for Switzerland be?* I would like to mention Muheim again. Even if we liked to, we cannot escape the reality of the big wide world. Nevertheless, we must always strive to go our separate, sovereign way. The direct-democratic instruments of referendum and initiative are good instruments to avoid hasty decisions. In parallel, the two institutionalised values of federalism and subsidiarity must not be degraded but strengthened. Especially the subsidiarity – the step-by-step involvement in responsibility – is a good response to a pervasive policy of arbitrariness, indifference and convenience.

*What are the effects of this arbitrariness and convenience policy?*

Many people in Switzerland are either interested in Switzerland’s policies too lit-

tle or not at all; they probably do not really care what happens to the euro and the franc. We have already become accustomed to the convenience of a single currency in many parts of Europe, to the amenities of the open borders and the international, globalised tourism. People take a critical look at it far too little, if at all. We are far too little aware that a comfortable attitude also has its downside. This is: the threat to internal security. Something I have not only noticed in society, but also in politics today, is a pervasive arbitrariness. People are infected by arguments in certain situations which may apply in any current, succinct matter, but then they distance themselves from their core values, their private profile, their own origins. And here I come back to Levi-Strauss, who says: “A nation which does not know where it comes from, does not know where to go.” We should use the anniversary year 2015 in order to remind ourselves of this fact. In the coming years, we are well advised to become increasingly aware of our origin, where we come from. Then we also know better where to go and where definitely not.

*Mr National Councillor Lustenberger, thank you very much for the interview.* •

(Interview Thomas Kaiser)

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are blamed for being the originators of this negative development. In other words, everything that distinguishes Switzerland from other states, namely its freedom due to the direct popular participation in the policy-making process, is accused of being responsible for Switzerland’s creeping decline.

**“No absolutist and centralist tradition”**

In the following chapters, Simon Geissbühler, using a variety of sources, sheds the right light on the Swiss political system by refuting all the individual points of criticism in an objective and well-founded manner. First, he justifies the crucial importance of our concordance system on historical grounds: “Die Konkordanz ist historisch bedingt. Ein fragiles Staatsgebilde, das aus verschiedenen Sprachen, Konfessionen, politischen Sensibilitäten und historischen Erfahrungen besteht, muss den Ausgleich und den Kompromiss suchen, sonst zerbricht es (The reasons for our concordance system are historical. A fragile state structure which consists of different languages, religions, political sensitivities and historical experiences must seek balance and compromise, or else it will break up).” (p. 41) The importance of the concordance system is also social, “die uns immer wieder daran erinnert, dass es so etwas wie ein Gemeinwohl gibt [...] (which reminds us time and again that there is such a thing as the common weal [...])” (p. 43) In addition to concordance, direct democracy is also a landmark belonging to Switzerland. Geissbühler writes already in the foreword – and puts things in a clear and concise way: “Sie [die Schweiz] hatte keine absolutistische und zentralistische Tradition und entwickelte sich nicht von oben, sondern von unten. (Switzerland had no absolutist and centralist tradition and evolved not from above but from below.) (p. 13) This historically developed exceptional feature is being negated mainly by EU supporters or internationalists. Its national political significance might also not be recognized. If it remains true to itself, Switzerland will never allow itself to be integrated into a centralised system imposed from top down, as it is typical of the EU to a high degree. Thus Geissbühler regards the significance of direct democracy not only in its political immediacy, but also as a factor of political stability. “Die direkte Demokratie hat zu bemerkenswerter politischer Stabilität geführt, erhöht die Legitimität des politischen Systems und stärkt das Vertrauen der Bürgerinnen und Bürger im politischen Prozess (Direct democracy has led to a remarkable political stability. It increases the legitimacy of

the political system and strengthens the confidence of citizens in the political process.”) (p. 44) He sees a unifying effect in direct democracy as well as in the principle of concordance: “Zudem ist die direkte Demokratie ein wichtiges Element des nationalen Zusammenhalts (Furthermore direct democracy is an important element of national cohesion)”. Geissbühler also does away with some myths that are invoked time and again, for example the myth that direct democracy and thus the participation of the people in political issues would constitute a mental overload and that therefore such serious decisions should rather fall to politicians. The argument that the people are too stupid for direct democracy ultimately means that the people are too stupid for democracy. “Die Vorstellung, es sei schwieriger, einen konkreten Sachverhalt mit Ja oder Nein zu beantworten als unter Dutzenden und Hunderten von Kandidaten in einer Wahl denjenigen oder diejenige zu finden, der oder die am nächsten an den eigenen Präferenzen liegt, ist absurd (The notion that it is more difficult to say yes or no to a specific issue than to find, among tens and hundreds of candidates that one person whose preferences are nearest to ones own, is absurd).” (p. 47)

**“Federalism is still a defining, indeed an identity-forming element today”**

Federalism is another important pillar of the Swiss political system. It also plays an important role in connecting people and in underpinning the state. “Der Föderalismus ist bis heute ein prägendes, ja identitätsstiftendes Element der Schweiz (Federalism is still a defining, indeed an identity-forming, element of Switzerland).” (p. 54)

But it also promotes the “Wettbewerb zwischen den Kantonen und Gemeinden und [führt] so zu innovativen Lösungen (It promotes competition between the cantons and communes and so [leads] to innovative solutions).” (p. 54) Federalism also helps “die Steuern niedrig zu halten [...] und so verhindert der Föderalismus die Machtkonzentration (to keep taxes low [...] and in this way federalism prevents the concentration of power)”. (p. 54)

A democratic tradition like the one Switzerland can boast is shared by few European states. Very few countries in Europe can compete here, and they can certainly not do so when it comes to the organisation of Swiss democracy. “Nicht alle europäischen Staaten haben eine so lange demokratische Tradition wie die Schweiz. Das in Europa wieder der Ruf nach einem starken Leader aufkommt und ernsthaft behauptet wird, autoritäre Systeme hätten erhebliche Vorteile, ist beklemmend (Not all European countries have as long a democratic tradition as Switzerland. It is oppressive that in Europe you hear the call for a strong lead-

er time and again and it is seriously alleged that authoritarian systems supposedly have significant benefits).” (p. 63)

**“The only direct democratic state on our planet”**

In addition to the institutions and Switzerland’s three political levels with far-reaching political responsibilities and competencies, is the “politische Kultur ein wesentlicher Bestandteil der Schweizer Identität (political culture is an integral part of Swiss identity)”. (p. 55) The historical roots and their development are crucial to the formation of this identity. The involvement of the population in the political decision process was already to be found in medieval times, even if to a certainly still limited extent. This made it obviously easier for Switzerland to integrate the ideas of the Enlightenment in its political philosophy, so that Switzerland could evolve to what it is today. “Die Schweiz war in Europa das einzige Land, in dem in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts der ‘Liberalismus, der Föderalismus, die Demokratiebewegung und die Parlamentarisierung erfolgreich waren (Switzerland was the only country in Europe where in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century ‘liberalism, federalism, the democracy movement and the parliamentary system were successful’).” (p. 56) In addition, after the establishment of the federal state there were the right of initiative and referendum at federal level so that one can justifiably say that Switzerland is the only direct democratic state on our planet, and it generally works well. In several statistics commissioned by the OECD Switzerland holds a leading position. Although a certain scepticism is always appropriate when dealing with OECD surveys and research, at least some conclusions can be drawn from the comparison between countries.

**“Social solidarity is predominant in Switzerland”**

Geissbühler rejects the argument that direct democracy was sluggish and that it delayed the innovation process in Switzerland by arguing that not even 10 per cent of the laws passed by Parliament are submitted to the people’s vote in a referendum. Even though Switzerland is a liberal state and political liberalism has played an important role in its political and economic development, social solidarity predominates in Switzerland. By international standards, “vertreten die Schweizerinnen und Schweizer [...] also keineswegs (wirtschafts-) liberale Positionen (the Swiss [...] by no means champion (economic) liberal positions).” (p. 58) Geissbühler himself is not hostile to liberalism and sees it as a driving force for political and economic success. Other traits that are of central importance

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# The US will lose out to the axis Moscow-Beijing

Interview with Folker Hellmeyer\*, chief analyst at Bremer Landesbank

*Folker Hellmeyer, chief economist at Bremer Landesbank, has no doubts about the future of the global economic system: The axis Moscow-Beijing will prevail against the old hegemon USA. Both countries are looking for a long-term strategy and not for short-term profit. Because of their blind obedience, the EU could be among the losers. The sanctions have already damaged Germany as well as the other EU countries enormously.*

*“Deutsche Wirtschaftsnachrichten”: The EU countries report new losses due to the sanctions imposed against Russia. In your estimation, what damage have the sanctions already caused?*

*Folker Hellmeyer:* The damage is much more comprehensive than the statistics show. Let's start with the economy and the accumulated damages so far. The decline in German exports [to Russia] in 2014 by 18% or in the first two months in 2015 by 34% year on year recorded accounts only for the primary segment. There are secondary effects. The economy in European countries with strong business in Russia, among them also Finland and Austria, suffer gravely. Subsequently these countries order less in Germany. Even more European multinationals are considering building production facilities at the highest efficiency level in Russia to circumvent

the sanctions. Thus we lose potential capital stock here, which is the basis of our prosperity. Russia wins this capital stock.

*It's not yet clear that the sanctions will end in the foreseeable future. How much can the bill become for the German export industry?*

Germany and the EU have disposed of their economic reliability towards Russia. The relationship of trust has been broken by Germany and the EU. It will take several years to rebuild the confidence. Plant construction for German and European exports takes up to five years between signature and delivery. For this reason, *Siemens* has been kicked out of a great project. *Alstom* lost the contract for the railway line Moscow-Beijing. Ergo the potential for damage is much more

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\* Folker Hellmeyer (born 1961) is chief analyst at Bremer Landesbank effective April 2002. Previously Hellmeyer worked among others for the German Bank in Hamburg and London as a senior dealer and chief analyst of Landesbank Hessen-Thüringen. As a commentator of events in international financial markets he is regularly represented in the media.

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for the Swiss political system are discussed: the militia system, the militia army, the humanitarian tradition, etc. Geissbühler states that the legendary will of the Swiss to defend themselves has diminished. Only two thirds of the population would defend the country in case of war. This is the result of a public mood that is also illustrated by the fact that the army “in den letzten Jahren systematisch ausgehöhlt worden” ist. (the army has been systematically eroded in recent years.) (p. 60) Yet we do have our militia system and our defence preparedness, and even though the latter applies to only be true for only two-thirds of the population, this percentage is ever so much higher than that of German (43.4%) or Italian (37.4%) readiness for defence. Geissbühler sees some danger in the constant upgrading of social welfare. “Der Schweizer (Sozial-)Staat wurde in den letzten Jahrzehnten keineswegs ab-, sondern kontinuierlich ausgebaut (The Swiss (welfare) state has not at all been cut back in recent decades but instead it has been continuously expanded).” (p. 104) If carried too far, this can drive individuals to passivity and loss of autonomy. For him it is a balancing act between solidarity and individual responsibility. “Während die Solidarität mit den Mitmenschen und ein gewisser Schutz unbestrittenermassen Werte beziehungsweise Ziele jeder Gesellschaft sein müssen, sind auch Solidarität und sozialer Schutz nicht grenzenlos (While the solidarity with others and a certain degree of protection must remain undisputed values or goals of any society, even solidarity and social protection are not without their limits).” (p. 76) In addition to

the expansion of the welfare state, he also sees an increasing threat to the freedom of the individual in increasing state interference in private lives and in a rising regulation of private and public life.

### “More long-term orientation and more strategy in political thought and action”

Geissbühler recognises the “reformitis” that has been introduced into various areas of public life as a threat to the sovereignty of the state and to direct democracy. This can be seen particularly well in the school sector, an area in which for years now reform after reform has not improved the quality of teaching and the skills of school leavers; indeed, the opposite is the case. “Freie Arbeit und offener Unterricht haben jedenfalls kaum einen positiven Effekt auf den Lernerfolg. Es gibt dagegen verschiedene neuere Studien, die zum Ergebnis kommen, dass Frontalunterricht besser ist als unstrukturierter, freier Unterricht (At all events, individual instruction and open learning have scarcely any positive effect on learning success. There are, however, several recent studies that come to the conclusion that teacher-centred learning is better than unstructured, free lessons).” (p. 98) Dangers are also lurking in the digitisation of teaching, as the addictive potential of the so-called “social media” is immense. Very few pupils or students can withstand using their smart phone during class. Here we are facing a development that has very little to do with education and training. “Was heute mehr denn je fehlt, ist klassische Bildung. Gefragt wäre nicht der Sprint hinter dem Zeitgeist her, sondern echte Bildung, die Zeit und Geduld braucht, die Raum für die Entfaltung der Talente der Kinder lässt und die nicht einem kurzfristigen und illusorischen

Investitionsdenken hinterherhechelt (What is missing more than ever today is a classical education. Not the run after the “Zeitgeist” is needed but real education that takes time and patience, that leaves scope for the development of the children’s talents and that does not pant after short-term and illusory investment planning).” (p. 102)

Despite all hardships, or to use the words of the Helvetic forefathers, despite all the “malice of the time” Geissbühler sees reason for neither pessimism nor fatalism. In his opinion the negative developments in our country are self-inflicted and therefore correctable. “Diese Malaise begründet sich in den oben skizzierten negativen Trends, denen sich die Schweiz ausgesetzt sieht, die wir weitgehend selber verschuldet haben und gegen die wir zumindest bis jetzt zu wenig bis nichts unternehmen (This malaise is due to the negative trends outlined above, to which Switzerland is exposed, for which we are largely responsible ourselves and about which we have done little or nothing at least up to now).” (p. 103)

It is Switzerland exactly, with its citizens’ rights like the referendum and the initiative, that opens up opportunities to put a stop to undesirable developments and to think twice, rather than just follow any international standards that has nothing at all to do with our country, our (political) culture and our way of living together. That is why according to Geissbühler “wieder mehr Langfristigkeit und mehr Strategie im politischen Denken und Handeln (again more long-term orientation and more strategy in political thought and action)” is needed.

Anyone who wants to retain Switzerland’s characteristic traits and its excellent state system will find convincing support in Simon Geissbühler’s book. •

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massive than the current figures reveal, not only for Germany, but also for the EU. The future damage cannot be quantified precisely, however, it is definitely significant.

Moreover, the Beijing-Moscow axis within the framework of the *Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)* and the BRICS countries is planning the largest growth project in modern history, namely the development of the infrastructure of Eurasia from Moscow to Vladivostok, further to South China and India. It remains to be seen to what extent the sanctions policy of the EU and Germany in these mega projects, on the part of the emerging countries, will be interpreted as affront not only to Russia.

Obviously, some of the participants of European policy are lacking any capacity of abstraction regarding the full scope of their actions on our behalf.

*In the end, who will pay for the damage?*

The measurable damage is the loss of growth, i.e. lost wages, lost contributions to the social system and lost tax revenue. This applies to the previous 12 months, and it applies to the coming years. Thus, the people in Germany and the EU pay the price through lost prosperity and stability increase. The non-measurable damage lies in an elevated geopolitical risk situation for the people in the EU.

*If one realistically considers the situation in Ukraine: The Kiev government seems mainly to be interested in keeping the situation hot in order to continue receiving new loans. Is there no western politician who is willing to tell them outright?*

This is indeed annoying. People who are focused not only on "Western quality media", are surprised that the media are concealing Kiev's aggression and their governments discriminatory laws, which are grossly disproportionate – compared to the claim of Western values and democracy. I think it might be Mr *Steinmeier's* credit, that he speaks plain text behind closed doors. The question is whether the behaviour across the Atlantic supports Mr. *Steinmeier*. In this regard I am referring to the submissions made by *Victoria Nuland*, the US Assistant State Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs. The fact is, that with the coup in Ukraine, the oligarchy and its friendly tendency towards Moscow was replaced by an oligarchy now devoted to the United States. It's geopolitics, which benefits third forces, but definitely not Germany, not the EU, not Russia and not the Ukraine.

*Finance Minister Natalie Jaresko is a former employee of the US State Department, who received Ukrainian citizenship only one day before her inauguration. Is the*

*former investment banker simply invincibly good or is there a master plan behind her?* I do not know her personally. Much has been written about her. This results in a picture that does not allow the term "invincibly good". The fact that important posts in the Ukrainian administration were occupied by external forces with extreme proximity to the United States and their institutions, underscores the geopolitical character of the coup. Ergo, the term master plan is at least defensible.

An important figure of recent German policy who is no longer in office, said in a bilateral meeting that the picture is best described by speaking of US geopolitics on the chessboard of the Ukraine with the blood of Ukrainian "farmers" via the gang of Moscow against the centre of power in Beijing. This is a perspective which I share, indeed.

The fact is that the emerging countries emancipate themselves from US hegemony. This has become evident in the foundations of competitive institutions to the World Bank (*AIB*) and the IMF (*New Development Bank*) by the axis of the emerging countries. This displeases the still prevailing hegemon. The current international crises of Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Egypt and the Ukraine are an expression of this clearly identifiable power confrontation going on in the background. Didn't we want to establish democracy and freedom everywhere? Let's take a look at the success ...

*Several EU countries, such as Italy, Austria or Hungary grumble increasingly audibly about the sanctions. In Germany, however, there is an almost eerie silence. Why is that?*

The German citizen is very satisfied. Things are still going well despite the loss of business: the next holiday is just around the corner. The media are dealing, in politically correct terms, tamely towards the US geopolitics, towards our policy as well. The smoothing out of this complex issue by politics and media is working.

*What are the sanctions' consequences on the German-Russian relations?*

At the level of politics that relationship has collapsed. Yet the dialogue continues from both sides. Basically, that's positive. The Moscow's disappointment about the German policy is massive. In Moscow there is a very realistic assessment of Germany's and Europe's ability to formulate and live a policy independent of US interests. In the area of business things are better. Because the different levels of conversation are used. Here they are preparing for day X after the sanctions. A quick revival of the pre-crisis levels is unlikely. Russia is a bear. Now new supply routes are established and they will not be given up after the sanctions policy has ended. Arbitrariness may be "en vogue" in the

West, but not in Moscow. With every day that passes in the sanctions policy, we are consuming our common future.

*What are the consequences of the sanctions for the economies of the EU?*

We are missing export growth, we are missing a peace dividend. We are reforming the weak countries of the euro zone and are re-establishing their international competitiveness under grave sacrifices just to deprive them of the markets, afterwards. Does the left hand of German and EU politics really know what the right hand is doing?

*What are the risks for European banks?*

These risks are manageable, for the greater part. The monitoring that is and has been undertaken in this regard by the supervising authority is effective and does not allow any sustainable accidents.

*Why do the big associations like the Federation of German Industries BDI knuckle under? One would think, their raison d'être is to represent the interests of the industry?*

There are considerable differences between public statements of the associations and their internal situation and mood. In the field of business there is considerable discontent. However, I am disappointed with regard to the associations' public statements. They act politically correct. Political correctness is a restricted correctness and thus incorrect by definition. For an export-oriented economy the subject of sanctions policy is of striking and for some companies even of existential significance. Fantasising here on the primacy of politics means a partial denial of responsibility with regard to the tasks of these associations.

*The contempt of the US government in dealing with the Europeans is remarkable, indeed – catch-words NSA and "Fuck the EU". Are European politicians lacking self-respect or are they just cowards?*

Those, who are true democrats, who take seriously their duties as politicians for the res publica, who respect the right for self-determination, have to draw conclusions from these statements. Those who do not, have deficiencies with regard to the above mentioned canon of values. I'm the wrong person to ask about these issues. You must submit these questions to our political leaders.

*Inverse proportionate to the attitude of bowing down before Washington is an attitude of aggressiveness inside: At first dissenters were defamed as "Putin understanders", most recently the one who does not howl with the wolves is called a "Putin-Troll". Does the Cold War already claim the negation of part of our democratic freedoms?*

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# We need more advocates for justice and humanity

by Karl Müller

Next to me on the train there is a young lady sitting, she is about 40 years old. During our conversation it turns out that she is a Kurd. Already for many years she has been living in Germany and is married to a Serb. I ask her what she thinks about the latest developments of the Turkish government's relation with the Kurds. "It's a tragedy," she says. Not indignantly, rather helplessly. But that was not amazing, she continues; primarily because of the numerous natural resources in the regions where the Kurds live, the Turkish government would never allow a separate Kurdish state.

The existing influential powers of the world were not interested in the fate of the Kurds, she says. These powers could not make profits on the part of the Kurds. She and her husband belonged to a minority that has been pilloried and ignored. Her husband came from the Serbian part of the country of Croatia. During the holidays they would probably go there again to visit their family. There it still looked like it used to look in the time immediately after the

war in the early nineties. The Croatian central government did not make any reconstruction efforts, she says. Almost only old people lived there. The younger ones are all leaving. The thought crosses my mind that this is also a kind of expulsion as well. After all, Croatia is a member of the EU "community of values"!

## Cui bono IS?

On 27 July, one day after the Turkish president had revoked the peace deal with the country's PKK once more, there was talk of their being a terrorist organisation and *Walter Stütze*, a former state secretary of the German Ministry of Defense expressed his view on radio *Deutschlandfunk*. The Turkish government has asked for a meeting of the NATO Council. It regards itself as under attack and seeks the support of NATO. A few days earlier there had indeed been an attack in Turkey. The IS was referred to as perpetrator. Turkey bombed positions of the IS ... but also of the Kurds ... even though in northern Syria they had



Albert Schweitzer. (picture keystone)

just been fighting and were still fighting the IS. Now the Turkish government wanted to take control of a 50-kilometre wide strip in northern Syria. There was absolutely no in-

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## "The US will lose out ..."

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In late 2007, I wrote in the preface of my book "Endlich Klartext": "First, free markets die, then democracy dies!" In this book the US hegemonic system was analysed. The current geopolitical conflicts are abused for the demolition of democratic liberties at home. The pace is increasing. I am more worried than ever. Currently I am dealing with the term "terror of the mainstream." We pretend to be tolerant and pluralistic. However, who takes views differing from the mainstream in politically sensitive issues is exposed to the risk of isolation or defamation. These developments are an absolute contradiction to the claim of democracy and freedom. Yes, the current conflicts undermine democracy.

*In the USA – different from Germany – there is a very lively debate on the hegemonic behaviour of the government – right across the political spectrum. Why not in Germany?*

That's correct, only that debate in the USA you are referring to has no political consequences regarding the situation in parliament. In our country the debate is less pronounced, but the parliament is a little more colourful, even though hampered in terms of efficient opposition by the grand coalition. In the end many Germans may confuse prosperity and freedom of movement with liberty?

*How will this conflict go on? Is it conceivable that Americans and Russians will get*

*together again – for instance because of the IS or Syria – and the Europeans will be running after the two superpowers and pay the bill in the end?*

For me the conflict has already been decided. The axis Moscow-Beijing-BRICS is winning. They are fed up with the West. In 1990 these countries had a share of 25% of the global economic output. Today they have 56% of the global economic output and represent 85% of the world population. They control approximately 70% of the world currency reserves. They have an average annual economic growth of 4 to 5%. As the USA was not willing to share international power (for example votes in IMF and World Bank), an own financial system in the sector of the emerging countries is being established. There lies the future.

At the moment the EU is drawn in into the conflict which was caused by the USA, because they didn't and don't want to share power. Thereby the EU's own development opportunities are paralysed. The longer we follow such policies in the EU, the higher becomes the price, the less we will be taken serious as dialogue partners.

Without Moscow and Beijing no problem in the world can be solved. The USA indeed could act much more pragmatically than we can imagine today. The lack of an own agenda on the part of the EU and Germany lets us appear as losers.

*What must happen before we will see an independent foreign and economic policy in Germany again?*

I won't respond to this question, I beg your pardon!

*What does it mean for a business location if a government plays geopolitical games rather than really represent German national interest like all others do?*

It means that one's own location is being damaged.

*Does the ordinary parliamentarian understand the interaction of politics and economics?*

I am sceptical.

*Does politics become better while politicians understand less and less of economics but their number rises?*

Definitely not! The stability of a democracy depends on the stability of economy. If lasting harm is permanently caused to economy, the radicalisation of society will grow as the experience in the German Reich showed in 1933. Besides there is another version i.e. that democracy becomes a "Demokratie" and ends up in oligarchy. With regard to the USA there exists a study of the Princeton University. Original sound: The USA is no longer a democracy, it is an oligarchy! Oops, this was not politically correct ...

At the moment there is more at stake than the man or the woman in the street believes or wants to believe. You see me deeply concerned. •

Source: *Deutsche Wirtschaftsnachrichten* 24.7.2015

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

**"We need more advocates ..."**

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ternational legal basis for that, he says. Turkey was planning an illegal war of aggression against a sovereign state.

**A dynamic, which one day nobody will be able to handle**

Walter Stütze says: "I do hope that, above all, the United States will exert some influence on Turkey with a reasonable position in the NATO Council." But then he adds immediately: "I hope so – my belief, however, is not very strong." The interviewer adds, that the first US response to the Turkish action was "an understanding one, according to the principle, that also Turkey had the right to proceed against associations, conceived by them as terrorist". Stütze adds: "If you look at the map, you see that the intention [of the Turkish government] is – as revealed in the report before our conversation – to establish a controlled security zone between Turkey and Syria, that this will in reality result in a policy of occupation against a sovereign state, whose political regime we find unacceptable, but which actually exists and actually still has the responsibility. And that means war, quite simply war." We are faced with a dynamic, "which one day nobody will be able to handle any more. Precisely in the area that we are talking about, we are experiencing the decline of the national order, by the way essentially caused by the disastrous war in Iraq, triggered by *Bush Junior* in 2003. And we see that also Western governments, including NATO governments, are facing this problem without any concept so far."

**The Kurds – victims of a new US policy**

Three days later, on 30 July, the former state secretary in the German Foreign Office and former German Ambassador in the US, *Jürgen Chrobog*, takes the floor in the same broadcasting programme. He fears that for Turkey it is not mainly about fighting the IS. Main enemies of the Turkish government are the Syrian President *Assad*, whom "one wants to get away with", and the Kurds. Admittedly, the Kurds fought the IS, but now the Turkish government expressed that they wanted to fight the IS. For this they had got a "carte blanche. They could do as they liked, they were backed above all by the Americans".

Now the Americans, as Chrobog says, could use airbases in Turkey (and maybe not only there) again with the approval of the Turkish government for their operations in the Middle East and now they "reset anything that might annoy the Turks in any way and might jeopardise this again." Therefore, the US government was willing now to sacrifice the Kurds after they had

been previously used for the fight against IS. "In this case here", the former German US ambassador says, the Kurds "are the victims of a new American policy". When asked whether the problems in the region would not even become greater that way, he replies: "That is certainly a risk that turns out quite clearly. The Americans see it very one-sidedly, they set up the sole objective that they pursue, everything else is neglected, which will increase the tensions."

**From virtue terror ...**

*Georg Büchner's* drama "Danton's Death", written in 1835, is about the deadly confrontation between the Jacobin *Robespierre* and his opponent *Danton* during the French Revolution. Büchner makes *St. Just*, a fellow of Robespierre, express the core of the violence programme and his basic conviction: "There seem to be some sensitive ears at this meeting that cannot tolerate well the word 'blood'. Some general observations may convince them that we are not more ferocious than nature and the time. Nature follows its laws quietly and irresistibly; man is destroyed, where he comes into conflict with it. [...] Now I ask: Should the spiritual nature be more considerate in revolutions than the physical nature? Should an idea not be allowed to destroy what opposes it, as well as a law of physics does? Shall an event that is about to change the whole essence of the moral nature, i.e. of mankind, not be allowed to go through blood? The cosmic spirit uses our arms in the spiritual sphere just as it uses volcanoes and floods in the physical sphere. What difference is there whether you die of a disease or of the revolution? [...] *Moses* led his people through the Red Sea and in the desert, until the old corrupt generation had destroyed itself, before he founded the new state. Legislators! We have neither the Red Sea nor the desert, but we have the war and the guillotine. The revolution is like *Pelias's* daughters: It dismembers the human kind to rejuvenate it. Humanity will rise from the blood vessel with primal power as the earth rises from the waves of the Flood, as if it was created for the first time."

**... to "humanitarian collateral damages"**

The perpetrators of violence at the time spoke of the terror of virtue.

Today we speak of "humanitarian intervention", of "Blood Borders", plans for a new "Greater Middle East"... and of "collateral damages".

Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria ... The disposition and the consequences of the programme of violence have remained the same. Under *Bush Junior* the neoconservatives had decisive influence on the policy of the United States.

The neoconservatives have their roots in Trotskyism. Are they pursuing the target of *Trotsky's* theory and practice of "permanent revolution" to this day?

Near the end of the drama *Georg Büchner* lets speak the wife of one of the victims of violence the following words: "Everything is indeed allowed to live, the little mosquito there – the bird. Then why not he? The stream of life would have to stagnate if only a single drop would be spilled. The earth would have to get a wound by the stroke."

**Reverence for life instead of violence that hides behind the lie**

More than 100 years later, *Albert Schweitzer* spoke of the "Reverence for Life": "I call humanity for the ethics of reverence for life. This ethic makes no distinction between more valuable and less valuable life, higher and lower life. It rejects such a distinction. [...] The immediate fact in the consciousness of people is: 'I am life that wants to live, surrounded by life that wants to live.' This general affirmation of life is a spiritual act by which man ceases to live thoughtless, by which he rather begins to dedicate himself to his life with reverence and giving it its true value. Man, in this way become thinking, experiences at the same time the necessity of practicing the same reverence for life toward all will-to-live as toward his own. So he experiences the other life in his own life. Goodness, by the same token, is the saving or helping of life, the enabling of whatever I can. Therefore, I see that evil is what annihilates, hampers, or hinders life. This is the absolute and reasonable ethic."

Facing the world today and the past 25 years is there anyone able to better formulate this?

**The crescendo of the peaceable persons – against the primitivity of violence**

*Albert Schweitzer* continued his text as follows: "In this time when violence hides behind the lie and dominates the world so eerily as never before, I still remain convinced that truth, peacefulness and love, gentleness and goodness are that power that is over all the power. They will own the world, if only enough people think and live those thoughts of love and truth, of gentleness and peacefulness purely and steadily enough. All ordinary violence in this world creates a limit itself, because it generates a counter-violence that will be equal or superior sooner or later."

What about today? Fact is that those countries in the world that do not want to subordinate to the dictation of the "world's only superpower" any longer have heavily

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# The Democratic Republic of Congo – amidst the East African Storm

by Prof Stanislas Bucyalimwe Mararo, Antwerp



Prof Stanislas  
Bucyalimwe Mararo  
(picture ma)

pk. The analysis of the permanent hotspot Eastern Congo offered in this section is at the same time disturbing and surprising. What is disturbing (churning) is the dispassionate way in which Stanislas Bucyalimwe, historian in the tradition of

African historical scholarship, once more relates outrageous things: The currently ruling statesmen recognized and supported by the West had shed the blood of innocent people already well in advance of their jump to power – statesmen for whom we in the West lay out the red carpet – as has once again been the case just recently when the Rwandan autocrat Paul Kagamé was received with great pomp and ceremony by a business school and his euphemistic messages were distributed across all the major media without any critical remarks. Against this habituation to the unsupportable Bucyalimwe has applied for many years a very simple means: He stays with the historical truth diligently and unswervingly unveiling it layer by layer until finally a judge may be found again in the international community who will have enough courage to counter the rampant obfuscation and state propaganda with the overwhelming evidence. In his account of the recent past in the

## “We need more advocates ...”

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gained in importance in the last 15 years. They arm themselves against further outbreaks of violence of that “single world power”, but they do not want to solve the conflicts by wars. First priority is the demand for compliance with the objectives and the ways prescribed by the *United Nations Charter* and the international law. “War is obsolete”, every sensibly thinking person knows that today.

But why does the Kurdish woman in the train think she is fighting a losing battle? There is the experience of the past 25 years. We all have had this experience, but we must not just perpetuate. “Still ...” there is the principle of violence. But was Albert Schweitzer not right, when he wrote about the people who take the reverence for life seriously: “They will own the world, if only enough people ...”?

“Also eye-opening are the words of Boniface Musavuli of the group ‘Freunde des Kongo und der USA’: ‘In February 2013 Johnnie Carson, Undersecretary of State at the Africa department, announced the United States would assist the DRC, as they would have done it in the cases of the former Yugoslavia and Sudan. This suggests that Congo needs to be split up for the Americans like the Sudan and the former Yugoslavia, in this case in favor of Rwanda and Uganda.’<sup>11</sup>”

Great Lakes Region Stanislas Bucyalimwe remains strictly committed to the facts and used documents which are painstakingly documented once more by reference materials in this article written exclusively for “Current Concerns”.

This article was already composed some time ago. Recent events in Eastern Congo which has been the arena for the most inconceivable atrocities for more than twenty years now, have confirmed his analysis. The destiny of the huge Congolese country will be decided in the East. Crucially important are not only the mafia-like structures established by “new African leaders” such as Museveni, Joseph Kabila and Paul Kagamé for the exploitation of the raw materials there available at dumping prices which represent a permanent robbery of the Congolese people’s national wealth. The strategic location of Eastern Congo rightly called by the author “the Great Horn” of Africa with reference to the new US-American Africa strategy is also a key factor. This region includes not only Somalia and Djibouti, Eritrea and Ethiopia – parts of Kenya, Uganda, Eastern Congo and the miniature states Rwanda and Burundi built up under American protection after the genocides of 1994 are also part of this strategically significant greater area. Twenty years of Rwandan policy consisting of splitting up its impotently powerful neighbour Congo find their strategic explanation here as well as the emotions newly inflamed for months in Rwanda’s twin Burundi that have brought the country once more to the brink of civil war. Not only makes Bucyalimwe’s analysis clear who the actual wire-pullers are, but he also shows that at least as far as Eastern Congo, Rwanda and Burundi are concerned they come from old political networks acknowledging just one rationale: to maintain their socially predominant position at any cost.

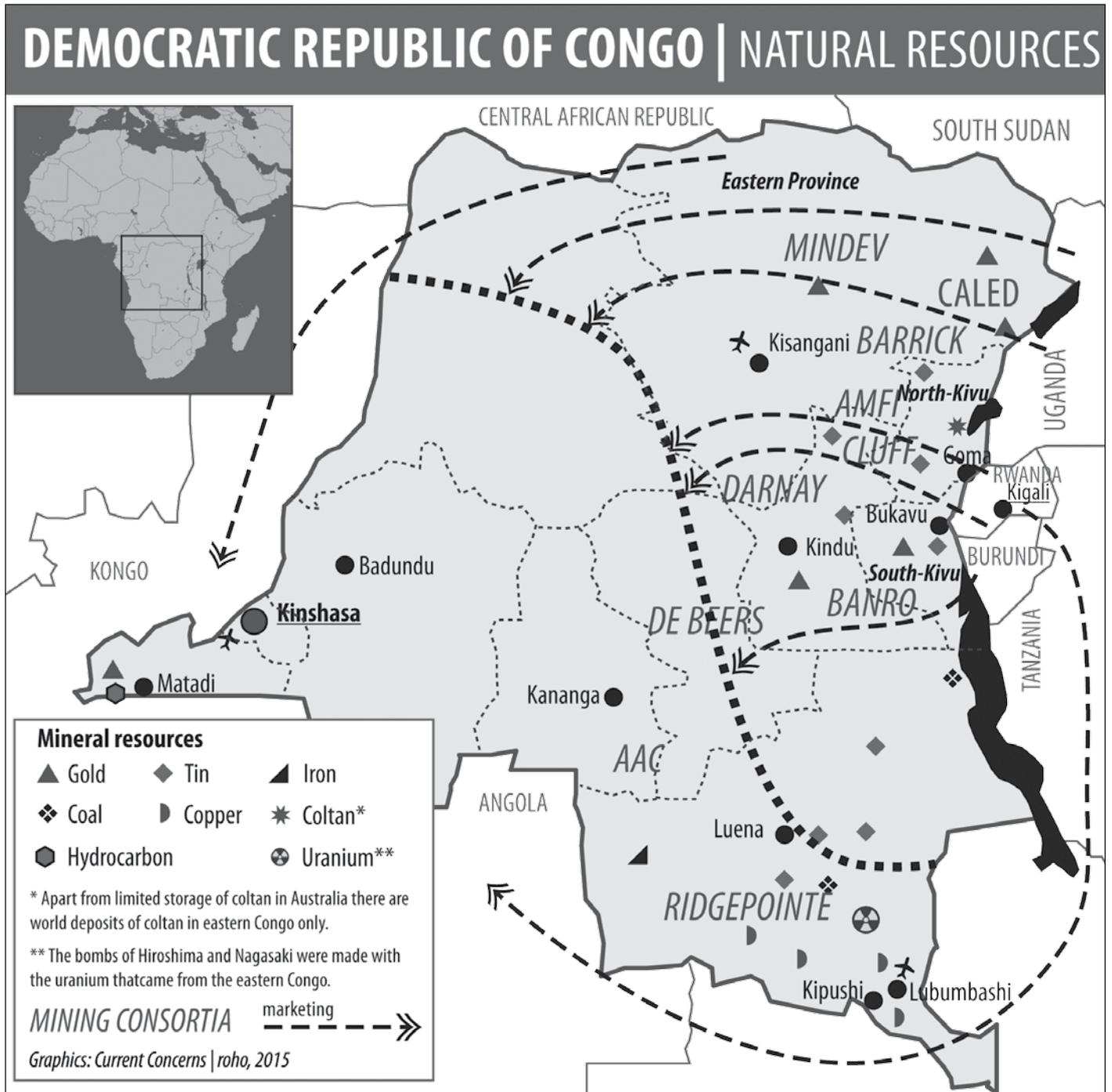
“The Great Lakes Region has vast resources and potential, but it is overshadowed by a tragic past that influences the present. [...] The Second Congo War (1998–2003) was one of the bloodiest conflicts in the latter half of the twentieth century and it laid the foundations for the present insecurity. Killing over five million people, the war displaced communities, devastated the economy, made guns and ammunition readily available, and traumatised entire populations. The UN’s largest peacekeeping mission is now deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), working to protect civilians and consolidate peace. Although conflicts have declined markedly in the Great Lakes Region, instability continues to threaten weak state institutions. Transnational organized crime activities, and the money they generate, appear to play a significant role in perpetuating the instability, lawlessness and violence, particularly in the East of the DRC. It is estimated that in the East of the DRC, there are still between 6,500 and 13,000 active members of armed groups who are benefiting from criminal activity.” (UN Report, 2011, p. 7)<sup>1</sup>

## America’s policy in Central Africa

Without any doubt the fate of the Democratic Republic of Congo, whose state developed in the years 1885 to 1910/11 from west to east and is now exposed to destabilization on all fronts<sup>2</sup>, is being decided in the east.

In the east, we are dealing with the territorial claims of Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, which concern the South Kivu, the North Kivu and the Eastern Province (Province Orientale). Not only that Rwanda and Uganda keep a large part of the area occupied (it has been declared a territory of struggle against terrorism and the operating area of *Africom* (US command

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### Abbreviations

Expressions which are not explained in the text

**AMFI: American Minerals Fields, Inc.** founded in 1995. International Consortium under US leadership to reduce the key raw materials, in particular in Africa and the Congo.

**ADF/NALU: Allied Democratic Forces.** Ugandan Resistance Movement. Like Rwanda, Uganda accepts the operating of this movement from North Kivu as pretext for military intervention.

**Afrimex:** British mining consortium that, according to the Brit-

ish government is enriched in the throes of civil war in eastern Congo.

**CNOOC: China National Offshore Oil Corporation.** National Chinese petroleum conglomerate.

**FDLR: Democratic Forces de la Libération du Rwanda.** Hutu-dominated resistance group fighting the Kagamé government (Tutsi) in Rwanda from eastern Congo. It constitutes the main argument for the presence of Rwandan equipped combat units in east-

ern Congo such as M23 or before the CNPD.

**LRA: Lord's Resistance Army.** Ugandan resistance movement against Museveni.

**SOMIGL: Société Minière des Grands Lacs.** Main economic financial source of the eastern Congolese rebel movement RCD supported by Uganda, which delivered the western companies, including Bayer, the desired coltan. Without coltan no cell phone works, no rocket and no drone.

**"The Democratic Republic of Congo – ..."**  
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center for Africa) and the *Eastern Congo Initiative* – ECI – of which *Cindy Hensley McCain*, the wife of *John McCain*, is a founding member<sup>3</sup>), but also Burundi has been transformed to a free zone as a result of the military agreement with the US on 25 January 2014.

**Military agreement Burundi – USA, excerpt**

"This agreement shall apply with regard to the temporary presence of United States personnel and United States contractors in Burundi in connection with mutually agreed activities including, for example, training, exercises, and humanitarian activities. (Art. 2) United States personnel shall be accorded the privileges, exemptions, and immunities equivalent to those accorded to the administrative and technical staff of a diplomatic mission. (Art. 3) They may enter and exit Burundi with United States identification and with collective movement or individual travel orders. Their driving licenses are accepted. They are authorized to wear uniforms while performing official duties and to carry arms while on duty if authorized to do so by their orders. (Art. 3,4,5 and 6) They are authorized to exercise criminal jurisdiction over United States military personnel while in Burundi. (Art. 7)"<sup>4</sup>

What is now happening in the East of the Democratic Republic of Congo, is part of an Anglo-American hidden Agenda.<sup>5</sup> Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 Washington has employed its famous concept of *New African Leadership* for its realization. It is characterized by "programmed elimination" of human life and infrastructure.

In other words: It is impossible to understand what is going on today in the region of the African Great Lakes and as well in the DRC, without explaining beforehand what it is envisaged for in terms of geostrategies after this event or of what exactly the New World Order consists, which the American president *George Bush* (the elder) announced on the occasion of the invasion of Iraq under the name of "Desert Storm" in 1991. These events show the new role of the United States, but 1991 is also a crucial year for the Great Horn of Africa and for the whole of East Africa. For the Horn of Africa, or more precisely: the Great Horn of Africa became a key area for the consolidation of the US hegemony in Africa and the Persian Gulf. *Sami Makki* puts it this way: "[...] elle est sous haute surveil-



lance international"<sup>6</sup> (It is under strict international surveillance.) What has not been prevented it from sinking into chaos.

**The Greater-Horn-of Africa-Initiative (GHAI) and its consequences**

One sign of the US imperialist offensive is the so-called GHAI (*Greater Horn of Africa Initiative*), launched by the Clinton administration in December 1994, shortly after the RPF (*Rwandan Patriotic Front*) came to power in Rwanda. Therefore, its implementation was accompanied by so many bloody upheavals in central and eastern Africa, since GHAI is a project that concerns not only the four core countries of the African Horn, Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Eritrea, but also involves Tanzania, Kenya, Sudan, Ugan-

da and Rwanda and Burundi (cf. map of GHAI countries).

To the outside the communicated objective is humanitarian: the combat of the effects of disasters that have been caused by the people in this vast region. The spiritual fathers of the initiative, however, add immediately that this was not meant as a universal remedy but simply as a laboratory (test).

The real goal of the initiative is confidential and is political and strategic<sup>7</sup>. It is part of the struggle against Islamism and terrorism. The American support for the independence of South Sudan (July 2011), the separatist movements in the west (Dar-

### "The Democratic Republic of Congo – ..."

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fur) and the east of Sudan illustrate this very well.

As switching points function the following states: Tanzania, South Africa, Uganda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Rwanda. Such switching points countries could also be understood as *Brzezinski* states "welche von einer massivem militärischen Unterstützung durch die Vereinigten Staaten profitieren, welche es ihnen erlaubt, ihre Interessen zu verfolgen" (which benefit from a massive military support from the US, which allows them to pursue their interests; protection of American companies or those which belong to the military-industrial complex). According to *Pierre Hillard*<sup>8</sup> the *Brzezinski* Doctrine can be reduced to one simple sentence: "The Islamist weapon is the American geostrategic instrument."

The transformation of the territories of the DRC into a war base against international terrorism and the landing site of various American organizations and companies (such as ECI, USAID, CARPE, Wildlife Direct, Africa Conservation Fund, etc.) belongs in this context. This also applies to the large number of multinational companies (American, English, Canadian, Israeli, French, Chinese and even other origins) which have jostled here since 1999, such as AMFI, the AFRIMEX, Soco International, Barrick Gold, Banro Resource Corporation, Héritage Oil, Tullow Oil, Total, CNOOC, SOMIGL, Anglo Gold Ashanti Kilo/AGK, etc.). Their presence occurred simultaneously with "the militarization of the mining sector". The book by *Pierre Barcyse* with the title "L'enjeu géopolitique des sociétés en République Démocratique Minières internationale du Congo/ex-Zaire" (Dossier of the group "SOS Rwanda-Burundi", Buzet/Belgique, December 1999, see map), the one by *Delphine Abadie*, *Alain Deneault* and *William Sacher*, entitled "Noir Canada: pillage, corruption et criminalité en Afrique" (Montréal, Éditions Écosociété, 2008) and that of *Patrick Mbeko*: "Le Canada dans les Guerres en Afrique centrale: génocides et pillages des ressources minières du Congo par le Rwanda interposé" (Le Nègre Editeur, January 2012) are just some appropriate reference studies the reading of which is recommended in this context.

Also important are the influence of Neo-conservatives<sup>9</sup> and the protestant Anglican American pressure group "Breakfast Prayer".<sup>10</sup> To put it bluntly: The Democratic Republic of Congo is afflicted with full force by the "neoconservative virus". Among them one finds the authors of texts such as "Der Kivu ist Teil von Ruanda" (*Herman Cohen*) or "Der Kongo muss

seine Landreserven und seine Reichtümer mit Ruanda teilen" (*Nicolas Sarkozy*). Also eye-opening are the words of *Boniface Musavuli* of the group "Freunde des Kongo und der USA":

"In February 2013 *Johnnie Carson*, Undersecretary of State at the Africa department, announced 'the United States would assist the DRC, as they would have done it in the cases of the former Yugoslavia and Sudan'. This suggests that Congo needs to be split up for the Americans like the Sudan and the former Yugoslavia, in this case in favor of Rwanda and Uganda."<sup>11</sup>

### Washington, the policy of the whip and the dictatorship of ethnic minorities

During the Cold War (1960–1990), the US and their allies used the long-standing Congolese dictator *Mobutu* but later dropped him in favor of the Ugandan autocrat *Museveni*. *Museveni* was leading the series of the so-called new African leaders. Since he seized power in 1986, the United States has supported the wars conducted by this Ugandan dictator (Rwanda, Sudan and DRC), militarily, politically and diplomatically<sup>12</sup>.

The Ugandan model, the seizure of power by a rebellion, has spread to Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC. That is why the men at the top of four states have two characteristics in common: They are all chiefs of rebel formations, and they belong to the same ethnic group. Simultaneously Rwanda plays the part of the American protectorate in the region and is a pawn against the French presence<sup>13</sup>.

In order to achieve their objectives and to make Paul Kagamé the head of state of Rwanda and Joseph Kabila of the DRC, the United States had four heads of states killed, two in Burundi, one in Rwanda and one in the Congo: In Burundi these were the elected President *Melchior Ndadaye*, a Hutu, who was killed by the Tutsi army on 21 October 1993, three months after his inauguration, and his designated successor, *Cyprien Ntaryamira*, also a Hutu. In the evening of 6 April 1994, *Ntaryamira* was in an aircraft to return to Kibali after a conference in Arusha, together with his army chief, General *Déogratias Nsabimana*, other Burundian top officers and the Rwandan President, *Juvénal Habyarimana*, and the General Chief of Staff and their crew. Shortly before its landing at Kanombe airport<sup>14</sup>, the aircraft was hit by a surface-to-air missile and crashed. In the case of the Congolese contract killing it was President *Laurent-Désiré Kabila*, who belonged to the ethnic group of *katangian Luba*. He was reportedly shot dead on 16 January 2001, allegedly by one of his own security forces<sup>15</sup>. All these terrorist murders are still residual; the above observations shed light on the reasons.

Regarding the Democratic Republic of Congo, the expectations of its population were once again stifled, as already in 1960. Because the democratic scheme negotiated during the *Congolese National Sovereign Conference*, which was still monitored by the Troika Belgium, France and United States, was dropped in favor of a military scheme, which was encouraged by third countries, in particular through the constellation of the above key states. This alliance was tested for the first time during the invasion of the DRC in September/October 1996.

The US and allies of the invasion of the DRC did not only provide the heavy weaponry<sup>16</sup> but after the bloodbath of the assassination of President *Laurent-Désiré Kabila* they also established *Joseph Kabila*, and orchestrated the peace agreement, which placed the country under international guardianship. Nothing indicates that since the signing of the *Lusaka Agreement* on 10 July 1999 until the *Nairobi Declaration* of 12 October 2013 anything in this scheme has fundamentally changed<sup>17</sup>.

Paul Kagamé was a member of the Ugandan army, *Joseph Kabila* of the Rwandan army. Many Ugandan nationals mix in the institutions of the "new" Rwanda (*Jack Nziza*, General *Patrick Karageya* and others), and as numerous Rwandans are in the institutions of the DRC (*Jean-Bosco Ntaganda* is just one example among many). Meanwhile, the claim that the fate of the DRC was controlled by the men of the regime of Paul Kagamé has become an open secret: They are all former comrades in arms, in the context of the military formations which carried out the campaign of 1996/97, such as the FPR (*Front Populaire Rwandais*), the AFDL (*Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo*) and the RCD (*Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie*), which emerged from the same Rwandan hotbed like the recent "rebellions" under changing names (CNDP, M23, M27<sup>18</sup>). Paul Kagamé by the way confirms this every time he stresses that "no one in Kinshasa, up to the highest state level, can suggest he was not acting in close consultation with Rwanda". From this we can safely conclude that the followers and protagonists of Kigali's destabilizing policies against the DRC are situated in the power center of Kinshasa itself<sup>19</sup>.

It was *Yoweri Museveni* and Paul Kagamé who sponsored most of the "rebellions" and armed groups that have haunted the Kivu and the Eastern Province since 1996. Incidentally, in a speech on 7 April 2014, on the occasion of the commemoration for the genocide 20 years ago, *Museveni* clearly defined the region of the Great

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### "The Democratic Republic of Congo – ..."

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Lakes as the center of their strategy to become the bulwark of a new empire<sup>20</sup> which one could read between the lines: Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Western Kenya, North-west Tanzania and the East of DRC.<sup>21</sup> This only means that next to the run on the wealth of the DRC there is still another main reason for the permanent instability of the region, the hegemony claim of the Hima Tutsi peoples.<sup>22</sup>

The output of the cross-border mining companies are organized in Mafia-like networks which are supported by the military and political elite of Uganda, Rwanda and their western sponsors and African allies. They generate fabulous dividends and maintain a vital industry which the profiteers want to keep alive at all costs. The Department of Drugs and Crime of the United Nations says so in the segment quoted at the beginning of this text:

"The activities that the international organized crime develops in the region and the amount of money that it generates seem to be a major reason for the prevailing persistent instability, impunity and violence, especially in eastern DRC. 6,500–13,000 members of armed groups which benefit from the criminal activities are estimated to be active in eastern Congo."

Operations against the LRA<sup>23</sup>, ADF/NALU and FDLR are important without any doubt. So far, however, they have turned out as but a sham. How can one explain that weakened armed groups, as different reports record, can for so long withstand army units (US Africom units, Ugandan and Rwandan army units, MONUSCO UN troops and Congolese, Southern Sudanese and Central African units) swarming around in eastern Congo?

If it would please Washington, the expansionism of Yoweri Kaguta Museveni or Paul Kagamé or any other regional satrap who thinks he is God on earth, were quickly tied back and peace and stability could set in again. Given the "real politics" powered by the world, this is unfortunately probably still part in the field of pious wishes for long.

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

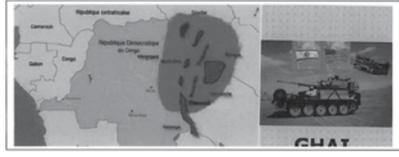
<sup>1</sup> Organisiertes Verbrechen und Instabilität in Zentralafrika. Evaluation der Bedrohungslage. Vienna (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) 2011, p. 7

<sup>2</sup> The events referred to take place at a time when the political situation is very bad, because of the following facts: (1) disputed elections, power conflict; (2) frontline of representatives of centralization versus representatives of decentralization; (3) increasing repression against opposition activists and human rights defenders; systematic elimination of officers within the Congolese army, which

## Exposition of rich historical facts of the conflict in eastern Congo

Stanislas Bucyalimwe Mararo, PhD

MANEUVERING FOR ETHNIC HEGEMONY  
A THORNY ISSUE IN THE NORTH KIVU PEACE  
PROCESS (DR CONGO)



Volume I: The 1959-1997 History of North Kivu

Editions Scribe

Stanislas Bucyalimwe Mararo, PhD

MANEUVERING FOR ETHNIC HEGEMONY  
A THORNY ISSUE IN THE NORTH KIVU  
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Volume II  
The 1996/1997 Invasion of the "Tutsi Without Borders"  
and the Remote Reconciliation in North Kivu

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*pk.* In two recently published volumes, *Stanislas Bucyalimwe Mararo* submits a historic overall presentation of the conflict in eastern Congo that will soon belong to the standard works of the painful history of this region. In the two-volume study the scientist from the University of Antwerp explains the genesis of the conflict, its dramatic culminations and the current situation. The author has not only a keen eye for the geostrategic importance of this new "Congo turmoil," he also penetrates it to the smallest detail and shows which interests prevented to this day that the hard ravaged re-

gion finally finds what the population yearns for: peace and normality. Numerous sources, diagrams and documents prove both political and personal responsibilities of the actors.

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are devoted to the country, such as Colonel *Mamadou Ndala*, General *Alphonse Bikweto*, General *Jean-Julien Bahuma* among others; (4) deterioration of the living conditions with ensuing increased frustration; (5) strengthening of tribal thinking with corresponding tensions at different locations (Ndoole, P., Masisi/North Kivu. La milice Raia Mutomboki dévaste des villages entiers, in Grands Lacs Syfia/RD Congo, 27 October 2013; Kungu, K., Insécurité à Mutarule/South Kivu. Massacre de six membres de famille, in *L'Observateur*, 16 August 2014); (6) resignations, irresponsibilities and carelessness in the ruling classes and elites of the Congo (Mutinga, M., La République des Inconscients, Ed. Le Potentiel, 2010); (7) religious rivalries between the major Churches (Catholic Church and various exponents of Protestantism), between them and the numerous Revival Churches ("Trojan horses of America" in the Congo and throughout the world) and between them and the national churches (for example the Kimbangists and others)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.easterncongo.org/about>

<sup>4</sup> "Un projet d'accord avec les USA menace la Souveraineté nationale du Burundi", in *Arib-Info*, 23 Jan-

uary 2014; "Le Burundi signe un accord militaire avec les Etats-Unis", in *Xinhua*, 25 January 2014

<sup>5</sup> The events in the east form the warhead in the process of parcelling out the country. There are a number of serious studies that address this issue, among others: Kankwenda, M. J. et Mukoka, NF (under leadership of) *La RDC face au complot de la balkanisation et d'implosion*. Kinshasa/Washington/ Montréal, ICREDES, 29 January 2014

<sup>6</sup> Sami Makki, "La Corne de l'Afrique, un espace régional sous haute surveillance internationale", in *Revue Humanitaire* (el. Version), 22 July 2009, put on the Web on 13 October 2009, as of 23 June 2014. URL: <http://humanitaire.revuep.org/399>

<sup>7</sup> The financial support of separatist movements in a member country, Sudan, whose southern part has been amputated in July 2011 with support from the United States, is one example. Cf.: "US Played Key Role in Southern Sudan's Long Journey to Independence. Twenty years of US involvement contributed to today's secession of Southern Sudan – but peace is yet to come" (*The Atlantic*, July 2011; Jacobs, J., "South Sudan and the US National In-

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terest. History Suggests that US support for South Sudanese independence has less to do with democracy and justice than oil reserves", in *Think Africa Press*, 13 March 2012.

- <sup>8</sup> He is also the author of the book "La montée irrésistible du nouvel ordre mondial" (Editions François-Xavier de Guibert, 2010).
- <sup>9</sup> William Perry, Richard Perle, Robert Kagan, William Kristol, John Bolton, Harry Johnson, Paul Wolfowitz, Roger Winter, Madeleine Albright, George Moose, Dick Cheney, Donald Henry Rumsfeld, Prudence Bushnell, John Bolton, William Swing, Richard Armitage, Stephen Solarz, Bernard Kouchner etc. The signatories have also signed the following document: "Project for the New American Century/PNAC", dated spring 1997, a kind of catechism for the conquest of world domination. The following sources confirm the fact that it is actually the shadow of the neoconservatives circling above the political-military-economic mists of the DR Congo: "Un des plus gros trafiquants d'armes dans le monde (Victor Bout) arrêté en Thaïlande" in *Le Monde*, 6 March 2008; "L'Occident à la reconquête de l'Afrique" in *Échos d'Afrique*, 6 May 2013; Musavuli, B., "RD Congo: il faut mourir pour l'Amérique, sinon on est mort ...", in *Agora Vox*, 21 September 2013; Le Bec, C., "Pétrole: Dan Gertler décroche le gros lot en RD Congo", in *www.jeuneafrique.com*, 8 August 2014). Christophe Le Bec defines the place of the mentioned person in the mafias' economic network and specifies: Controversial acquisitions. The group "Fleurette" by Dan Gertler holds the group "Oil of DR Congo" firmly in its hand via "Foxhelp" and "Caprikat", two companies that are domiciled in the British tax haven of the Virgin Islands. It remains obscure how the mentioned companies have got their mining rights. But it is clear that the businessman in question has neither the financial resources nor the technical expertise to make a project of this dimension come true. His reputation could complicate the task of finding the indispensable partners who convert his reserves into hard cash. In fact, he is close to Joseph Kabila and is suspected by NGOs like Global Witness and the think-tank "Africa Progress Panel" by Kofi Annan, to have repeatedly acquired extensive oilfields at ridiculously low prices, because he is close to the center of power in Kinshasa. Which should have allowed him to generate \$ 1.4 billion in untaxed funds. Fleurette denies these allegations vehemently and argues that he has "invested \$ 7 billion" in the Congolese economy.

- <sup>10</sup> Investments of 7 billion dollars "dans l'économie congolaise". Indongo I., "Le voyage euro-américain du Président J. Kabila, 'Breakfast Prayer' et la presse", ([http://www.congonline.com/Forum2001/Fevrier/Indongo\\_Imbanda02.htm](http://www.congonline.com/Forum2001/Fevrier/Indongo_Imbanda02.htm)). Some Congolese politicians have taken pleasure in it. The organization *Apareco* refers to them as "pharisaïcal politicians with actor's talent," see Candide Okeke, "Déjeuner de prière au Grand Hôtel de Kinshasa. Ruberwa, Kengo et Matata Mponyo auto-proclamés 'Leaders chrétiens intègres'!" *L'Oeil du Patriote*, Paris, 13 November 2012 (<http://www.apareco-rdc.com/index.php/a-la-une/oeil-du-patriote/968-ruberwa-kengo-et-matata-mponyo-auto-proclames-leaders-chretiens-integres.html>)
- <sup>11</sup> Boniface Musavuli, "RD Congo: Il faut mourir pour l'Amérique, sinon on est mort", *Agora Vox*, 21 September 2013
- <sup>12</sup> Remigius Kintu, *Terror incognito: the US conspiracy behind Museveni's wars*. Baltimore (Maryland), 19 April 1997
- <sup>13</sup> Michel Chossudovsky, "The US was behind the Rwandan Genocide: Installing a US Protectorate in Central Africa", in *Global Research*. Montreal, 2003
- <sup>14</sup> For details cf.: Philpot, R., *Rwanda and the New Scramble for Africa: From Tragedy to Useful Imperial Fiction*. Baraka Books, 20 Dezember 2013; Onana, C., *La France dans la terreur rwandaise*. Paris, Éditions Duboiris, 31 March 2014; Ndayuzwe, N., *La guerre mondiale africaine: la conspiration anglo-américaine pour un génocide au Rwanda*. Enquête dans les archives secrètes de l'armée nationale ougandaise. Editions Sources du Nil, 2014
- <sup>15</sup> Nashi, E., *Pourquoi ont-ils tué Laurent-Désiré Kabila?* Paris, Editions L'Harmattan, January 2007. The American ambassador, who was still in Kigali at the time of the assassination of the two presidents, Habyarimana and Ntaryamira, i.e. the neo-conservative William Lacy Swing, was transferred to Kinshasa at the time when Laurent-Désiré Kabila was assassinated. He was the one who heaved Joseph Kabila into the position as head of state and consolidated his power between January 2001 and December 2007.
- <sup>16</sup> Péan, P., Carnages. Les guerres secrètes des grandes puissances en Afrique. Paris, Fayard, 10 December 2010
- <sup>17</sup> Kibangula, T., "RDC: les pourparlers entre Kinshasa et le M23 s'achèvent par la 'déclaration de Nairobi'", in *www.jeuneafrique.com*, 12 December 2013
- <sup>18</sup> "Une nouvelle rébellion, M27, en gestation dans le territoire de Masisi et piétinement de la traque des ADF au Nord-Kivu. Pourquoi la paix traine-t-elle à

- venir?" 18 August 2014 (<http://paixgrandslacsafricainp.blogspot.be/2014/08/une-nouvelle-rebellion-m27-en-gestation.html#!/2014/08/une-nouvelle-rebellion-m27-en-gestation.html>)
- <sup>19</sup> Mienze, M.M., "Le PPRD répond à Ruberwa: Les Tutsi plus représentés que toutes les tribus du Kivu réunies", in *La Prospérité*, 23 October 2007 (<http://www.congoplanete.com/article.jsp?id=45261053>). Bearing in mind the number of Tutsi that occupy key positions in the Congolese national institutions, there is no doubt that this is the strict application of Rwandan politics, which Emmanuel Ndahiro, head of Rwandan intelligence service in 1997 paraphrased as follows, "When we gathered from 3 to 5 June in Kisoro (Uganda), just after our victory, which had led to the overthrow of the dictator Mobutu, we emphasized that we need to reinforce the promise we had already made by installing our best human resources (ressources humaines) in those organizations, which guarantee the security, the economy, finances and the political administration, in particular in the provinces of North and South Kivu, which are an integrating part of our country. This strategy will strengthen our control over the Democratic Republic of Congo." in: Péan, P., Carnages [...], op cit, p. 386
- <sup>20</sup> "Discours de Museveni ou Acte de naissance 'officiel' de l'Empire Hima-Tutsi?", in Emmanuel Neretse, "Que cachent les discours de Paul Kagame et Yoweri Museveni le 7 avril 2014 à Kigali? Analyse". Brussels, 8 April 2014 (<http://www.musabyimana.net/lire/article/que-cache-les-discours-incendiaires-de-p-kagame-et-y-museveni-le-07042014-a-kigali-analyse/index.html>)
- <sup>21</sup> "Discours de S.E. Yoweri Museveni, Président de la République de l'Ouganda, lors de la 20e commémoration du génocide rwandais à Kigali – Rwanda, 7 April 2014" (<http://unenouvelleafriquevoitjour.blogspot.be/2014/04/discours-de-se-yoweri-museveni.html#!/2014/04/discours-de-se-yoweri-museveni.html>)
- <sup>22</sup> Jean-Charles Murego, Instabilité de la région des Grands Lacs africain. Causes et solutions Brussels, August 2010 ([http://www.musabyimana.net/fileadmin/user\\_upload/documents/2010/Instabilite\\_de\\_la\\_region\\_des\\_grands\\_lacs.pdf](http://www.musabyimana.net/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/2010/Instabilite_de_la_region_des_grands_lacs.pdf))
- <sup>23</sup> According to Nile Bowie and Michel Chossudovsky the battle against LRA provides an American pretext to militarise Africa. Cf.: Bowie, N., "Merchandising and Branding Support for US Military Intervention in Central Africa", in *Global Research*, 14 March 2012; Chossudovsky, M., "Joseph Kony, America's pretext to invade Africa: US Marines dispatched to five African countries", in *Global Research*, 19 March 2012)

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# Harnessing untapped energy

## Blue Energy – a revolutionary innovation

by Heini Hofmann

The inventors *Thomas Edison* and *Nikola Tesla*, known to every student of physics, wouldn't have imagined in their wildest dreams that around 125 years later, thanks to an ophthalmologist, their vision of a thermo-magnetic drive system would be put into revolutionary practice – a welcome contribution to the energy turnaround.

The idea to use low-temperature energy below 100 °C, one of the largest sources of energy worldwide, for generating electricity is old. In 1888 Thomas Edison described a pyro-magnetic generator and Nikola Tesla described the magneto-caloric motor one year later. Since then, there were still dozens of attempts to build a *Thermo-Magnetic Motor* (TMM).

Also in Switzerland Professor *Peter Egolf* and his team from the Western Switzerland University of Applied Sciences have repeatedly described the feasibility and applicability of TMM engines, supported by the Swiss Federal Office of Energy. But no one succeeded to build a viable system providing continuous power – until an ophthalmologist and a passionate inventor now had a visionary inspiration. It proves that innovations are not always coming from established think tanks, but occasionally from smart individual brains.

### Industrial prototype planned

Since a demonstrator has been put into operation in the Thermal Bath of Zurzach some time ago, and a first industrially applicable prototype is planned to be tested in Switzerland this year, movement comes into this story. As in the past little boys with shiny-eyes watched the flywheel of the toy steam engine come into motion, so the blue energy team in Zurzach became feverish when their TMM-baby began to work – since there is a big potential in it, as science confirms.

Still worldwide there are only a few technologies capable of using low-temperature energy economically. The *Organic Ranking Cycle (ORC)* is one of those, it is a mature process, however in contrast to TMM plants it is complex, maintenance-intensive and the cost of this electricity is uninterestingly high. Research is going on also on thermoelectric generators that convert two heat sources of uneven temperature directly into energy. But here one focuses on high temperatures, for example engine exhaust gases.

However, in the low temperature range there is still an area to work through without much competition, making for a technology and market leadership for the *Swiss Blue Energy Ltd* headquartered in Zurzach,



*The ominous “Almost-Perpetuum-Mobile” during the building and exploratory phase; the development of this thermo-magnetic motor took several years.  
(picture Swiss Blue Energy)*

which works closely with the Swiss Federal Office of Energy. The three leading figures of this new technology with great potential for application in industrial and developing countries are ophthalmologist *Nikolaus Vida* from Bad Zurzach as main promotor, Professor *Hugo Tschirky* of the ETH Zurich and Professor *Kurt Heiniger* of the Northwestern Switzerland University of Applied Sciences and Arts FHNW in Windisch. (Tragically Professor Heiniger was fatally injured in an accident in his beloved mountains after this article was issued; the project will however be continued.)

### Thermomagnetic carousel

How does this “miracle machine” work? Everyone knows that a magnet sticks to iron. It is less known that it falls off by itself again when the iron is heated above the Curie Point. This is because the building elements (atoms, molecules, ions) are uniformly aligned in the cold iron and therefore respond to an external magnetic field. But the building elements turn into

an oscillatory instability when warming and lose their structured arrangement once they reach the Curie temperature. They don't respond to a magnet any longer. This process is cyclic.

But the construction of a powerful Thermo-Magnetic Motor requires controlling the changes in the state of appropriate magneto-caloric materials under the influence of temperature in very short time, in milliseconds. Key to this are suitable ferromagnetic materials and a thermomagnetic switch which is activated by a medium of different temperature. To realize this was the hard nut to be cracked in order to be successful.

In a cylindrical (and, as it befits *Blue Energy*, blue-colored) housing is a rotating plate, similar to a mill wheel. The magneto-caloric material is arranged on it as a ring and passes along several permanent magnets. In front of these it is put into a magnetically active state, it is attracted and puts the plate into rotation-

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### Eureka-Project already approved

In the further development of Swiss Blue Energy to market maturity there are still some hurdles to overcome, first the optimization of the magnetocaloric material and thus the „thermomagnetic switch“, but also the configuration of useful plant dimensions for industrial use. But everything seems to be well under way. Large bright spot here: An Eureka project for the exploration of new magnetocaloric materials in collaboration with the Technical University of Delft has already been approved.

The advantages of this innovation are evident, and the application potential of this new technology is practically unlimited. The Blue-Energy-modules can be constructed in various orders of magnitude, are emission-free, noise-reduced and practically without interventions in landscapes. They are based on simple, low-wear mechanics, are low in production costs and easily transportable for decentralized use (in remote locations or as well in developing countries). They can also be started up within seconds and turned off so that there is no need for an operating storage system.

Such flexible operation and the simplicity of the system make it possible to generate electricity, which is relatively low priced compared to other technologies. Briefly: The Blue-Energy-Principle corresponds to the growing environmental awareness to use surplus heat sensibly rather than disposing of it in rivers or evaporating it in cooling towers. This new star in the electricity-sky should therefore contribute to brighten the future of energy.

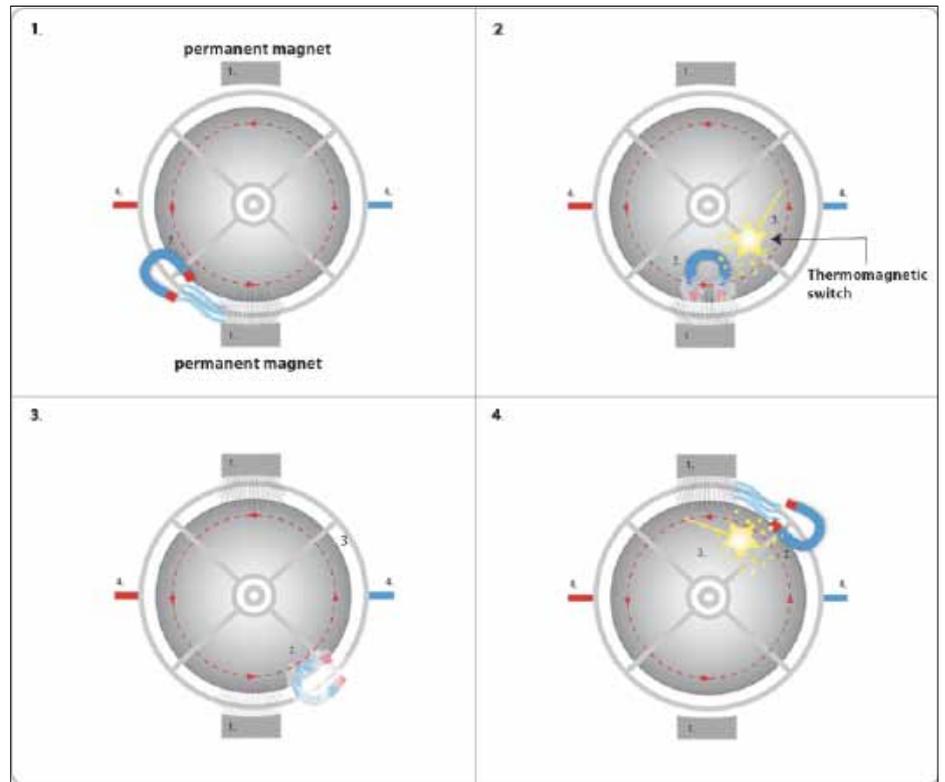
#### “Harnessing untapped energy”

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al movement. To maintain it, the material is demagnetized by means of a thermal switch when passing the magnets. This process (Curie effect) is repeatedly running, so that, like driven by an invisible hand, the high-tech carousel rotates.

#### The substitution of gadolinium – a hard nut to crack

That is the reason why a lay person may be tempted to believe in a perpetuum mobile. But there is also an impulse behind this. The “fuel” for the rotary movement is – what a wonder – available warm and cold water in the low temperature range. Yet unlike a mill water wheel, this “water wheel” does



The magnetocaloric-driving principle: 1. ferromagnetic material is being attracted by the stationary magnet, 2. “thermo-magnetic switch” de-magnetises the material, 3. de-magnetised material escapes from the magnetic field, 4. thermo-magnetic switch re-activates the ferro-magnetic effect, material is again attracted. (pictures Swiss Blue Energy)

not use hydro energy but instead the difference in temperature. That is why there are feeders for hot and cold water leading into the cylinder body with the horizontal plate, and the used water flows off.

At the present state of the art hot water of somewhat over 30° C with a difference of 20° C to the cold water is already sufficient. So the waste water of the thermal bath in Zurzach has been used successfully for the demonstration prototype. In the case of very warm waste water it would even be possible to use it several times in a cascade system, whereby the power output would still increase.

But the technical crux lies with the linchpin of this innovative machine, the magnetocaloric material, which causes the magnetization effect. Currently from the group of rare earth elements only Gadolinium (with a Curie temperature of about 19° C) can be used in the low temperature range. But it is expensive and difficult to process. Therefore, scientists in cooperation with Swiss Blue Energy are conducting research for alternative materials that make it possible to choose the optimal Curie temperatures compatible with the nature of the locally available water sources.

#### An active contribution to the energy turnaround

If this succeeds, the potential uses are almost unlimited. Possible heat sources industrial effluents with different temperature lev-

els as well as solar and geothermal energy from natural sources. The use of industrial waste heat is also an important contribution to avoiding CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Blue-energy plants can be operated between warmed water (by solar thermal or PV-cooling system) and colder water sharing the temperature of its surroundings. Ideal are sunny locations on lakes, rivers and the ocean.

Regarding geothermal energy, which is present everywhere: Since only cold water and hot water under the temperature of 100° C are required, no expensive and problematic deep drilling is necessary. Cost-effective drilling in subsurface layers is sufficient. Tectonically active regions such as Iceland or Japan are just about optimal locations for Swiss Blue-energy plants. Studies also show that efficiency in the low temperature range is considerably better than that of all other technologies available today.

This novel, thermo-magnetic method for commercial and industrial use will render it possible to make use of the unlimited quantities of waste heat and natural heat in the low temperatures to produce rotational energy, which can for example serve to drive electric generators. Blue energy thus seems predestined to make a major contribution to shaping the desired energy turnaround in Switzerland as well as internationally.

Additional Information:  
[www.swiss-blue-energy.ch](http://www.swiss-blue-energy.ch)  
 (Translation Current Concerns)

# We want to help children find their way into life

## Instructing and guiding are the adults' duties

*Interview with Dr Michael Winterhoff, M.D., child and youth psychiatrist and psychotherapist*



Michael Winterhoff  
(picture ma)

*Current Concerns: Mr Winterhoff, you have written several different books, the last one carries the title "SOS-Kinderseele" (SOS-Children's Soul). What is so alarming about the development of today's children?*

**Dr Michael Winterhoff:** Look at Germany today, we have close to 60% school graduates who are not capable of working. Nobody wants to hear that and nobody wants to talk about it. The only one speaking about it is the industry and nobody is listening to them. They are put off with phrases: "You need to adjust yourselves to today's youth!" In reality it is this way: graduates are lacking work discipline, the sense of punctuality, the recognition of structures and plans, they cannot set priorities; when their mobile rings it is more important than the customer who is standing in front of them. And, they cannot put into practice, what they have already learned.

*Does that mean that the way children are being prepared for life today, will confront our economy and democracy with huge unsolvable problems, one day?*

Yes, and that will cause our society to drive into a wall. These are unimaginable circumstances as mass phenomena. And politically, one does not want to see it. In Germany educational policy is ideology. The ideologists, those of the late '68 or theoreticians stuck in '68 ideas are now in control. Their ideology is to push for everything to be free and open. That means to turn away from focusing on relationships and person-centered education. The result is the children and teenagers cannot develop socially and emotionally.

*In Switzerland these phenomena do occur in the same way. We have many graduates who find no apprenticeships. Not because there are not enough of them but because they do not possess the necessary qualifications. Some of which are basic knowledge and others are work discipline. We have a very good dual vocational educational system which has been ruined that way. You speak of 60% of school graduates not capable of working in Germany; here the educational director in Zurich spoke of 20% a few months ago.*

At the moment in Germany one speaks of 20% as well. But you need to know that there are no exact numbers. Many of these youths are absolving programs, for example the vocational primary school year or the vocational preparation year and these youth are then not included in the figure, although they are not in the regular work process and actually without jobs. These programs are very expensive. I have patients in my practice who receive 400 euros when they work for some hours per week in a particular vocational educational program. Nevertheless, the politicians boast of having the lowest unemployment rate among youths in Europe. One is cheating the children and the country. And the people who are causing all this today, cannot be held accountable.

*Where do you see the main causes?*

The causes lie partly in a society with which we are not able to cope. The adults are lacking the calm and therefore the intuition that children need for their development. This will be the theme of my next book.

Our society has become ever more difficult and awards little orientation. Structures are missing. We live in a time of uncertainty, just think about the health insurances or the pensions. Our society is increasingly lacking a positive perspective for the future. However, this is what we people need in life, otherwise we will be missing our share of happiness, satisfaction and the ability to look forward to something. That means: The adults in our society will have increasingly more deficits and the child lends itself for unconscious, unwanted compensation and that is why there occurs a shift in relationships.

*What do you mean?*

Only a few people see children still as children and give children what they need, namely time, a lot of calm, guidance and much accompaniment. Children are increasingly seen as partners and that means that one has the idea of being capable of educating children by talking and by making things comprehensible that way. But children have to practice first. They also have to be protected from certain topics. In the mid-90s, all these things were still self-evident. Many adults are proud to see children as partners, and lift them to the adult position. This is why today our children are also "self-responsible" in the classroom, for example in the "learning-bar lessons". There the child can choose whatever it

wants to do and has to take responsibility for it. If thereafter it shows that it has covered up that it did not learn anything, it must take the blame itself.

*Do you consider this a social trend which is also reflected in education policy?*

Yes, because more and more there is the idea that children learn much by themselves and a teacher is seen only as a learning guide.

*But that is only a small part of the population ...*

In addition, there is the large group of those who absolutely want to be loved by their children. This is for example the generation of grandparents. Formerly a grandmother used to prepare the grandchild's favorite meal and thus spoil him. But she would have clearly demanded from him: "Wash your hands, stay at the table". Today, a grandmother who wants to be loved, may not ask this anymore, because she is afraid that her grandson will no longer come to see her. This is a so-called projection. This means, the child is unconsciously abused for what the adult is missing. This causes a reversal of power. The adult is in need and slips into the position of the child and the child into the position of a surrogate parent.

*For how long have you observed this development?*

This is a disorder I first met with in early 2000. It took a long time for me to understand the context: Today, for many parents the child has become a part of themselves. They feel like their child, think for their child and go to school for their child. They do absolutely no longer represent the child's counterpart. They may be controlled and determined by their children for 24 hours. They do not even realise that, because the process occurs unconsciously. Though thereby the children's development is hampered. The children get stuck in their developmental age at 10 to 16 months and live in the idea of being able to control and determine everything and everyone. They revolve around themselves, are purely pleasure-oriented and avoid requirements. Naturally, this way they are not capable of a relationship, either. Because of this delayed development they have no sense of wrongdoing, despite their parents' educational efforts. In conflicts they cannot recognise group connections and, therefore, they cannot learn

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from conflicts. They lack empathy. They do not recognise structures and processes, for example the requirement, that one behaves differently in class than during the break.

*In other words, they lack the maturity appropriate to their age?*

Yes, one must say: We have more and more children and young people who are very well equipped with intelligence, but who live with the world view of toddlers. You may compare it to somebody who owns a very good computer with Windows 95 and wonders why the programs do not work. In such a case one can play around as long as one wants. It is no use. With such children you may focus on concentration training or assertiveness training, or whatever else – it will not work, the operating system is faulty.

*You have much experience in dealing with such children. What is to be done?*

Such children could be saved within one to one and a half years. With the deep psychological and analytical knowledge this would be no problem at all. This is also one reason why I write the books. The principle is that the age of development entails how I see the world and how I behave. A five-year-old would execute every job given by his mother, even happily, and when she praises him he beams. An elementary school student would therefore pick up a piece of paper, if the teacher requests him to; not out of obedience, but because he recognises that she has something to tell him. Until the mid-90s, children in Germany have developed this way. At the age of three they were ready for kindergarten, at the age of six ready for school, and at 16 ready for vocational training. This is no longer the case, today, because they have been stuck at earlier stages of development.

*What has changed?*

In the mid-90s the adult was still resting in himself and was therefore able to draw on intuition. Children were still seen as children. Therefore, they were naturally instructed in many parts in kindergartens. The child belonged to the same group, had the same reference person, the same reaction, the same processes. Today there are open and free kindergartens. Children can select what they want to do. According to my professional point of view this represents an emotional neglect.

But this is reality today. And if in 1995 you had said: "A teacher is only a learning guide, children are to help themselves at the learning counter and learn as much as possible on their own," you would have

been declared insane. Similarly, if at the time one would have abolished handwriting – which the primary school teachers are doing now –, one would have met with the same horror. In our society that was not even worth a discussion.

*And this has an impact on the lives of children ...*

We have to become aware that this way we give our children no chance of developing to the status of an adult. Throughout their whole life they will remain dependent and needy and are not fit for life. We as adults have a great wealth, in the range of feelings alone. We are capable of adapting to others. We are capable of withstanding and to wait and see. Take alone the point that I save toward an item. I am going to make it one day and will be able to afford it. That's a great feeling. Imagine further the feeling when a child works for something and manages, for example, to correctly paint the letter or write a good dictation. We deprive our children of of these enriching feelings, if we look only after saturating them and give them everything as quickly as possible. Mobile phone, tablet, anything to keep them quiet.

*What developments do you observe at school?*

If you only look at the modern teaching methods, they would not even work for adults. Let us assume that you want to learn tennis; we do it in a "modern way": There is a learning station "forehand", a station "backhand", there that of the "movement", and then we still have a "bistro", in case you want to take a little break. In the early 90s there was a Swiss, *Jürg Reichen*, who travelled throughout the country saying that children should write like they imagine that something should be written. Applied to the tennis example, we now do it in the following way: During two years you hit the ball over the net, just as you imagine it should be done, so that you do not stop enjoying tennis afterwards, we start with the training. It is evident that this way you will not become a good tennis player, unless you're a genius. But that's the way how you deal with children today. It's not just about the discussion of learning methods! But the most important thing we humans need is the emotional and social psyche. It covers all the interpersonal achievements. It can only be formed in interaction with the other person. If now also in schools and kindergartens the other person, the counterpart is no longer present, the children have no chance at all. We become a society of autistics and narcissistic persons who only focus on themselves and live for the moment according to the pleasure principle.

Michael Winterhoff

SOS  
Kinderseele

Was die emotionale und soziale  
Entwicklung unserer Kinder gefährdet –  
und was wir dagegen tun können

C. Bertelsmann

ISBN 978-3-570-10172-8

*And all that on the basis of false theories ...*

It is hard to take, how a whole generation of adults follow the wrong track. Furthermore they are still convinced that everything is right, and do not even permit any discussion, but simply enforce something that misses the child completely by using an atavistic exercise of power. This is hard to endure. In my opinion, we are well on the way of becoming a developing country, where the knowledge about and the feeling for children and their needs, is getting completely lost. One day, we will have to clarify all this in a way, that is unimaginable, because the adult becomes an illiterate with respect to how to deal with children. But this will come, I am confident about that. Otherwise I would not do that. I cannot change society. I'm doing my part as a physician. I do point out, I clarify, I do not keep quiet.

*In such contexts one is often reproached of blaming ...*

That is not the question. I'm just the one who points at the facts. I do not judge, I analyse. I never thought, that from an analysis, an analysis of a family I would arrive at an analysis of society. But the society is well on the way to abolish itself, because the younger generation is no longer fit for life. It is not my intention to paint a gloomy picture here, because we still have the chance to counter this development. We have the possibility to bring the children up to their appropriate age within one and a half year.

*What must happen?*

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**"We want to help children ..."**

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Education policy must stop to be ideology. Professionals must be asked here. Above all teachers, who experience the children every day have to be involved. I would like to see all kinds of professional groups.

First of all those pedagogical methods should be examined in order to see whether they lead to an improvement – in the framework of a double-blind study, with hundreds of children being taught with, and hundreds of children, being taught without this methods. Today this is not the case. Let us take as an example the method of learning to read by Jürg Reichen again: A person invents something in the educational field. Coincidentally, 20 years later it was examined whether this method proves successful. The results were devastating: One person had brought up a whole generation to be dyslexics. Insane mistakes are made because nobody has the idea to examine this.

And moreover, I would like the teachers to cease being muzzled. Teachers should get together and via their teachers' associations should ensure that something happens concerning the learning contents. Teachers must cease being immature. We can all do something. In other words, I can still teach in a person-centred way. In addition, I can also make up my mind and seek allies. The whole thing will only change if we have allies, I'm rather hopeful here.

*At the political level, as well?*

I had a meeting with the educational speakers of the CDU (Christian Democratic Union) in Germany, who realise now that more and more young people are not going forward into life. They are now beginning to take certain efforts for a change to education via personal bonding, so that the relationship to the teacher will again be in the foreground. That change will come, but presumably the damage must at first even become worse. Please ally yourselves against all these ideas of "freedom and openness". School only works in a person-centered way and never otherwise.

*Where would be the starting point for the parents to change?*

Parents in symbiosis usually do not notice that they support a false development in their children. That is a severe problem. They live in a symbiotic relationship with the child, it has become a part of their selves. It belongs to them like their arms. As long as the arm does not hurt, they are not aware of its existence. 90% of parents come to see me, because the school sends them. And then I ask them: "Do you wonder about your child not participating in the classroom or disturbing lessons?" Then they say: "Yes, because I

have no problem with my child." These parents do not know what does not work at school. They do everything for their children, and do not realise that they are in a wrong system. When I say "Your child does not listen!", they reply, "It does!" and when I have another go, "But not for the first time? If you say: 'Lay the table', they answer 'Why always me!'" Then the parents respond, "That's true, but that is not why I have come to see you." Only when I say, "Well, if he does not listen to you for the first time, then he won't listen to his teacher as well." Then we slowly get into a genuine discussion. There lies the problem. Parents do not realise that the child has become part of their own nature. Therefore, they are not able to classify the problem and cannot see that they are also responsible for the fault.

*And breaking out of this system is necessary?*

Yes. I call it the "arm system". If I have a pain in my arm, the question immediately arises, "What is the reason?" I then go to see a colleague and I already have an idea. "It is probably because of my playing tennis! What can I do so that the arm will become well again?" That is different with parents, who live in a symbiosis with their child. They are looking for a diagnosis at best, a therapy, some guidance, of which there are a whole lot. The children then all suffer from ADHD, ADS, dyscalculia, dyslexia, highly giftedness. They are given Ritalin or some other therapy. But that cannot solve the problem of children with development disorders because their problem is quite different. That is, the children in our country are increasingly labelled as pathological. That should be changed.

*We have had the same experience. Many children have diagnoses: ADHD, Asperger's syndrome or whatever syndrome there is. Currently they are often diagnosing Autism Spectrum Disorders, which is rather new.*

When you ask ten people, you will get ten different answers. There is no method to assess the psyche. That's the big problem. It is the question of the model that the one prefers from which you seek advice. And you have to keep in mind that ADHD is not a disease. It is a model which is treated as a disease. This serious diagnosis is no help for the children, possibly parents might be relieved. But there will be no assistance for the development of the child's emotional and social psyche. Society is overwhelmed by these children with disorders. If I categorised the children as I once learned, I would also get false results – to my mind. If you have a certain flexibility you will find out that there are developmental disorders. That's why I wrote books on this topic. I see it as a medical

task, even if it is sometimes very exhausting. I do this because things must get on, because people need to be informed.

*What should the school do?*

If there is a child disrupting the class, this child has a right to his teacher showing him that he is misbehaving. But nowadays the teachers themselves make diagnoses. We have more and more teachers who send the kids to a therapist and say, "He suffers from ADHD!". They don't realise that it is themselves who are not taking the position they should take and that they are not performing their task. Being a teacher means to assume responsibility for the child and not delegate it to the child. It also means that I clearly say, that's right, that's wrong; you're writing this once more and here you will have to work more. We are probably becoming unpopular by this behaviour. However, we want to help the children into adulthood. As a teacher, I must be able to give low marks in case they are justified.

*How can we help children with developmental disorders?*

It would be important to establish a preparatory year for school which is not about the learning of cultural techniques, but about achieving the maturity for school. That would be possible in one or one and a half years. It would take small groups of eight to twelve children, with whom person-centred work is done. To form the psyche of a child, I have to teach it and accompany it. Adults who want to be loved by children or see their children as partners, classify such behaviour as authoritarian or reactionary or patronising. But it is the determining factor for a child to develop. The development does not just work on its own. We have to accept that. This insight will result in a new task for educators and teachers.

*In other words, we are facing a comprehensive task for society as a whole?*

We live in a society that is under delusion; in a society that is thinking only for the moment, a society that is just oriented towards the symptom: symptoms need to be eliminated. Nobody is thinking about what the situation will be in five years, in ten years, in 20 years. With children you have to think in periods of 20 years. So if you don't, we might have a kind of pseudo-peace right now. But these children are not fit for life. However, this is neither to be solved by strictness in education nor by therapy. Ultimately ours is a cruel time for children; a time when it looks as if we were doing everything for children. Actually, we are not doing the most important thing that needs to be done for our children: establishing an emotional bond and relationship and thereby making development possible.

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*Our starting point was the great number of adolescents unfit for work. These are the children that have grown up but have not become adults!*

Yes. In many companies you will be told that in their trade there are many vocations disappearing. In the skilled trades sector – a friend of mine is an electrician – you will hardly find a German speaking employee of German origin under 30 years of age on a building site. In this sector apprenticeships are hardly ever started, and the IHK (Chamber of Industry and Commerce) will tell you that in Germany every second apprenticeship is broken off. We have high drop-out rates in higher education, more than 30%. And we have a high percentage of adults who cannot be kept in a company although they have been adequately trained.

*What happens to them? Will they become the concern of the social services?*

The problem is that the social services become active only in case the parents are destitute. In other words, in Germany parents have to pay for their children until they are at least 26 years of age, whether they are employed or not. And since parents do not see through this, they assume that their child has an ADHD or anything else and cannot do anything about it.

*For the next few years, but afterwards ...*

There are not many people thinking so far into the future, today.

*But at some point the child will be 26 years of age!*

Yes, but when I wrote my first book in 2008, there were already two million twenty to thirty-year-olds in Japan, spending all their lifetime in their rooms with 24-hour internet access and a well stocked refrigerator, so their parents have their peace. But as soon as they are challenged, they go wild. As soon as their fridge is empty or their computer doesn't work any longer, they freak out. They are called Hikikomores. It is the future model of German families that the children as grown-ups remain seated on their parents laps. In other words, we will have an increasing number of people who are in need of support and are unable to work. It is not that they do not want to work.

*We are now seeing these children in vocational schools who often fail to recognise that they have to work in order to pass their final exams.*

You could bring all of them to a level appropriate to their age within a year and a half in case you worked with them in a person-centred way and see that behind their

moroseness and their utterances there are infants. This is my job I am doing for the industry. I often find myself invited to country-wide meetings by the industry, also in Austria. They ask me what could they do with these trainees. If you are aware of this background and ultimately recognise that there is an infant behind this behaviour of the adolescent there is a way. I don't respond to them but I take the position to give them all the support they need and to guide and instruct them in many proceedings. If you work with these youths for three months in an intensely person-centred way, if you instruct them all the time, they are growing in their psyche. The further they have come in their development the more differently they will perceive things and the more differently they will express and behave themselves. That is the way. That is what works. Especially in skilled trades. It is not about teaching them a skill but about promoting them in the development of their psyche. That would be hopeful. I am able to rescue even 17-year-old youths. However, there are 17-year-old youths whom I cannot help in their familiar environment. If their parents are lucky enough to own 40000 Euros I will send them to England to a boarding school. There they have a language barrier. This means, when I say in German: "set the table", the child would reply: "Why me again?" That's no refusal, but he only checks his view of the world: you're a table, a chair, a machine, you're to manipulate. Here is the language barrier: When the Englishman says: "Set the table!", then before the response is translated: "Why me again?", the Englishman has already moved on. There are teachers in the private schools working in a person-centered way who build up a relationship with the students. Those who do not take an active part during the lesson have to work during the break. The teachers accompany the students to the hockey games in the afternoon and comment: "The way you play hockey now, you will participate tomorrow in my classroom". They give a lot of guidance and apply ritualised processes. Every lesson is clearly structured. The fact is, they have changed after three months; after six months, they leave their disorder behind because the process is so intense. If a twenty-year-old would take part in a project, go through a year abroad, an ecological year, a voluntary service year, he would also reach an age-appropriate level within that year. You will not recognise him after that. So, everything is possible! This can neither be resolved by strictness nor by therapy. This can only be solved by person-centered working, as it is usually done with small children.

*In Switzerland we also have opportunities to counter such wrong developments by democratic means. As far as Curriculum*

*21 is concerned, for instance, initiatives have been launched in several cantons to finally bring a discussion under way and to prevent the introduction of this curriculum. There are also parents who have become involved. Attempts are being made from various quarters to create a counterweight to this process.*

That is why I was particularly pleased that I now have also been invited to Switzerland.

But if in Switzerland you have opportunities to work with initiatives, please do it. I am glad to put the know-how at your disposal. With my publications you have the best line of argument. Especially my book "SOS-Kinderseele" clearly shows that prevailing concepts and ideas cannot possibly succeed. To anyone endorsing such trends I would also recommend to make a trip to the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia and visit some schools. You will then see the disaster you will end up with. At primary school level we have by now 80% children with developmental disorders. These are data provided by teachers. But this is not only the case in North Rhine-Westphalia. In urban areas in Austria (Vienna) the teachers speak of 70% and in rural areas we have 50% to 60%. In Zurich they will also reach 70%. You can recognise these children by the fact that you always have to give instructions twice or three times. A child prepared for elementary school would realise: "I am in class, now. If my teacher says: "Take out your German book", I will take it out. That goes without saying". This is not obedience but a cognition process. Such a group of children look as if they were absent. You say: "Sasha, Timmy, take out your books, too!" The other group is walking around and discussing. When you have said five times: "Take out your German books", they will take it out. All these children are not ill, they are not fully developed. If we don't recognise this group and do not see that these modern concepts are completely contrary to the needs of those children the group of the people concerned that are unable to cope with life will steadily increase.

But go to Germany, and you will find it entirely convincing. If you take a look at schools and kindergartens in urban areas and talk to teachers and trainees and if you publish those interviews Switzerland should also wake up and say: "This is not where we want to go!"

*Mr Winterhoff, we thank you for your intense commitment and dedication, for your books and for the interesting discussion.*

*(Interview by Eliane Gautschi and Erika Vögeli)*

# Individualised learning – pretense and reality

by Rainer Werner

Since the Green's and the Social Democrats' government took power in the Land of Baden-Wuerttemberg in 2011, the school system (which used to be particularly successful up to then,) has been re-organized fundamentally. The "school for all (students)" – the community school is an institution where children of all talents are taught together and where they are taught in age-mixed classes.

In order to be able to handle the resulting extreme heterogeneity in the learning groups in a pedagogic manner the education planners put forward the concept of "individualized learning", a concept that is controversial among experts. It is also called "self-organized learning". Every student works on learning material that is precisely adapted to his learning skills, a procedure where the teaching personal is required to be only the students' companions in the learning process.

The didactic concept of individualized learning is too new to be already evaluated seriously by science. In Internet forums, though, you will find a lot of viewpoints taken by parents whose children had participated and had been suggested the "chances" of that way of "teaching". And these judgements are not very encouraging.

The "Arbeitskreis Bildung und Schule in Baden-Württemberg" (Working Group on Education and School) published an interview with four mothers whose children have visited a community school in Baden-Wuerttemberg working on the basis of the didactic prescriptions of the Green and Socialist education policy.

In the following I would like to assess the achievements and the declarations of these mothers, which I summed up along topical fields using pedagogic standards.

*"My child complains about all the noise in class. It is very noisy. At this school they have bought special earphones for the children to put them on when the noise troubles them too much. So that they can work quietly."*

*"If each child (works) on a different task, especially in mathematics, and if the teacher has to go to every child to answer a question, because he or she cannot stand in front of the class and explain the question and the task to all pupils at one go, there will be a problem in that" class". The other children have to wait very long, because they don't know how to go on with their work. And what will they be doing in that*

*situation? They will of course chat with their neighbor and the result is turmoil."*

*"There are the same complaints in the case of my child. It is above all the noise level during lessons. Because of this individualized teaching the teacher is on his or her way through the classroom, all the time in order to answer questions. That way the disturbance is even worse."*

Headphones in the classroom in order to banish the noise? No satire – but reality in a primary school, in which "individualised learning" is being practiced. Anyone who has ever taught knows that a certain silence in the classroom is the nuts and bolts of reasonable teaching, and even that sustained student learning actually depends on a quiet learning environment. Scientists have found that concentration and attention subside strongly when the noise in a class exceeds a certain level.

The parents' statements show that the noise does not come from the fact that the teacher would not be able to ensure silence. No, it is a direct result of the chosen teaching and learning method. If students need to wait for several minutes until the teacher comes up to them to answer a question on the matter, if the teacher is constantly walking through the classroom in order to clarify unclear aspects with the students, noise must necessarily emerge. It is the inevitable concomitant of the selected method.

*"Our daughter told us that they do nothing but study and fill in worksheets in the classroom. When asked whether also any introduction to new topics takes place, her response is 'No'. Those who have a problem, have to put their hands up."*

*"... because only sheets are distributed, and the teacher tries to pacify the others because there are a lot of disturbing kids who disturb teaching, the concentration, almost everything is difficult for the children."*

*"But our youngest daughter often says that she prefers to stay at home or would rather do so because she learns more at home and I explain everything to her, and at least she knows how to make use of the knowledge. I also have the feeling that she can remember more of what she learned at home than in class with its worksheet teaching."*

*"They also complain about the long waiting time, until a question will be answered. And then they rather wait or do not ask any more, because they know: if I ask at home, my mom will explain it better to me. She takes more time. Then I rather ask my mom at home. Last time [when waiting until a question was finally answered by the teacher] my child looked at the watch. It took about fifteen minutes."*

I do not allege that the teachers do not explain things at the beginning of a teaching sequence, or say something about the pending issue and how the students should solve the related tasks on the work sheets. But if more mothers report that their children still do not know how the tasks on the worksheets are to be done, the students did obviously not understand the "introductions" on the topic. Even conventional teaching knows this phenomenon. Experienced teachers therefore often make a student repeat in his own words after the introduction, what is important about the task. Sometimes you have to explain everything for a second time.

That pupils are left alone with the learning material after the teacher's introduction, as the dogma of "individualized learning" requires, is a weakness of this method. Everybody who has ever impaired knowledge to anybody else, whether to children or to adults, knows that even the process of thinking requires guidance. This is in particular the great merit of a teacher-guided class discussion. In every phase of the shared learning process, he will be able to set impulses in a way to help students to catch on and get on the right track. The fine metaphor, that "someone sees the light" describes this cognitive process vividly. How can such sudden inspiration occur, if a child has to wait for a quarter of an hour, until the teacher is ready to solve the child's problem of understanding?

*"Children at this age need someone to lead them and give them a feeling of security. Also they need a sense of achievement in which they experience: I was taught something, then I practised, and now I have mastered it!"*

*"The quota for the year is the school curriculum. This is not comprehensible for a child at this age. However, the child must decide: How much do I have to work every day?"*

**"Individualised learning – ..."**

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*Actually, the child does not know, how it is performing in comparison to the school year, how much time it will need, how many modules are still to be done. As a mother I have to care about this, since the teacher doesn't.*

*"I also feel that this self-directed learning is very difficult for the child. Mostly it has to struggle through the material on its own. Queries regarding the learning content will only be answered very slowly, if there is any spare time at all for this child."*

It is quite obvious that the children miss the teacher in his or her traditional role: As an expounder, an advisor, a helper, an inspirer, and as a role model. Who are the teachers who are the most successful in teaching? These are teachers, who are "burning" for their subject. Those teachers who teach passionately and who will inspire the children with their "fire". The author Klaus Mann once said that teachers have to be "hunters of souls". How is that possible, if the teacher is degraded to a "learning guide", who should only respond to pupils' enquiries? It is not surprising that a pupil of a Swabian primary school answered the question of her parents who her favourite teacher was, as follows: "the all-day lady". She was referring to the social worker who played with her during breaks – and who had some time to spend.

*"It seems to me that it is the parents, as we have already heard in many cases, who are the real learning guides."*

*"And if you ask me today, what the quality of the school is. I would like to answer: You only will perform well at school, if you have strong parents. De facto strong teachers do no longer exist. I very much hope that school will one day take on the education of the children again and that it is not the family that has to take all the responsibility."*

*"[We hope that] the teacher will go around as he did in the past and will take a look, where the child is at and what its difficulties are and where teacher support is required. Children should not be left alone. It is unacceptable that the parents have to assume the teacher's role after the child has already been at school for four hours. It is difficult to learn with the children at lunch break what*

*they missed at school. This cannot be compensated by parents."*

As the statements of the mothers show, the children are depending very strongly on parental help with this learning method. Parents have to explain at home, what the teacher has failed to do during lessons, probably due to stress while trying to respond to all the requests. Parents are feeling pushed into a role that is not their own. Bad conscience in the case of the child's failures at school and conflicts between parents and children are the result. There is bitter irony in the fact that an education policy, which took the challenge to decouple the child's achievements from "parents earnings", will again reinforce exactly this dependency by an unworkable learning method: Children with an educated middle-class background will get specific assistance at home, whereas lower class children or children with migrants' milieus must do without this assistance. The well-intended is often just the opposite of the well-done.

*"There is hardly any teamwork any more, which I find a pity. [What we would like to see:] There is a lesson where children try to do everything together, working in groups and teams, learning to develop things together. They should see that there are differences, that there are well-performing and less well-performing students. Children, who are stronger at one subject and perhaps weaker at another one, that the children are not in competition, however the diversity should be seen and acknowledged. I think this will ensure a more sustainable imparting of learning content."*

Individualised learning turns children into lone wolves. Something gets lost that has always given the classroom its meaning for the pupils: being a place of community, protection and companionship. To date, the class as a joint study group has had the function that the children can pit themselves against the others, that they inspire each other, but also help each other in solidarity when it is necessary. Why a policy, which looks at education through the "social spectacle", disregards this very social function of a school class, is one of the many absurdities with which this method of learning is tainted. Individualized learning finally proves to be isolated, antisocial learning. "Somehow paradox: At teaching level isolation is propagated while at school structure level they are propagating of 'learning together as long as possible'." (Michael Felten)

*"The child feels more in competition with the others. Statements such as*

*'X has already come so far, but I'm faster than Y', can be heard very often. The children feel very much under pressure, I think."*

Since in heterogeneous learning groups knowledge and talent of children differ very much, the pace at which they work through the worksheets, must be different, as well the outstanding learners do the stint within a few days, while the slow learners take weeks. The learning tests are therefore written at different times. So it is inevitable that the children "evaluate", who is the fastest and who was allowed to write the test first. In internet forums I found sharp judgments of parents referring to the mood in classes. They speak of a "new stigma" and "selection", which are therefore particularly "mean" because they take place under the label of "shared learning". Classical Comprehensive School, once the Social Democrats' favorite school, is far superior to this concept because there the students are taught in courses with different intensity (streaming), whose level is appropriate to their abilities. These courses usually develop the same solidarity among the students, as was customary in the traditional classroom.

*"[...] in parent-teacher meetings we criticize that the performance level of children is poor and low. Then we hear from the school: 'We do this and we do that. And everything is great. And we really only care about the children'."*

If pupils learn only little in class over a longer period of time, a gradual decline in performance sets in, which is sooner or later "pulling down" the entire school. This process can be observed at all integrated school forms. Since they are constantly busy with disciplinary problems, the teaching of the subject matter must become stunted. No school board is willing to admit that the level of performance at their school leaves much to be desired. All too often they appease, deny and talk sweet. Until the inspectorate is coming up and reveals the defects, in the wake of which the registration numbers of pupils decrease. A responsible school management would reveal the weaknesses in teaching of their own accord and develop counterstrategies together with the teaching staff. If the results were that the chosen (or rather the prescribed) learning method was responsible for weak performance among pupils, they would openly admit it and demand renunciation of the unfit. The welfare of children is always more important than the dogma of a learning method. In other words, governments and parties come and go. Deficits suffered by children in their school years may be

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## Will Curriculum 21 cause future apprentices to be less efficient?

wl. "Students are too stupid for an apprenticeship." An article with this dramatically-worded subtitle in the "Blick" of 9 February 2015 points out that the majority of applicants for commercial and technical apprenticeships display serious deficiencies in their scholastic qualifications. Reading, writing, arithmetic and a good work discipline are key skills that apprentices should have acquired in elementary schools so as to be able to meet new challenges at their training places and in their vocational schools. For years however, more and more voices have been heard complaining that this foundation is fragmentary in case of many apprentices.

Many masters and supervisors therefore allow their apprentices to fill their academic gaps during working hours.

In addition, various vocational schools offer special tuition in elementary school knowledge for apprentices – and that partly also during the time in which they should be working in their training companies. All the participants in professional education spend a lot of time and money to ensure that apprentices will pass their exams. Yet, despite the high cost, there are high failure rates, for example, 25 to 30 percent of failures are unfortunately normal with electricians.

Because of the controversial introduction of *Curriculum 21*, discussion is currently focussing on the elementary schools' actual mandate. The promise is that the above-mentioned school reform is to bring about significant improvements. With the deceptive notion of "competen-

cies" it is alleged that the pupils will supposedly become more competent. This article is questioning whether this claim is true, using the example of teaching mathematics. The "Berne Zeitung" of 13 February 2015 reports how this has changed in recent decades.

Here Prof *Caluori* of the University of Education for North-Western Switzerland explains: "Thirty years ago, I stood in front of the class and said something like, 'This is how it is done. This is the fastest and most elegant way of solving the problem.' [...] Today, students are taught to actively discover and develop their own solutions." In the same article Prof *Wälti* of the Berne University of Education says

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a burden for their lifetime in some cases. Who would take responsibility for that?

#### Summary

Individualised learning does not correspond to the ideal concept of teaching and learning. A reasonable learning process includes the intellectual exchange among all students. Mutual stimulation of different talents, which the defenders of "learning together for a longer time" put forward as pedagogical profit, does almost no longer take place in the *Gemeinschaftsschule*, because there the class has lost its traditional function as a learning and discussion community. For the great Germanist *Eberhard Lämmert* a conversation is the "alternating speech that educates people and binds them". The two verbs can be taken quite literally: A clev-

er-run classroom discussion "educates" and "binds". The cognitive (knowledge) and the affective (social virtues) go hand in hand. Why do we give all that up for the sake of an ideological setting?

Yet another aspect is often overlooked by proponents of individualized learning. Primarily the stronger pupils will benefit from this form of learning because they can organize and discipline themselves well. The nestor of (West) German didactics *Hermann Giesecke* warned years ago against the illusion that children with learning difficulties might benefit from heterogeneous learning groups, if we only differentiate the learning process: "Almost everything that modern pedagogy considers progressive, will be a disadvantage for the children from uneducated milieus. Especially the disadvantaged child needs an almost old-fashioned, directly guiding, but also patient and encourag-

ing teaching in order to escape from his or her condition." (quoted in: Michael Felten: "Bildungsgerechtigkeit – Gespenst oder Gebot?" [Educational justice – specter or commandment], 2012). And this "directly guiding" teaching, the discussion guided by the teacher, can only be done in relatively homogeneous groups of learners. Those who want the one thing – common learning or learning together – must defend the other thing – the differentiated system, with its homogeneous classes. I entrust the "printed permission" of the educational scientist *Jochen Grell* to all teachers in this republic: "You may teach directly, addressing the whole class at once. You need not be ashamed of yourself that you want to teach pupils. The school has been invented in order not to have to teach each child individually." •

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

*Rainer Werner* is a retired high school teacher for the subjects German and history. During his teaching career at three Berlin schools Rainer Werner wrote numerous books, especially teaching aids for teachers of German. The scale of titles ranges from "Psychoanalysis and Literature" over "Poetry in German lessons" to Schiller's drama "Die Räuber". These books' objective is to provide the teacher with didactically edited material for ambitious and creative German lessons. With lectures and workshops on German didactic topics Rainer Werner especially addresses young teachers and trainees to inspire and delight them for modern German lessons that succeed at involving students. Rainer Werner also interfered in public education and school policy debates. In the "Tageszeitung", the "Frankfurter Rundschau" and the "Welt" he published essays and commentaries on education and on educa-

tion policy. As an outstanding expert he also participated in debates on the radio. In 2011, as a result of his long teaching experience and his education policy engagement, he published the book "Auf den Lehrer kommt es an" (The teacher matters). It intends to show the teachers who engage in school, but also a wider public "how school can really succeed". In 2014 he published his latest book: "Teachers Make School. Why good teachers are so important". Since his retirement in 2011, Rainer Werner has increasingly engaged in the "internal school reform" that most schools have begun to realize by now. In training sessions, workshops and lectures Rainer Werner shows what steps can be taken in the lesson planning and in the design of school life in order to make their own school a "good school". Rainer Werner operates the website: <https://guteschuleblog.wordpress.com/>



**"Will Curriculum 21 make..."**

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that mathematics grades should better reflect students' thoughts rather than only the accuracy of their solutions. And the lecturer *Alfred Zahner* of the St. Gallen University of Education proposes, for example: "Watch the traffic on St. Leonard Street for ten minutes. Determine what the percentage of red motor cars is in respect to all cars driving by the bus stop." In other words, you walk out there, count cars for ten minutes, solve one (!) percentage problem and finally return to school. Would you rather prefer something a bit more efficient?

The teaching of mathematics has greatly changed: For example, today the number range is no longer expanded by small steps. Whereas until a few years ago first-graders first dealt with the numbers one to six, then up to ten and only after that up to twenty, they are today expected to do maths calculations up to 20 right away. The important difference of computing in single or in double figures (ten transition) used to be introduced and explained systematically, but now pupils are expected to find their own "creative ways" to cross this bridge. In old teaching materials for the second form the multiplication table was introduced and practised in numerical series, however the latter do even no longer appear in current teaching aids. Where do these changes come from?

For about 20 years, the well-sounding key concept of "constructivism" has been dominating the educational theory taught by most lecturers of teacher training colleges or educational universities. Even before this development the conventional teacher role and with it the well-proven classroom teaching has been forced back strongly by buzzwords like "open classroom" and "individualisation". Since the nineties "constructivism" has then figured as a kind of overall theory for various educational reforms: It was now assumed that as human beings, we are principally unable to discern reality, but that we piece together or "construct" our own individual image of reality in our brains. Accord-

*Markus Möhl*, president of the school board of the vocational school Lenzburg: "In addition, more and more young people are no longer reliable and able to withstand stress. [...] Through individual learning goals and increasingly self-directed learning they hardly experience what failure means. [...] By means of individualization the interests of the individual are essentially placed above the welfare of society. This promotes selfishness and ultimately harms all." (Aargauer Zeitung from 15 January 2015)

ing to this theory there is no longer any objectivity. It is alleged that anything like learning occurs only when the student "discovers" that his previously constructed image is not useful for the solution of the problem. These theories are of course at odds with a teacher who introduces a topic to his students systematically and in small steps. Now he is only supposed to create so-called "learning opportunities" and "learning environments", where students should "discover" something "autonomously".

Curriculum 21 seizes on this theory. Its "principles", for example, state: "Ideally, organized learning environments offer learning opportunities supported and varied by teachers and teaching aids. These are designed to acquire single, but more usually several, facets of one or more skills as well as to consolidate them and to apply them in special situations." Curriculum 21 expressly demands that in mathematics, students should look for their own paths, explore relationships and formulate conjectures – again we meet the idea that students shall discover mathematical structures independently, while the teacher is only the provider of their material of research. However, most students need the structured guidance of a teacher – so the above-mentioned method of teaching often produces dyscalculia and frustration instead of mathematical understanding.

On the other hand, Curriculum 21 fixes the "basic requirements" in actual arithmetic at such a low level that more education cuts are to be feared – after all, with all this "exploring" and "discovering" there is not enough time to learn the subject matter previously studied and practised. For instance, according to Curriculum 21 and unlike before, students need not master the multiplication tables at the end of the second grade. And even later they are only to become acquainted with it, instead of mastering it. However, the students are expected to use a calculator in maths from the fourth grade upwards. Written multiplications and divisions are then entirely omitted. Also up to the end of the ninth form percentages, exponentiations and root calculations do not have to be understood but are simply completed by using a pocket calculator. After all, there are not even any "basic requirements" fixed for this area that all students would have to satisfy.

In the consultation response of the "Schweizer Gewerbeverband" (Swiss Trade Association) about Curriculum 21 we therefore find the following assessment: "In vocational education the standards of mathematical knowledge and skills are rather modest in scope. In most occupations it is much more important that the basics have really been mastered at the time of entrance into the first

*Heinz von Foerster*, one of the founders of constructivism: "You ask a child, 'what is two times two?' And it says, 'green!' Such a response is unpredictable in an ingenious way, but it [...] contravenes our longing for security and predictability. This child is not yet a predictable citizen, and it might one day not even follow our laws. The consequence is that we will send it to an institution for trivialization officially called school."

year of training. These are skills in which some sort of drill is expedient, even if that word is frowned upon in educational theory."

Until the nineties, teaching materials had introduced the structures of mathematics gradually, step by step, and teachers had also applied this "sort of drill". Curricula and teacher training laid the foundation for structuring a lesson systematically. Today "constructivist" teaching is proclaimed almost everywhere at educational universities where teacher training takes place. The same applies in the area of teaching materials: Systematically structured books, etc. are disposed of in the waste paper, while the new compulsory teaching materials follow the concept of "constructivist" teaching. They have been adapted to Curriculum 21 even before it has been adopted, and for example in Thurgau they have already been made compulsory.

This shows that Curriculum 21 is part of an agenda, in which critical debate or democratic participation is not welcome. For years, Curriculum 21 has been developed in virtual secrecy. This has cost the cantons almost 9 million Swiss francs. In the canton of Thurgau alone, 4.7 million Swiss francs have been budgeted for the introduction of the new Curriculum from 2013 to 2021. Not included are, of course, the follow-up costs for special education at schools and remedial courses at vocational schools for those students who do not discover the required mathematical relations by themselves, as well as for the planned federal education monitoring (testing), in which the acquisition of all those "competences" is to be checked. By 2019 educational monitoring in Switzerland will have cost further 6.75 million Swiss francs, the cost of remedial courses and special education are unknown.

It is high time that the industries paid attention to the school issue. If the education bureaucracy and the colleges of education no longer work in the interest of society as a whole, it seems necessary that all citizens – including entrepreneurs – should clearly express what they expect of the educational system. •

(Translation *Current Concerns*)