

# 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*

## For humane and responsible finances

**“Renewing research and teaching in finance, economics and management to better serve the common good”**

*Appeal of teachers and researchers*

**1** The authors of this appeal are deeply concerned that more than three years after the outbreak of the financial and macroeconomic crisis that highlighted the pitfalls, limitations, dangers and responsibilities of main-stream thought in economics, finance and management, the quasi-monopolistic position of such thought within the academic world nevertheless remains largely unchallenged. This situation reflects the institutional power that the unconditional proponents of main-stream thought continue to exert on university teaching and research. This domination, propagated by the so-called top universities, dates back at least a quarter of a century and is effectively global. However, the very fact that this paradigm persists despite the current crisis, highlights the extent of its power and the dangerousness of its dogmatic character. Teachers and researchers, the signatories of the appeal, assert that this situation restricts the fecundity of research and teaching in economics, finance and management, diverting them as it does from issues critical to society.

**2** This appeal is public and international and may be seen as part of a broader framework of convergent initiatives. Under current conditions, the academic world cannot be expected to train the open, innovative, responsible minds that are required for facing current and future challenges. This situation is restricted neither to Switzerland nor to Europe. Research on economics, finance, and management ought to contribute to the common good and avoid complacent analysis about the supposed benefits that the economic system may derive from of financialization of economic and social activities driven by the alleged benefits of financial innovation and speculation.

**3** Professors, lecturers and researchers have been entrusted by society with the task of serving the society through their search for a better understanding

of reality. Only in this context does academic freedom have a real meaning. Such freedom entails a responsibility and not a mere license. Today the major priorities for research in finance, economics and management should be to examine their foundations as well as the implications of these foundations for practice in light of the events that led to the financial crisis. Only on the basis of such an examination will it be possible to design policies and remedies which lead to a balanced functioning of the economy.

**4** It is imperative to go beyond discussions between specialists with a similar cast of mind. Inevitably such discussions are likely to fall short of a critical examination of premises. The present situation requires the opening of the disciplines of economics, finance and management to a fundamental questioning, free of the trammels of the dominant conceptual framework, which is required for their regeneration. However, such efforts face strong resistance within the academic world and must therefore seek external support. Affirmation of the need of the disciplines of economics, finance and management for plurality of approaches entails debate concerning these disciplines' epistemological, ethical and anthropological foundations.

**5** As trustees of the confidence of citizens and as producers of ideas that influence attitudes, behaviors and policies, we wish to draw the attention of public opinion and politicians to the fact that the conditions required for the responsible carrying-out of our mission are missing. This appeal is addressed, on the one hand, to students, researchers early in their careers, colleagues and economic actors and, on the other hand, to those with essential roles in the management of academic education and research such as rectors, presidents and deans of academic in-

continued on page 2

## The common good first Federal Council: And now get to work!

*by Suzette Sandoz, former  
National Councilor, Pully/Switzerland*

The dice have been cast. The time of caustic or contented comments is over. The global economic war is raging. The country needs a strong Federal Council, i.e. one whose members form a real team; and the political parties must stop counting their seats and putting their egos – or that of their party presidents – first.

The four major parties in the country are represented in the executive branch of the Confederation, where they occupy six out of seven seats. The concordance principle is respected. The arithmetic issue will never be resolved to our full satisfaction, unless we change the number of seats at each election, so that the number is easy to split, or if we exchange members in case of any numerical change in party shares.

The seventh seat was granted to a person who has not proved to be unworthy, and who has been a member of the executive staff since the beginning of the global crisis. This person would still be a member of Switzerland's largest party if the internal disputes of this party would not have led to her exclusion. That is history. Let us consider the matter as closed. The greatness of a person's political competence shows in his ability to stay aloof from bickering. Now the SVP will have the opportunity to prove worthy of the confidence that many citizens showed them. It would mean to betray this trust if the party went into opposition, and thus would put the balance and stability of the country at risk in an era in which these two features are vital to withstand the attacks and the jealousy of the European Union and the United States in crisis, not to mention at war.

Now it is time to look into the future, a stormy future in which our country faces further assaults of its neighbors today and in the future; since these neighbors have become panic-stricken by the financial and

continued on page 2

**"For humane and ..."**

continued from page 1

stitutions, and administrators of research funding. All these parties have role to play in to ensuring the fulfillment of conditions for a fundamental regeneration of our disciplines and for the required return to intellectual pluralism.

6 Teachers of higher education, the signatories of this appeal, wish to suggest some courses of action that would promote such pluralism, the only defense against the risk of blinkered dogmatism and the misguided loss of intellectual and political direction which is the result of this dogmatism. These courses of action include:

- Undertaking a critical retrospective review of recent teaching and research in economics, finance and management with the aim of raising awareness concerning the relevance to society of work in disciplines which are supported by public funding. Academic freedom cannot be a justification for teachers and researchers to ignore their broader social responsibility.
- Actively promoting interdisciplinarity at institutional level through the encouragement of enhanced communication, of opening dedicated institutional spaces and fostering links between academics in different disciplines.

7 Conditions have to be created to make intellectual pluralism a reality at all levels of the academic hierarchy through measures such as the following:

- Consideration should be given when recruiting new academic personnel to their interest in broader socio-economic problems as well as in issues bearing on the equity, stability and sustainability of the economic and financial system.
- The criteria for the evaluation of research should be expanded to include practical relevance and willingness, manifested in publications, to tackle interdisciplinary themes. Such an expansion would counterbalance existing criteria which attribute overwhelming importance to the number of publications in a limited number of highly rated, monolithic journals.

8 Subjecting prevailing main-stream thought to reasoned criticism is a scientific duty. Such criticism makes possible

progress towards the goal of intellectual pluralism in the disciplines of economics, finance and management, an intellectual pluralism which is essential to the capacity of these disciplines to enrich public debate and to clarify the nature of policy choices.

*The authors of this appeal are the following:*

*Prof. Hon. Claude Auroi IUHEID – Geneva, Switzerland*  
*Prof. Heinrich Bortis University of Fribourg, Switzerland*  
*Prof. Marc Chesney University of Zurich, Switzerland*  
*Prof. Paul Dembinski University of Fribourg, Switzerland*  
*Prof. Denis Dupré University of Grenoble, France*  
*Prof. Rajna Gibson University of Geneva Switzerland*  
*Prof. Jean-Christophe Graz University of Lausanne Switzerland*  
*Em. Prof. Chris Lefebvre Catholic University of Leuven Belgium*  
*Prof. Rafeal Matos HES Sierre Switzerland*  
*Em. Prof. Claude Mouchot University of Lyon 2 France*  
*Prof. Alfred Pastor IESE – Barcelona Spain*  
*Prof. Étienne Perrot Catholic Institute of Paris, France*  
*Prof. HES Marie-Françoise Perruchoud-Massy HES Sierre, Switzerland*  
*Prof. Frédéric Poulon University Montesquieu – Bordeaux IV, France*  
*Prof. Birger P. Priddat University of Witten/Herdecke, Germany*  
*Gilles Raveaud Maître de conférences University Paris 8 Saint-Denis, France*  
*Prof. Sergio Rossi University of Fribourg, Switzerland*  
*Prof. Jean-Michel Servet IUHEID – Geneva, Switzerland*  
*Prof. Milad Zarin University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland*

*(Genève-Fribourg-Zürich March 2011)*

The colleagues from teaching and research and all interested persons, who read this appeal and would like to sign it, can do this on this blog by clicking on the following link: <http://www.responsiblefinance.ch/appeal/sign-for-call>. For any comments on this appeal please use the following field.

You can also send your signatures and comments to: [manifeste@obsfin.ch](mailto:manifeste@obsfin.ch).

(Translation Current Concerns)

**"The common good first"**

continued from page 1

economic crisis which they are largely responsible for themselves.

As the United States undergo an analogous economic crisis, although it has different reasons, we must unfortunately speak of a global economic war. This war, which is not waged on a military level, includes methods of psychological intimidation to gain financial benefits. And it is at this level that the Federal Council – but also the Parliament – has to be very firm and united. They must never give in to whatever moral accusation they have to face, because that is the point where the others try to "strike" us, knowing that we want to be paragons of virtue.

Dare we say: No! Our tax system is not outrageous. The competence of the cantons in this area is totally legitimate. It is adapted to the life and the needs of our fellow citizens, and it is up to you neighbors to take action in your own countries to make taxation attractive for your inhabitants.

No! Our banking secrecy is not a scandal. It may be a protection against the greed of inquisitorial political systems. We will make sure to regulate it in a way so that unscrupulous people cannot misuse it; but you will have to do the same with your own banks.

No! The financing of our political parties is not shamefully obscure. There is a fundamental difference between the political system in our country, in which the parties merely fund the direct elections of the members of parliament on the federal level, which reduces their influence considerably. Your election system, in which the parties fund the direct election of executive members who exercise the real power in small numbers, is different. You have to know who paid for the election of your President and your Prime Minister. However, we do not have to know who in one canton or the other supported this or the other Member of Parliament financially.

No! Our semi-direct democracy and federalism may not be sold off in the name of a centralized simplification because they are an essential condition of our inner peace, and Europe can have no interest in hosting a trouble spot in his lap.

Yes! We are always open to negotiations, to discussion, to the search for a friendly solution; but when we speak we do so by looking the partner in the eye, not by presenting ourselves as sinners. •

Source: *Le Temps* on 19.12.2011

(Translation Current Concerns)

## Taking on social responsibility as well in the financial sector

Interview with Professor Marc Chesney, Professor of Finance and Vice Director of the Institute of Banking and Finance at the University of Zurich

*Current Concerns: Professor Chesney, you are co-initiator of the appeal "Sustainable and Responsible Finance" – what motivated you to do so? What is your main criticism with respect to the current situation in teaching and research? What are the causes of the current misery?*



Prof Marc Chesney  
(picture ma)

Professor Marc Chesney: In the appeal we say that the financial crisis revealed the limits and hazards as well as the responsibility of the prevailing doctrine in economics, i.e. the *Chicago School*. This school claims in particular, the markets were efficient and able to regulate themselves, and government intervention were inherently dangerous.

We, the authors of this appeal, note with concern that four years after the onset of the financial crisis, this doctrine is still claiming a virtual monopoly in the academic world. This monopoly is based on the institutional power that is exercised unconditionally on universities and research. It is problematic that the scientific journals qualified as "A-journals", which the researchers are to make use of, publish too little critical articles and junior colleagues fear for their careers if they critically comment on issues. We argue for greater pluralism in teaching and research.

The universities are public in Switzerland, and therefore the professors for financial studies should represent society's interests.

*The appeal has been published in various countries. What has been the response to your appeal so far?*

So far about 400 people have signed the appeal, mainly from Switzerland, but also from Germany, France, Austria, Spain, and Italy. Most of them are from the academic world, but not exclusively. Unfortu-

nately, in the financial sector there are not many interested colleagues.

*Where do you see definite ways to create conditions for sustainable and ethically sound economic sciences oriented towards the common good? What needs to be changed?*

The professors should critically analyze the content of teaching and the hypothesis of the models. After that, we should not use models that are not realistic but develop new ones. The doctrine should be adapted.

For example, the scientific research in finance did not consider enough what systemic risks the new financial products pose. We must show clearly that derivative products (such as options, or CDS, i.e. *credit default swaps*) do not only serve to cover the risk, but also create a system risk, as it has been shown since 2007. We also missed to explore, in how far trading outside the stock exchange, the non-transparent and unregulated so-called OTC transactions (OTC=*Over the counter*) or securitization, i.e. tradable credits, are dangerous for the stability of the economy. In this respect, the economic sciences also share the responsibility.

*What measures do you propose with regard to the financial crisis?*

OTC financial products should be prohibited in order to obtain more clarity and transparency. They are dangerous because they make the risk more diffuse and in most cases information about these products are not tangible.

Moreover, we should aim at a certification of financial products. We certify in the pharmaceutical industry, in the food or the auto industry. That means we should create a national and/or international organization for financial services, too, which can analyze these products to see whether they generate systemic risks or not, that is whether they are permissible and will be allowed or not. The financial crisis has shown us that financial products that create systemic risks are dangerous for the real economy and for our society.

*In the appeal you address the issue of interdisciplinary cooperation. Where do you notice shortcomings and where some potential for a meaningful development of the financial industry?*

As we have already written in the appeal, professors, teachers and researchers are carriers of trust in the society that has imposed on them the duty to serve by constantly searching for a better understanding of the real world and through sharing their knowledge. In order to serve the society and the real economy, debates behind closed doors among specialists, who all follow the same pattern, prove to be problematic. We need more diversity and interdisciplinarity, among others with the fields of ethics, philosophy, anthropology, for example.

*You talk about the responsibility for society. What tasks do you see in the training of future financial experts and economists?*

At the universities we train future leaders, so we have a responsibility towards society. Students should understand that finance is not just a technical field, but has other dimensions still. If we stay on a purely technical level in training, we risk to train more *Jérôme Kerviel*s (he had bestowed the bank *Société Générale* in 2008 with the highest loss in its history of 4.9 billion with fraudulent speculations in options) or *Kweko Adobolis* (the UBS broker, who had piled up a loss of around two billion dollars in the "equities" department in London).

It is about connecting the financial to the ethical dimensions in our professional discipline. Those who handle securities have a responsibility beyond the company which also affects society.

*Professor Chesney, thank you for the interview.*

*Marc Chesney* studied mathematics and economics in Paris. From 1993 to 2003 he was professor at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales HEC in Paris. Since 2003 he is Associate Professor of Finance at the Department of Finance and Banking at the University of Zurich; since 2008 he has also been its vice president. Furthermore, he is a Research Fellow at the Center for Religion, Economics and Politics ZRWP, a joint facility of the Universities of Basel, Lausanne, Lucerne and Zurich and the Collegium Helveticum.

# General Guisan's election by the Romands

by Jean-Jacques Rapin

Recently General *Guisan* was elected by the Western Swiss Person of the Century the viewers of the Western Swiss Television TSR, ahead of *Nicolas Hayek*, who was not really from Romandy, and a whole lot of other prominent figures such as *Claude Nicollier*, *Didier Cuche* and *Bertrand Piccard* (living not only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century).

This is an incredible, amazing election which no one would have dared to bet on! Despite the systematic denigration, the dragging of our history through the mud and the sick insinuations in the recent years, there is a kind of barrier in the memory of a nation. In the right moment it reminds us of the fact that people like *Guillaume Henri Dufour* or *Henri Guisan* were historic personalities, who – whether we want it or not – are part of our collective unconsciousness. Their lives and their exemplary functions – with light and dark sides – must remain in the memory

of the community and are handed down as such to the following generations, otherwise we will have to fear an intellectual barrenness. To ignore this would be a perverse act. This would cut the ties that unifies a sequence of generations. These ties are based on the confidence, on trust and the great respect for our ancestors. Through such a cut the currently active virus of self-vilification, of self-destruction and of self-contempt will be settling in our minds.

If extraordinary circumstances bring the country into extreme danger, the responsibility of the helmsman – in this case General Guisan – will increase to extraordinary dimensions as well. This was understood by the population in 1940, and those of 2011 have not forgotten it. We would be trifling, we would even be mean and cowardly if we trivialized the risks or would even deny it later. Quite the opposite is true, extraordinary courage and the

strong will of the man who was capable of demonstrating the embodiment of the absolute spirit of resistance must receive recognition in appreciation of his achievement.

This attitude of the general has left its marks in his epoch. The population has been sensitive to it. They showed a connectedness, which makes us think: his picture was hanging in every single village pup, and in most family libraries was a book that was dedicated to him. Continue to believe that General Guisan played a decisive role in the protection of our independence with the help of Providence, and so to remind us of the virtues of the spirit of resistance is not an absurdity. By their election the Romands have shown courage against the spirit of the times and respect for our ancestors. •

Source: *La Nation*, 30.12.2011

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

“Group Giardino”: Open letter to the members of the Swiss Federal Assembly

## Security of country and people must retain highest priority

*Ladies and Gentlemen of the Federal Assembly*

On Monday, 5 December 2011 you took oath on our constitution, where also the articles are included that concern our army, which we would like to call to your mind, also giving you our assessment:

- “Switzerland has an army.” (Art. 58 exp. 1) and not a “Swiss National Guard” or a “Competence Centre for Defence”. The army’s primary mission comes first in the text of our constitution:
- “The army serves war prevention [...]; it defends the country and its population.” (Art. 58 exp. 2) The Federal Constitution does not mention anything about “maintaining the competence”, but about the permanent tasks of “war prevention” and “defence”. 200,000 army personnel are not sufficient to fulfil this mission. An enlargement is compelling.
- “[The army] supports the civil authorities in the protection from serious threats of internal security and in mastering other extraordinary situations.” (Art. 58 exp. 2). 37,000 army personnel for these supporting tasks are not enough in case of “serious threats” in “extraordinary situations”. Leadership, self-protection, relief resources, vacation and the required perseverance mean that only a few thousand army personnel for guard/protection remain.

– “The Federation protects the constitutional order of the cantons”. (Art. 52 exp. 1) Distributed to 26 cantons, hardly 300 army personnel per canton remain to be deployed for object protection.

– “[The Federal Assembly] takes measures to maintain the external security, independence and neutrality of Switzerland.” (Art. 173 exp. 1 Ziff.a) Nothing is said about “co-operation” with the foreign countries. Instead independence and neutrality are to be protected.

The recent decisions, taken by the members of the Federal Assembly in the past summer and in autumn 2011 concerning the national defence, are pointing into a slightly positive direction more than was the case in the past (complete equipment, more financial means). *Giardino* supports the decision concerning the procurement order for the air fighter “Gripen”, taken by the Swiss Federal Council some days ago.

However, we are altogether convinced that the already resolved and planned measures (in particularly with respect to the army size) still fall short and must be qualified as unconstitutional on closer consideration. Moreover, the plebiscite was ignored: On the 18 May 2003 the majority of the population (76%) agreed to the military law called “Army XXI”. As the key figure an army size of 220,000 personnel (thereof 140,000 “active serving”) was agreed upon. On 6 June 2011

the National Parliament decided in favour of the retention of the army reserve (initiated by MOP Galladé, 09,4102) and thus confirmed the plebiscite. This reserve must be maintained also in the future as a minimum structural, “inner” reserve. It will increase perseverance, particularly in case of support tasks of the cantons.

We invite you to consider our thoughts and concerns in the interest of the security of our country and its people for your further political decisions.

There is not the smallest doubt about the fact that the global and European development – in the broadest sense of the term – appreciably worsen and the pressure on Switzerland will become bigger. Therefore it can not be and must not be that the small state of Switzerland continues to weaken its last security reserve, our proven militia army and our mandatory military service. The history of the 20s and 30s of the last century should serve as a warning. Any price for a failure would be high. Whether we will again be as lucky as in the period of 1939–1945, must definitely remain open. We should not rely on it.

Please take note!  
Sincerely yours

*Greppen/Heiden on the 8<sup>th</sup> of  
December 2011  
Hermann Suter, President  
Franz Betschon, Vice-president  
www.gruppe-giardino.ch*

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

## Facing the Future with Confidence

*Farewell address of Federal President Micheline Calmy-Rey, Head of the Confederate Department of Foreign Affairs, given on the occasion of the new election of the Federal Council, Berne, 14 December 2011*

Mr President  
of the National  
Council,  
Mr President of  
the Council of  
States,  
Ladies and  
Gentlemen of  
the National  
Council,  
Ladies and  
Gentlemen of  
the Council of  
States,  
Ladies and  
Gentlemen



former Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey  
(picture thk)

In the beginning of 2003 when I started my work at the *Confederate Department of Foreign Affairs*, the world was still in a state of shock after the attacks of 11 September. It was a few weeks before the beginning of the Iraq war, conducted by a coalition under US leadership. This conflict has created deep rifts in the previously so imperturbable Atlantic Alliance. Then we heard about an “old” and a “new” Europe. Now the Iraq war is over and the last American troops are about to leave the country. However, the difficulties in Afghanistan and the more frequent attacks on the Hindu Kush show that the real reasons behind the conflict have not disappeared.

The world has changed in these nine years. The centers of economic and political interest are shifting – in a permanent way. China and India have moved up into the group of superpowers. These two states have actually become the motors of global economic growth.

The OECD is expecting that in 2030 the economy of the developing countries including the emerging market countries will represent 60% of the global BIP. The West, that is the United States and Europe, is still enjoying the highest standard of living globally. However, the share of the western economies is continually decreasing.

The debt crisis in the euro-zone and in the United States is demonstrating the fragility of our economic structures. Several European states and the US have called investors of emerging countries to finance their debts. This is particularly true for China, which is holding substantial money reserves. Here we see new dependencies emerging. On their effects, also geo-politically, we can only speculate today.

In any case, we will see an end of the West’s hegemony over economy and poli-



*“Due to its long tradition of democracy and dialog, its non-colonial past, its neutrality, due to the high standard of its diplomacy and due to the stability of its political system, Switzerland is a particularly credible, reliable and constructive partner.”*

(picture thk)

tics, exerted in various ways since the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

*Ladies and gentlemen*

Substantial globalization will accompany the end of Western hegemony. It is affecting all areas: not only finance and economy but also the areas of energy, climate and environment. And of course terrorism, trans-national crime and human trafficking which do not respect borders.

Within a century, we have changed from a world dominated by the European Continent to a multi-polar world where the balance of power is more complex. I think that mutual dependencies and multipolarity will be the two characteristics of the coming era.

The state, which used to dominate international relationships with his agenda, will have to define a new role in this multi-polar and global universe. There is no doubt that the state will remain an important actor in the world, but one who has to collaborate with other actors like the international organizations, private enterprises and the civil society. The latter has profited highly from the new technologies, being able to influence the fate of certain states – just think about North Africa and the Middle East. And, ladies and gentlemen, how could we miss the global in-

fluence of the multi-national enterprises? How could we overlook the financial markets’ influence on the conduct of states or on global development?

These serious tendencies are deeply changing the present society and will of course have an impact on the position of Europe or Switzerland in the world.

In these nine years, we have put our focus on European politics, strengthening the bilateral relations. We have entered strategic partnerships with emerging countries, deepening our commitment for global problems. The main emphasis was on the position of Switzerland as mediator and actor in the further development of international law.

*Ladies and gentlemen*

In the past years, we have developed foreign politics and diplomacy in a difficult environment with important concepts and ideas. We have promoted the politics of human safety with numerous initiatives; we have made proposals for the reform of institutions and for questions of global governance; we have strengthened our efforts for mediation in conflicts; in dialog with difficult but relevant partners, we have turned against stigmatization in

continued on page 6

**"Facing the future with confidence"**

continued from page 5

order to give diplomacy a chance over force. We have struggled for a development of law, particularly with respect to the protection of civilians, even if we had to content with non-binding rules where we would have preferred to establish binding agreements. Moreover, we have made progress in fighting poverty and in areas like water, climate change, migration and health. We have contributed to the reduction of inequalities, fostering the access to resources.

*Ladies and gentlemen*

Too many people are living in poverty. More than a billion people do not have enough money for food and another billion are on the verge of relapsing to poverty.

Problematic is also the global distribution of poverty and income. In the last 20 years, the poorest fifth of the world population has only been able to raise its share of the total income by half a percent while a group of 10 million people has doubled its wealth within just one decade.

*Ladies and gentlemen*

What we need is a sustainable and just economic growth – goals we can only accomplish with a stable financial system.

The financial system has developed due to a multiplication of its leverage effects and not based on real growth. So it has become obvious for a while now that the financial and banking system has to change.

This means that the financial markets have to be regulated and supervised and that at the same time they have to become more transparent. This means that the "Financial Stability Board" has to be strengthened, implying regulations for guarantees for "too big to fail" banks and

the separation into commercial and investment banks. The arrogant behavior and particularly the amount of bonuses in some of these enterprises have shocked us and induced us to actions.

*Ladies and gentlemen*

In our politics, we have to assess the relations of power realistically. There are those who think that we are weak and unable to accomplish anything. And there are those who think that we are omnipotent and able to solve any problem. They are both wrong. International relations are relations of power, shaped by the search for compromise between diverging interests. The style we have practiced in our domestic politics for centuries has now also become the core of our foreign politics.

Of course, we are facing a number of issues for which we do not have any solutions yet: We are in difficult preliminary discussions with the European Union. However, we are moving forward and we have a strategy opening the path towards a new round of bilateral negotiations and discussions about questions regarding the application of the current agreements. With important economic partners, we have differences on tax questions. With our neighbors, we have differences on questions of cross-border cooperation, particularly the freedom of movement, our airports and other questions of traffic. Nevertheless, we are working towards practical solutions for the problems, making constructive proposals.

Based on the development of the past years we are compelled to the following statement regarding the Swiss foreign politics: We have to support the interests of our country, articulated by domestic politics, by an increased international presence. Passive abstaining will not help our national interests – and it will only con-

strain our influence and our possibilities. More than ever, Switzerland needs commitment and cooperation.

*Ladies and gentlemen*

Today's multi-polarity and globalization are an important challenge for Switzerland. Nevertheless, I am convinced that in essence they represent a huge chance for us.

In a dynamic environment characterized by multi-polarity and pluralism, states have no choice but to obey – as I would call it – the imperative of collaboration. It has no choice but to involve all participants relevant for a certain topic – that is, not only the political actors – in the search for a solution.

Due to its long tradition of democracy and dialog, its non-colonial past, its neutrality, due to the high standard of its diplomacy and due to the stability of its political system, Switzerland is a particularly credible, reliable and constructive partner.

Since today we have more decision centers, a higher number of international actors and global problems that even the most powerful country in the world is unable to solve, Switzerland has better chances to be heard than during the cold war with two confronting superpowers.

We founded our federal state in 1848, during a time when the European Continent was in turmoil. At the time, Switzerland was full of audacity, courage and openness. We decided to face the future with optimism and to seize the chances it provides. Today we are again facing huge unrest and Switzerland has to find the courage to believe in its future.

I would like to thank you very much for your attention and I would like to thank you for your cooperation in the past nine years when I had the honor to head the Confederate Department for Foreign Affairs. •

Source: [www.admin.ch](http://www.admin.ch)

# Who decides on waging wars?

**To eliminate a development project: Was this the reason behind waging war against Libya?**

by Hannes Hofbauer

Since the breakdown of the Soviet Union, the Comecon and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation in 1991, three heads of states, odious to Western governments and institutions such as USA, EU and NATO were killed by them, respectively died under their responsibility. This is remarkable. On the 11 March 1996 *Slobodan Milošević*, former president of Yugoslavia, was left without medical help during his trial in the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in Den Haag and died in his cell in Scheveningen. On the 30 December 2006 *Saddam Hussein*, former prime minister and president of Iraq was hanged in Al-Kadhimiya North-East of Baghdad. On the 20 October 2011 *Muammar al-Gaddafi* was lynched in Sirte.

What do these three dead leaders have in common? First and visible the brutal form of their elimination. No serious trial, no hearing, no international examination took place concerning their guilt or responsibility for alleged war crimes. Western media convicted them by following the will of the Western military alliance surrounding NATO. In the moment of their elimination all of them were presented as the personification of evil. This demonization even allowed exposing – in the case of Gaddafi and Saddam Hussein and his sons – their distorted dead bodies to the public. Media consumers were supposed to look at them as devils not as human beings. This form of brutalisation also shows a historical step backwards in terms of standards of civilization.

Milošević, Saddam Hussein, and Gaddafi were physically eliminated because they were enemies, not because of their crimes, and for sure: all three were criminals, responsible for monstrous crimes. But these crimes – repressive policy towards ethnic minorities and political opposition – served the West only as a pretext for military interventions. This is the only interpretation possible because political oppression is taking place all over the world without the “international community” considering a military intervention. From Saudi Arabia to Spain [Basque country], from Nigeria to Indonesia: Nato would have their hands full of work to send their armada to combat for human rights.

Only in specific cases the Western allies take military action, allegedly to protect civilians. When and where are they doing that and what are the reasons behind?

The Western allies did not hunt down Slobodan Milošević, Saddam Hussein and Muammar al-Gaddafi because of their bad politics, but because of their good ones.

All three of them can be seen as different symbols of a “development dictatorship”. This included social policy for the masses, efforts to achieve regional balance and economic modernization. For some decades Yugoslavia, Iraq and Libya had used a huge amount of public money to modernise society. Instead of administering the state in favour of foreign investors, they used the means of the nationalization of industries for social and regional development. Western firms had only restricted access to the markets. This was one of the reasons why Milošević, Saddam Hussein and Gaddafi were considered as “odious” by the troika of Nato, USA, and EU.

But also their geopolitical position made them suspicious to the Western allies. Milošević, Saddam Hussein and Gaddafi were leaders of societies on the periphery of the Western sphere of influence, historically as well as presently. Yugoslavia, Iraq and Libya – all three of them were key states between the two blocks in the period of the Cold War and they saw no reason to relinquish their independent stance towards western take-overs and eastern greediness. Moscow and Washington, each guaranteed indirectly one half of this independence, leading to an increase in national self-confidence. After the breakdown of the Soviet Union their self-confidence lost its backing leading directly into disaster. It looks as if the “in-betweens” of the two old geopolitical blocks had to suffer most under the advance of imperial strategies to streamline political regimes in order to take over economic core pieces.

And they were not willing to give-up political and economic independence completely, as they were asked for after

---

**“... – far more important – an offer to Gazprom to construct a pipeline through the Mediterranean Sea to provide Libyan gas for Europe.”**

---

the breakdown of the Soviet Union. Their closeness to Moscow had allowed them to keep a relative distance to Western economic and political interests. Out of this position “in between” they had developed a certain self-confidence, which survived the breakdown of the Soviet Union. But this position directly led to catastrophic situations without the geopolitical backing. It looks as if the “In-betweens” of the two old geopolitical blocks had to suffer most under the advance of imperial strategies. Did it happen, because they could have achieved a different integration in the world market than the one dictated by

EU, USA and Nato? Did the imperial troika feel threatened by this?

Yugoslavia, Iraq and Libya: All three states have a long history of economic partnership with Comecon (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) in the Eastern Bloc. Up to the late eighties trade with investment and consumer goods, and weapons flourished. And all three of them were willing to trade on barter or bilateral clearing as well as on hard currency basis. This was frowned upon by world of the dollar hegemony. This mixture could be seen best in the Soviet-Iraqi system of trade. Iraqi oil was imported by the Soviet Union in exchange for Soviet weapons, and then Moscow sold this oil to India on hard currency basis in a triangular arrangement. In the early 1990s the United States and the European Community used the weakness of the post-Soviet leadership to impose economic embargos via Uno on all of the three economically strong and independent acting countries. In August 1990 Iraq was put under a total trade and financial embargo under the pretext of its invasion of Kuwait some days before. Two years later, in 1992, the UN Security Council asked all member states to sanction Yugoslavia (on 30 May) and Libya (on 31 May). In the case of Belgrade the argument for the sanctions was that the Yugoslav army had actively taken part in the civil war. In the case of Tripoli the bomb explosion of the Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, that had taken place years ago, served as a pretext to sanction Libya.

In the cases of Libya and Iraq this partnership was rooted in a common interest geopolitically as well as ideologically to counterbalance Western economic and political advances since at least the 1970s. This was true also for Yugoslavia a decade later. And all three of them were willing to trade on barter or bilateral clearing as well as on hard currency basis. [...]

Iraq, Yugoslavia and Libya were the only states to be paralyzed by long-lasting economic blockades. And also their traditional economic partners in the east were hit: Russia, Bulgaria, Rumania ... Just in a time where the crashing post-communist economies were struggling to re-orientate themselves. They were in urgent need of reasonable strong partners to trade in non-dollar currency or directly barter goods. This was prevented by the embargos against Iraq, Yugoslavia and Libya. In the beginning not yet cleansed officials of the soviet epoch voiced their outrage about the imposed losses: “In the first 6 months

continued on page 8

**"Who decides on ..."**

continued from page 7

since the existence of the economic embargos against Iraq the Soviet Union has lost 4 billions of US dollars." reported *Igor Mordvinov*, speaker of the ministry of Foreign Economic Relations. Today, we know that the later Russian Federation lost much more: the possibility of an alternative economic integration in the US-dominated global market.

Milošević and Saddam Hussein were already dead, when Gaddafi's Libya saw a small window of opportunity to survive after 2003 without delivering themselves totally to the dictates of Washington and

**"Gazprom asked Gaddafi to sell 'all gas and liquefied natural gas intended for export from Libya at competitive prices in the future' to Gazprom, as 'Interfax' noted on the 9 July 2008."**

Brussels. International agreements were signed with Great Britain, France and Italy. But also the traditional Libyan-Russian relationship was going to be renewed. 2004, after Tripoli had paid compensation to the heirs of the Lockerby victims however without a joined confession of guilt, the UN Security Council suspended the embargo. Until then, Gaddafi had survived the economic sanctions as the only one of the 3 pariahs. International agreements with Great Britain France and Italy were signed. But Gaddafi remembered the good relations with Moscow and began to reactivate them. In the wake of the western contacts Moscow and Tripoli tried to foster economic links. In 2007 *Sergey Lavrov* visited the desert country to talk about a new start of Russian-Libyan cooperation and to prepare the visit of *Vladimir Putin* five months later. Two big civil projects were to be discussed: a contract for Russian railways to be built 550 km of a new line connecting Sirte with Benghazi; and – far more important – an offer to Gazprom to construct a pipeline through the Mediterranean Sea to supply Libyan gas for Europe. On the peak of these possible new relations the boss of Gazprom, *Alexei Miller*, came to Tripoli in April 2008 with an offer that could have been a geopolitical bomb. In the west the alarm bells tolled. Gazprom asked Gaddafi to sell "all gas and liquefied natural gas intended for export from Libya at competitive prices in future" to Gazprom, as *Interfax* noted on the 9 July 2008. This offer was a real threat to the West. If the contract had been signed, Gazprom would have controlled most of the west European gas-supply. From the "North Stream" pipeline opening November 2011 to the still to be constructed "Mediterranean pipeline" West-

ern Europe's supply of gas could have been under Russian control.

As we know today, history developed differently. Since a couple of weeks CEO's from Western oil-, gas-, and water-firms are heading towards Libya to obtain production and usage contracts from a non-existing state with a so-called "transitional" government, which makes the buying cheaper. After 8 months of war Libya's market is open for the big players of the "collation of the willing", for the big capital of France, Great Britain and the United States.

*Abdel Rahim el-Kib*, Libya's interim Prime Minister in charge at the editorial deadline of this article, will fulfil his ad-

ministrative duties to the western investors without contradiction and so will his colleagues *Boris Tadic* in Belgrade and *Nuri Al Maliki* in Baghdad. •

*Hannes Hofbauer* is head of the *Promedia* publishing house in Vienna and author of numerous books. In Autumn 2011, he published the book "*Verordnete Wahrheit, bestrafte Gesinnung. Rechtsprechung als politisches Instrument*". The article above was also published in *German*, in *Compact* 12/2011.

(Translation *Current Concerns* with the help of the German source from *Compact* and the English source: [www.strategic-culture.org](http://www.strategic-culture.org))

### Hannes Hofbauer – Prescribed truth, punished conviction

The formulation of new statutory offences at EU level open the door to a judiciary on conviction. Denying an event that has been declared as genocide by a court is already punishable; denying communist crimes could become so soon.

By two examples Hofbauer portrays the debate concerning the definition of atrocities: one is the Armenian issue and its potential instrumentalization, the other one is the Bosnian founding myth, which is based on the thesis of a genocide in Srebrenica. Insights into the debate about the Holodomor in Ukraine, the massacres in Rwanda, Darfur, Palestine and Cambodia show what different interests may be hidden behind the genocide charge.

Discussions about the most horrible crimes, people have done to other people, will no longer be allowed to be openly conducted. At the end of 2010 a European Union's framework decision with the purpose of criminalising the denial of genocide and the trivialization of war crimes found its way into all national legal codes. From then on expressing a different opinion has become a criminal act.

Once a genocide has been determined by a court, it must no longer be questioned. Doubt about a truth that has been decreed by a court has become indictable.

The transition from penal law that prosecutes a criminal act towards a danger-repelling for enemies, i.e. code from a criminal law on criminal acts to a criminal law designed for law enemies targets at the core of civil society as the place of free exchanges of opinions. Memorial laws threaten historical research and journalistic research, but also political debate about events that have an identity-forming character for states and peoples. Law enforcement on views/convictions puts a necessary debate under taboo for everybody concerned.

"History is not a religion. History is not an object of jurisprudence. "With these core principles the most famous French historians appealed to political leaders in Paris to delete opinion paragraphs and prescribed truths from the statute books. In the German speaking countries hardly any voices were raised against establishing

legal provisions for the political debate so far. This book is marking a beginning.

The most dangerous aspect of the emerging justice on conviction is its potential for instrumentalization. So far differences of opinion about certain historical events often dissolve in a hegemonic discourse, which reflected the balance of power within media or science, but now the opinion leadership takes possession of the courts in order to help enforce its position as the only valid one.

The author Hannes Hofbauer, born in 1955, is a historian of economy and a publicist. For more than 20 years he has traveled particularly to the countries of the former Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and to Yugoslavia. Published in *Promedia Verlag* were: "EU-Osterweiterung. Historische Basis – ökonomische Triebkräfte – soziale Folgen (EU-enlargement. Historical basis - economic driving forces - social consequences)" (2007) and "Experiment Kosovo. Die Rückkehr des Kolonialismus" (Experiment Kosovo. The return of colonialism)" (2008).

Source: [www.medishop.at](http://www.medishop.at)  
(Translation *Current Concerns*)



ISBN 978-3-85371-329-7,  
264 pages, 17,90 Euro

# Psychiatry and Menschenbild (concept of man) – made in USA

## Thoughts on the development of the world's most widely used diagnostic manual DSM provided for the occasion of the 2013 edition

by Brigitte Kendel, Dipl. Psych. and Psychotherapist, Berlin

### Diagnostic manuals as instruments of theoretical and practical orientation

Ever and again it has been the intention of psychiatry and clinical psychology – focused on the physical and medical diagnosis of organic disorders – to classify the variety of manifestations of psychological disorders in a comprehensible theoretical overall context. The related goal was on the one hand to record the disorders categorically, to bring them into a systematic order to create a firm connection and professional orientation and communication base. Another related purpose was to develop an instrument that would allow a reliable diagnostic classification of each individual case beyond a general classification of mental disorders and provide tools for the understanding of the etiological and pathogenetic condition structure as a starting point for the development of appropriate therapeutic interventions. Thus, different approaches developed on the basis of a rich experiential knowledge in the course of working towards a fundamental understanding of the complex issues that are connected to the understanding of the human psyche, its functions, processes, healthy and pathological manifestations and individual forms of appearance – in particular nosologically-oriented classification systems each with their own concepts and terminologies in terms of understanding, diagnosis, prognosis and treatment of mental diseases. More recently, in the course of the primacy of a purely empirically-based, nomothetic scientific approach, empirically constructed category systems developed on a so-called purely descriptive-empirical basis. As this is explicitly about a “theory-free” foundation of psychiatric diagnosis, there is a binding theoretical basis neither from which criteria for the causes and manifestations of mental disorders could be deduced, nor for their understanding and their treatment. While the fact that nosologically oriented manuals do not correspond to the canons of modern science-oriented methodology is considered as their shortcoming, the so-called theory-free, empiricist systems run the risk that ultimately *the questions of psychopathology and adequate assistance are determined by discourses and that extraneous interests cannot be eliminated, which can lead to arbitrary and sprawling disease mongering of human*

*life problems and behaviour (see below DSM-III seq.).*

To sum up it can be said that up to the present day there is no theoretically and practically satisfactory systematisation of mental disorders, but that the empirical nomothetic approach is becoming more and more accepted, as there are two diagnostic manuals for mental disorders which increasingly dominate worldwide: one manual is the international WHO classification (ICD), which dates back to 1853 and which, in its 1948 edition, for the first time contains a chapter on “mental, psycho-neurotic and personality disorders”, in addition to physical illnesses; this chapter has close links with the development of the second diagnostic manual, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM)* of American psychiatry. This psychiatric diagnosis catalogue has been published by the *American Psychiatric Association* since 1952 and is commonly referred to as the “bible of psychiatrists” (see below).

Both manuals are continuously revised. In May 2013 a new edition of the American classification system for mental disorders, the DSM-V, will be published, and a revised edition of the ICD (ICD-11) based thereon has already been planned.

### The power of diagnostic manuals

The psychiatric diagnosis manuals not only reflect the current state of development in psychiatry and the prevailing view of science, they not only override the concrete development in this area, but they are profound tools in the social and the personal sphere of human interaction. Thus, in the Nazi era, the diagnosis of “schizophrenia” for example came close to a death sentence. The professionally recognized and used manuals clearly define, what, in the context of the entire mental development of a human life span – from birth to old age – is to be regarded as mental disorder and with what kind of terminology these concepts are to be described. Thus, these manuals command the conceptual framework for what is mental health and mental disorder in a human society, that is, what mental events, what kind of human experience, what thoughts, feelings and behaviours of a person are to be judged as psychopathological and what is to be regarded as normal.

They supply the specialist criteria in order to adopt a specific diagnosis. This also lays down the social framework within which mental disturbances are recognized by society. The making of a recognized diagnosis for instance ensures the financing of the healing process by means of health insurance funds. They also have considerable influence in the field of psychiatric and psychological assessments and expertises: thus for instance they serve as an orientation with respect to sick leave or illness-related early retirement. They also serve the experts as a basis for the assessment of questions of mental health or illness in legal matters, such as in cases involving guardianship or in litigation that involve the assessment of the capacity for responsibility and guilt, such as whether a person is to be condemned to prison or even death or whether as a result of the diagnosis the person is to be placed in custody in a mental institution or more.

As already mentioned, the diagnostic manuals have considerable influence on what research projects receive funds from the state and business. Explicit disorders are used in research as a basis for the development of research questions, research design and research projects. In this way, the manuals have a determining effect both on the direction of the further development of research issues, topics and methods, and practice-related application with respect to treatment methods such as the development of psycho-pharmaceuticals.

Alongside this influence on the mainstream of specialist discussion, they also have an extensive effect on the ideas and the self-image of the persons affected. They also affect the point of view of the family members and the social environment, creating dominant opinions and ideas within society about the phenomenon of mental illness and the handling of these problems.

### The idea of man: What is mentally ill? What is mentally healthy?

The view of what is to be regarded as mentally ill and the determination of psychiatric disorders always takes place on the basis of the cultural background of an implied idea of man and a specific interpretation of knowledge. This is closely related

continued on page 10

### "Psychiatry and Menschenbild ..."

continued from page 9

lated to the ideas of why people become ill and how they can be cured.

Accordingly, the description and classification of disorders usually involves a representation of the nosological and etiological aspects that, on the basis of the wealth of experience, research and knowledge already developed, constitute the foundation for the classification of the manifestations, for possible causal connections and for means towards a cure.

An impressive example for the close relationship between the existing basic interpretation of mental disorder and in the development of curative methods is the treatment of psychotic individuals using exorcism, which occurred at a time when our civilisation regarded possession by the devil as being a cause of a manifest psychosis.

Today, across cultures, social involvement, the ability to cooperate, mutual giving and taking, and the ability to empathise and sympathise with others are seen as normal mentally healthy conduct, while active marginalisation and self-isolation by an individual is regarded as untypical behaviour for mankind as a species across the board (cf. Pongratz, L. J.: *Lehrbuch der klinischen Psychologie*, p. 56 et seq.).

This view is supported by current findings in the humanities, in particular anthropology, modern developmental psychology, neurobiology and brain research on an empirical basis. They demonstrate that the need, which exists from birth, for interpersonal communion is a system of needs that is separate from and independent of any physiological satisfaction of needs and that requires a very specific satisfaction from an empathetic and sensitive parental figure.

The human child comes into the world excellently and capably equipped for this vital interpersonal interaction from its very first breath. From birth, the other human is essential and irreplaceable as a vital and irreplaceable dialogue partner for the survival of the child. The quality of the dialogue that develops between the mother (parental figure) and child has considerable significance for the development of the capacity to form relationships, for the security of the resulting bond, for the mental well-being and the development of the child's mental resilience.

The experience of being emotionally accepted as a person, of feeling understood, of being integrated in reliable and satisfactory interpersonal relationships, of being able to take and to give, forms the precondition for an optimum development of the individual and the basis for the mental well-being and satisfaction

with life. The ability to be a support for others and to be able to rely on the support in interpersonal relationships and not to stand alone constitutes an essential resource within the framework of the handling of critical development phases and life crises in the course of the entire lifetime of a human.

This lifelong focus of the individual on fellow individuals is an evolutionary legacy and has nothing to do with psychopathological dependency. It is a feature that is typical of the species man and an expression of his social nature, focused as it is on interpersonal exchange and co-operation.

Against this background, it is not surprising that the knowledge about the importance of the doctor-patient relationship (i.e. the so-called "rapport", i.e. the effectiveness of the physician's personality on the patient) had not only been known in the entire field of medicine before the humanities and natural sciences were separated; this knowledge was a matter of course, it belonged to the armamentarium of a physician and was deliberately reflected in the professional world.

Only with the development and elaboration of scientific methodology and the triumph of positivism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century medical science increasingly defined itself in terms of natural science. The rapid development in this area, which led to an impressive high-tech medicine and a specialist differentiation process entailed that the relevance of the doctor-patient relationship was neglected and only played a minor role in today's medicine.

In the field of psychiatry, this development did not take place in the same way, instead – as far as its methodology of knowledge was concerned – it maintained its liberal arts roots and remained dependent on a hermeneutic methodology of gaining knowledge based on comprehensive understanding and empathy in order to pave the way for a basic understanding of mental disorders and their cure.

The possibilities of psychotherapeutic aid developed on the basis of a personalist concept of man (Menschenbild). The development in this area took place on the basis of an exchange of speech in a research process, which examines the individual's development ideographically within his or her biographical and cultural context; it advances into the development of an individual's psychic structure and into the subjective meaningfulness of mental processes; it reveals and works on the unconscious aspects of human thinking, feeling and acting that restrict the quality of life and psychological well-being and as a result uncovers the path towards an enlarged spectrum of development for the human personality.

In analogy to the established processes in natural sciences to gain scientific insight, efforts have been made and still are being made to investigate also psychological phenomena with the help of methods derived from the natural sciences.

Even Freud assumed that physical or somatic processes accompanied all conscious and unconscious mental processes and hoped to be able to justify a scientifically sound research on the so-called "psychical apparatus" – especially of complex unconscious processes (see Freud, S.: *A General Introduction into Psychoanalysis*). He also tried to rationalize and render scientific the process of psychoanalysis and the underlying physician-patient relationship by means of a strictly defined "working alliance" by making himself available to his patients with "free-floating attention" and as a "projection surface" during the extraction and exploration of unconscious material and its spiritual interpretation; however, as a person he remained in a conscious personal distance and abstinence.

In this concept, the interpersonal relationship as a central starting point for mental health could not develop one of its most important aspects, namely – by means of emotional understanding, emphatic integrating and affirmative acceptance of the patient's person – to be effective as a resource for development and as an agent of the healing process. Therefore, Freud was able to heal neuroses with the help of psycho-analytic instruments, however no psychoses. It was the merit of Alfred Adler's individual psychology that it worked out the central importance of human social nature and the related basic conditions of human psychological development (see below) as a *conditio sine qua non* for achieving and maintaining mental health.

An important contribution was made in the wake of Freud by the representatives of neo-psychoanalysis and their successors, who recognized and explored the importance of both the personality and the emotional skills of the psychotherapist in a relationship; in a professional, genuine and reasonable and interpersonal relationship between doctor and patient they saw an essential basis and condition of mental healing. On the basis of the personalist concept of man they also successfully practiced in the field of psychoses and passed on their experiences and insights to future psychiatrists and psychotherapists in the context of their training. In Switzerland, for example, the so-called "existential analysis" (*Binswanger*) developed an independent approach. Moreover, *Gertrude Schwing* was looking for a personal approach and the *Benedetti-School* devel-

continued on page 11

### "Psychiatry and Menschenbild ..."

continued from page 10

oped an independent approach of personal psychotherapy from these beginnings. All these schools of psychotherapy with their positive results were curbed in their development by the introduction of a nomothetically oriented, so-called science-based diagnostics introduced in the mid-80s (see below).

Although the central importance of the psychotherapeutic quality of a relationship has been worked out in the context of modern psychotherapy research and confirmed by brain research as a neuro-physiological phenomenon and although it is regarded as a common effect factor and predictor for the success of psychotherapy independent of the method, this central finding is no longer reflected in the worldwide dominant diagnostic tools presented in the following (see below).

#### Development and the paradigm shift of the DSM

Let us briefly recapitulate the chronological development of the DSM:

1952	DSM-I, 130 pages, 106 diagnoses
1968	DSM-II, 134 pages, 182 diagnoses
<b>1980</b>	<b>DSM-III, 494 pages, 265 diagnoses, German 1984</b>
1987	DSM-III-R (Revision) 567 pages, 292 diagnoses, German 1989
1994	DSM-IV, 886 pages, 297 diagnoses, German 1996
2000	DSM-IV-TR (Text Revision), German 2003
2013	DSM-V, scheduled publishing in 2013, in process since 1999

At a closer look, the increasing number of diagnoses in each issue is astonishing. This is not always based on a greater specification in the context of professional research development. The emergence or the disappearance of diagnoses may be associated with multiple external influences.

For example, the authors of the DSM-II (1968) updated their diagnoses in the 7<sup>th</sup> edition (1974) not only just based on qualified reasons but also due to socio-political pressure: In the context of the then active sexual revolution – to mention just one key word, the "Kinsey Report", later unmasked as scientific fraud – and along with the 1970 San Francisco homosexuals' conference and other agitations and protests, the diagnosis of "homosexuality", for example, was deleted without replacement in the 1974 edition.

Warnings have been and still are expressed from various sides – such as the *Deutsches Ärzteblatt* (German Medical Journal, 7.5.2008) – that the authors of the DSM are intricately bound to the pharmaceutical industry and, thereby con-

licts of interest and a related threat to influence the diagnostic tools might occur, for example, by creating new, medicinally treatable syndromes. To avoid this, not only a restriction of the authors' salaries at pharmaceutical companies, but also the disclosure of their company-related activities, such as a speaker or consultant of the latter, are demanded.

One of the first psychiatric manuals in the US and progenitor of the DSM was published in 1917; it included 22 recorded diagnoses. It was revised in 1943 during the Second World War in the context of the US Army and replaced by a new and expanded classification.

When many soldiers had to be treated after the Second World War due to severe mental harm, the *American Psychiatric Association* (APA) established a more comprehensive classification, namely the first edition of the DSM-I with 106 diagnoses published in 1952.

DSM-II was published in 1968 and contained as many as 182 disorders and in the course of the various issues current changes were constantly made.

The edition of the DSM-III in 1980 which included a *diagnostic paradigm shift* already contained 265 disorders.

With this new edition, *the previous ideographic-oriented approach in the field of psychiatric diagnosis and treatment was abandoned and replaced by a nomothetic view of science with the appropriate methodological tools* (see below).

The authors justify this paradigm shift with the faulty scientificity of the former DSM editions and their rootedness and unreasonable contact with the humanities.

#### German edition of the DSM-III in 1984

We read in the German edition of the DSM III of 1984 that a "[...] decisive critical attitude towards pre-existing theories and theory constructs" (DSM-III, p. ix) are concerned, i.e. a "strictly empirical approach" including the hope to obtain objective, real scientific evidence this way. The concern was an updated clinical description, theory-free and an "open-minded and precise delimitation of all relevant psychiatric syndromes that can be distinguished" (DSM-III, p. V). The main task of the psychiatric diagnosis is considered to "[...] classify the individual patient in appropriate positions of a classificatory system, on the basis of those selected categories that have been proven meaningful and useful with regard to certain scientific and practical objectives" (DSM-III, p. ix). Moreover, "free from historical connotations, nosological prejudice and school-related emphases" (DSM-III, p. xi) a "matching terminology and appropriate methods for the quantification of

psychiatric issues" – including diagnostics – should "be achieved" (DSM-III, p. ix).

The nomothetic basis of the diagnosis is to allow a more accurate diagnosis and "[...] gain influence on the future psychiatric treatment. This concerns for example the necessity to make specific use of the numerous currently available psychotropic substances" (DSM-III, p. xi).

Apart from the symptom descriptions that are at the focus of attention, the DSM-III provides statistical information for example about the gender relation of mental disorders, about the typical age of onset, the effect of treatments, treatment modalities, and much more.

This approach guided by strictly positivist principles bases the diagnosis on a number of listed and interrogated symptoms, the naming of the diagnosis being depending on the combination of symptoms. Thus, the authors abandoned the basically personal orientation practiced earlier in psychiatry: namely to understand the high individuality of mental development by means of the trained psychotherapeutic conversation as a central tool – both in diagnosis and in cure – even from the first meeting of the complex individual case. This complex individual case can be explored and understood in the context of a procedurally progressive diagnosis that has already been supported by salutary effective moments and understood in its individual functional relationship based on an explicated theory.

Therefore, the DSM III does neither include any nosological or etiological classifications beyond the description of symptoms, nor any hint to significant evidence that could be useful for the study of causal and triggering factors, for example, in the biographical context, or contribute to the understanding of the highly individual processing of the functional dynamics and the finality of mental movements.

Instead, the DSM-III contains a "sophisticated multi-axial system" (DSM-III, p. xiv) based on multiple-choice tasks which should provide an information background for the assessment of the disorder, for its treatment and the expected prognosis of patients at different levels. Moreover, it enables the classification of the described symptoms into a framework of interrogative, individual life circumstances (DSM-III, p. V).

This radical reorientation, legitimizing itself by the introduction of a scientific approach in diagnosis, devaluated and dismissed the casuistic-ideographic approach which so far had been developed in psychiatry and clinical psychology. Thus the abundance of knowledge and experience of many generations of researchers was dismissed and devaluat-

### "Psychiatry and Menschenbild ..."

continued from page 11

ed as inaccurate and unscientific in favor of the psychometric approach. As a consequence of this approach we can now observe *a serious neglect or even deletion of the personal factor in the training of psychiatrists.*

Due to this neglect of interpersonal factor the object of research and the role of psychiatry, namely *the assessment of individual mental activity and the ensuing assistance is not only reduced and distorted in its central, individual-centered, personalist factor, but in fact essentially failed.*

#### The appropriateness of methods

By definition, the goal of the DSM-III consists of a science-based, theory-free, merely descriptive diagnosis. The underlying scientific instrument is based on the view that the mathematical foundations of both classic as well as stochastic measurement models are suitable for the purpose of a binding classification, systematization and classification of clinical symptoms and for the individual diagnosis of mental disorders and their treatment. The compilation of the symptoms – which in reality rarely appear in delineated form but rather in smooth transitions and overlaps – and the combination of symptoms to syndromes does not happen only on a purely empirical level, but is based on hypothesis-based definitions of what should be regarded as clinically relevant psychic behavior.

Neither the ensuing operationalisation nor the scientific criteria for the validity and reliability of the results have an objective character. Rather, the so-called "hard data" are based on statistical quality criteria agreed upon by the scientific community.

In order to reproduce the subject of research adequately, the applied research tools must describe the subject in its constituting and relevant dimensions. The so-called objective, real and scientific approach used in the DSM does not prove successful since the behavior of the subject does not underlie any determinism in its psychological dimensions. Although the behavior may be open to scrutiny it is basically beyond nomothetic causal relations and cannot be generalized. Therefore, psychic behavior cannot be forced into any type of scale, which is however the prerequisite for the mathematics of statistical operations.

The applied statistical methods with their underlying analytical dissection and quantification of mental processes bypass a holistic overall context of mental processes. Moreover, individual and personal relationships, forming the core of a

reasonable individual diagnosis and the ensuing treatment, are neglected by such standardization. As a result, there is a representative average value based on anonymity and consolidated in a so-called normal distribution, describing a kind of phantom individual. The specific individual appears as a deviation from this average value, but only with respect to certain aspects and not in his personalist identity.

Since the applied methods *do not grasp the object of research – neither the quality of the psychic features nor the individual in the psychical dimensions of his or her life and activity and in the constitutive aspects of his or her uniqueness and entity – they are nothing but pseudo-scientific results.*

#### A summary with consequences

Under the verdict of scientification and internationalization, especially in the US and Europe, the paradigm of the nosologic- and ideographic-oriented approach of psychiatric diagnosis was abandoned by the authors with the edition of the DSM in 1980. From then on, standardized diagnoses have been made on the basis of a list of merely empirically described different symptoms and have resulted from specific combinations of each of these features.

The standardization of the diagnostic test via theoretical methods of measurement is based on a mathematically founded, artificially generated comparability figure. Unlike in the natural sciences, where figures reflect an analogous expression of existing physical laws, mental content and qualities cannot be represented scientifically in such instruments; so that access to the uniqueness and subjectivity of each individual with the help of this diagnostic method remains disclosed and the established uniform nomenclature cannot answer the question what is behind the terminology.

The result of the DSM revision was an ever greater increase of diagnostic problems and of the diagnosed people. This meant that leading editors – *Robert Spitzer* (DSM-III) and *Allen Frances* (DSM-IV) – were finally alarmed. They now oppose the edition of DSM-V and *explicitly depict errors with terrible consequences, lying within the diagnostic system itself and including a high risk of erroneously positive diagnoses (see below).*

Having originally intended to establish a more comprehensive collection and helpful care for all people with mental health problems, the former authors with their current experienced background *warn against the development of additional diagnoses and the inclusion of classifications in the DSM-V. They also warn of pathologizing those people who never had serious psychological problems and of making pathogenic events out*

*of normal life crises and developmental variations.*

So, for example, it is planned that the DSM-V will introduce the deep mourning for deceased people as a pathological condition, i.e. as "Complicated Prolonged Grief" which has so far not been any specific psychiatric disease. Moreover, pre-morbid syndromes – called "praepsychotic disorder" as risk symptoms – are to be raised by screenings in the context of individually perceived stress situations. It is known, however, that only a small portion of the so-called high-risk patients fall ill.

This means that next to the implications for finance and health policy there is *an impending pathologization of the ordinary, a flood of drug therapies, and last not least the screening and standardization of the human personality.* "DSM-V could fill the world with ten million new, but erroneously diagnosed patients" (*Allen Frances*, quoted in "Süddeutsche Zeitung" of 9/10 July 2011, p. 22).

#### More and more diagnoses imposed on children

In particular, more and more diagnoses are inflicted upon children. There have already been diagnoses for infants such as "temper dysregulation disorder" or "feeding disorder". The definition of *Attention Deficit Disorder* (ADHD) is so generalizing that this disorder almost epidemically increased and led to an enormous consumption of psychotropic drugs. According to *Frances* ("Tagesspiegel" of 27 July 2011) trials provided evidence that in the U.S. alone over one million children were mistakenly diagnosed and pharmaceutically treated.

For reasons of prevention, a growing number of children are subjected to tests ever more frequently and are in danger that their developmental variations are mistakenly pathologized and treated medically. "With every young patient who was correctly diagnosed there are between three and nine more young people who are falsely diagnosed as patients" (*Allen Frances*, quoted in the "Tagesspiegel" of 27 July 2011).

Considering the effect of DSM and similarly structured manuals with regard to the Hippocratic oath – whose first statement is to avoid to inflict harm – they do not provide adequate assistance to alleviate individual psychological suffering; they rather act as institutionalized instruments which can become themselves a source of suffering, social discrimination, stigmatization and labeling for those concerned and their social environment.

Historically, the development of diagnosis was included in the context of psy-

### "Psychiatry and Menschenbild ..."

continued from page 12

chiatry's professional development. Being part of an explicit theoretical foundation of different schools, it served as an instrument of practice for the understanding and healing of mental illnesses. The new pseudo-scientific manuals are neither based on a theory of mental health nor based on a theory of mental illness. The declaration of behavior as mental disorder and the identification of symptoms are based on agreement and statistical processing and do not provide access to relevant problems.

The intended objectivity and standardization of diagnostic terminology may simplify internal communication among experts; however, it neglects the subjective factor inherent in the human psyche. Apart from the nomenclature of comparable symptoms and syndromes, the understanding of the individual and the variously differentiated complexity of mental reactions and their development and meaning has proven relevant and productive to the process of individual cure. Thus, even proponents of nomothetic re-orientation warn of a belief in progress that regards the clinical descriptions as objective findings (see DSM-III, p. V, VI).

Mental processes cannot be measured. They are only accessible, perceptible and detectable by inter-subjective processes of understanding and mutual interpretation. This involves an accurate conception of the individual context of development and experience. This basic knowledge cannot be obtained with standardized multiple choice questionnaires but only in an unfolded, skilled and humanely emphatic process of an individual approach to the relevant content behind a so-called disorder.

The unilateral effort to measure the psychic features as well as the accuracy and delineation of symptoms and diagnoses neglects how important the aspect of relationship inherent in human nature is as an agent of healing. The subtle hope is that with the advancing knowledge and understanding of complex neuro-chemical control loops and functional mechanisms of brain activity – analogous to physical illnesses – the mental processes can be understood on a substantive basis and "normalized" with a targeted symptom-oriented treatment approach by means of psychotropic drugs – an approach that is far less expensive than that of personal psychotherapy.

This way the organic brain activity is indeed scheduled in its neurobiological correlates; it is, however, curtailed by the aspects and results of its intellectual and spiritual dimensions, and in this reduction the person appears as a neuro-chemical-

ly controlled reflex being. This ignorance about the multidimensionality of mental processes and mental structure, vis à vis the creative self-activity of each individual in terms of subjective interpretation and the importance of the meaningfulness of experience and behavior, extinguishes all constituent elements of a person as human being.

To date there are no hard data for biologically based diagnoses from neuroscience and genetic research. The development of psychotropic substances and their symptom-oriented effect still leave many questions unanswered. Although their application can be effective in an emergency, although they enable psychotherapy in certain cases, for example, the purely symptomatic treatment based on psychotropic substances neglects the comprehensiveness of mental structures and the chance of a structural character development that is associated with successful personalist psychotherapy.

Thus, man becomes an object in a therapy based on drug treatment without personalist psychotherapy and all of man's innate abilities and potentials are neglected; in the context of an emotionally sustaining professional working relationship which can help him to overcome the problems and alter the related mental structures these potentials could enable the person to actively cooperate and develop from previous restrictions.

#### **The assessment of individual mental problems and the development of an appropriate therapy – a challenge for the professional world**

The interaction between unconscious and conscious processes has been frequently documented by research. This applies both to the existence of unconscious processes and their influence on human behavior as well as on the reverse process, namely the influence on unconscious processes via consciousness control.

This cooperative interaction between the conscious and subconscious mind is the starting point of human personality's development and the chance for new neural pathways in a personal psychotherapeutic development process. The change of previously unconscious and ingrained patterns requires the development of a self-understanding that is being enlarged through reflection and awareness; this has to happen in the context of the psychotherapeutic research process as well as through the intentional implementation of the new perspectives in the context of daily experience and behavior.

Prompted by symptoms that impair the quality of life a targeted therapeutic reprocessing becomes necessary which deals with the client's development and interpersonal experiences in his relevant re-

lationships. This establishes an emotional access to effective, yet unconscious parts of experience and behavior; it also expands the current horizon of consciousness in relation to subjective motivations and the correlation between emotion and reaction.

From the very beginning, the successful, interpersonally supported, reliable therapeutic process of cooperation is a necessary prerequisite and basis for such a process of increasing awareness, both in terms of diagnosis and as far as the development of highly individual, psychologically relevant content and its resultant assistance are concerned in order to overcome the mentally impairing disorders.

In particular, the carefully guided diagnostic interview at the beginning of treatment grants a bonus if compared to a merely standardized, impersonal diagnosis by means of a checklist; in cases of great discouragement and resignation the patient can experience a feeling of being unconditionally accepted and estimated by the interviewer's professional and human trustworthiness and another effect comes into play: namely, the budding of a probably deeply hidden hope for help and change which is often associated with the first interview and the initial phase of therapy. This means that via the method of diagnosis from the very beginning, the personal relationship with the patient is shaped and used as an agent of healing and as a resource, particularly for critical phases of development in the context of psychotherapy.

Since the quality of the interpersonal relationship and the emotional embeddedness in every phase and situation of life are – as has been shown – of vital importance to the development of the human personality and its mental state, it is a central task of trained professionalism to provide and develop an adequate psychotherapeutic relationship and tap the full potential of its inherent resources professionally in the context of diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders.

In case of a success, this personal process is associated with the growth of the personality of the person seeking help, showing itself as a reinforcement and encouragement in his entire personality and being objectively reflected in a significant reduction or even overcoming of the problems he has when coping with life. By understanding the access to oneself and the interpersonal protection accompanying personal therapy in a confidential relationship the subjective scopes of experience are enlarged as well as the individual's radius of action in dealing with the realities of life.

### "Psychiatry and Menschenbild ..."

continued from page 13

This leads to the following conclusion: the so-called unscientific nature of the old psychiatry, criticized in the DSM-III, with its humanistic methods of understanding, tracking and skillful empathy as the basis for a healing psychotherapeutic research and relationship process that enlarges personality, however, represents an adequate methodological tool, with which it is possible to detect the individual core of mental disorders and mental suffering and treat them in the context of a healing therapeutic relationship.

A successful psychotherapy manifests itself in the essential aspects of the entire person's emotional reassurance and is accompanied by a strengthening and enrichment of the entire personality, by growing self-confidence, by increased mental flexibility and vibes, by a growing emotional embeddedness and feeling of security among the peers, by a growing interpersonal responsibility, by a greater range of possibilities of action for dealing with the tasks of life, by a balance in the give and take and other things more.

Psychotherapy in this sense needs – other than a merely psychotropic treatment – is a unique personality training for the psychotherapist in addition to his scientific training. This applies in particular to his ability to establish a relationship and his capacity to basically affirm the patient as a person and understand him with skilled empathy, but without paratactic bias. This also means to be ready for permanent self-correction in order to check falsifications in the course of the inter-subjective research process; the resulting images and understandings of the mental experiences and the reactions of the person seeking help always require verification.

These interpersonal tools are the professional basis that enable the helper and the patient to illuminate the mental processes and make them accessible to reflection and change. Through this cooperation, the patient can become stronger by way of an increasing understanding of his own self, by developing and stabilizing confidence in himself, by internalizing the respect and affirmation experienced in the psychotherapeutic conversation and thus actively contribute to his mental health and interpersonal bonding.

The results of such personalist psychotherapy are based on the knowledge of the social nature of man, of the properties of human brain activity, the lifelong plasticity of the human brain and the associated human ability to learn and develop. The changes are objectively evident both in the practical life of the patient as well as in neuro-structural changes shown by imag-

ing techniques in the context of brain research.

### Conclusion

Diagnostic manuals, whose scientific construction is designed so that key parameters of mental activity – such as subjectivity, intersubjectivity and holism – find no categorical depiction, are not adequate to the human psyche and cannot describe the mental individuality of a person.

The underlying splitting of the connectedness of diagnosis and therapy, the merely descriptive approach and the absence of a comprehensive theoretical framework, and even the standardization of nomenclature, have at best produced a helpful tool for sociological, administrative, public health policy or other social policy issues, but not one that is appropriate to the human psyche and subject to scientific criteria.

The main concepts and contexts of spiritual and psychological processes that underlie the symptoms and the nomenclature of diagnoses cannot be detected with the applied methodology; and their content and subjective relevance can only be understood within a humane and viable, skilled, inter-subjective research process within a psychotherapeutic working alliance.

Behind the DSM there is a positivist, virtually lifeless view of man reduced to neurobiological structures, in which the intellectual factors constituting the subject are deliberately eliminated; it aims at an ever more perfect control of mental disorders by medication.

Since the human psyche as a mentally-processing and self-reflexive body that cannot be squeezed into a manipulable reductionistic stimulus-response scheme, an exclusively medical treatment without sound interpersonal psychotherapy often leads to the following situation: the concerned person, despite a perceived ease of his condition, does not feel at home with himself, remains insecure with respect to his personality and often experiences the medication as something strange and unpleasant which he inwardly rejects. Only when the patient feels addressed as a person in a psychotherapeutic process and experiences humane appreciation, when he has gained an interpretive access to himself and enlarged his opportunities for experiences and possibilities for action, he can assign medication as integrating help, maintain a self-assertive action towards himself and experience himself as a maker and shaper of his life and master of his own personality.

As long as diagnostic manuals such as DSM exist and are used, awareness of the

scientific community for the socio-emotional foundations of human personality development embodied in the social nature of man, and awareness for the socio-emotional foundations of psychological assistance will be essential to avoid damage in this field.

The highly sensitive area of mental help, the assessments and influences of which already interfere with the history and structure of children's and young people's lives, requires protection against transformation by ideologies and extraneous interests and may not be sacrificed to an ultimately economically and politically motivated dominance – as in the case of the American DSM concepts.

The central task of this branch of human sciences remains to supply necessary mental help and support to people at different stages of their lives so that they may become able to address their vital problems in the context of their life tasks, i.e. growing into their lives, into love, into community and professional life, in their old age and in times of crisis. The task is to offer help and support for those seeking help so that they can develop their own resources and regain control over themselves. We owe that to ourselves and to the Hippocratic oath. •

### Literature

- Adler, A.: *Die Technik der Individualpsychologie Bd. 1: Die Kunst, eine Lebens- und Krankengeschichte zu lesen.* Frankfurt a.M. 1972
- Adler, A.: *Über den nervösen Charakter.* Frankfurt a.M. 1972
- Bastine, R. H. E.: *Klinische Psychologie.* Vol. 1. Stuttgart u.a. 1990
- Bauer, J.: *Das Gedächtnis des Körpers.* Munich 2006
- Brisch, K. H. u. Hellbrügge, Th. (Hrsg.): *Wege zu sicheren Bindungen in Familie und Gesellschaft.* Stuttgart 2009
- Damasio, A.: *Selbst ist der Mensch.* Munich 2010
- Deutsches Ärzteblatt* of 07/05/2008
- Diagnostisches und Statistisches Manual Psychischer Störungen. DSM III.* Weinheim, Basel 1984
- Dörner, K.: *Diagnosen in der Psychiatrie.* Frankfurt a.M. 1975
- Ellenberger, H. F.: *Die Entdeckung des Unbewussten.* Zurich 1985
- Endress, M. u. Hauser, S. (Hrsg.): *Bindungstheorie in der Psychotherapie.* Munich 2000
- Freud, S.: *Abriss der Psychoanalyse.* Frankfurt a.M. 1984
- Fromm-Reichmann, F.: *Intensive Psychotherapie.* Stuttgart 1959
- Grawe, K.: *Neuropsychotherapie.* Göttingen, Bern u.a. 2004
- Pongratz, L. J.: *Lehrbuch der klinischen Psychologie.* Göttingen, Toronto u.a. 1975
- Sullivan, H. S.: *Das psychotherapeutische Gespräch.* Frankfurt a.M. 1976
- Tagesspiegel,* Berlin, 27 July 2011

(Translation Current Concerns)

## Help going from heart to heart

### The Work of the Swiss “Good Hearts Organisation” in the Slums of Nairobi



The children with their teachers and Alex Weigel in front of the school-building in the slum of Nairobi. (picture ma)

thk./ak. The history teacher who intends to structure his lessons in a contemporary and effective way should always try to combine history with topical subjects. This procedure trains historical thinking and furthers the understanding of the actual course of events. Lessons gain attractiveness while at the same time history becomes lively and within reach for students. Of course, not with all subjects the real world may be brought to the classroom. But even if possible only selectively, it remains an unforgettable experience for the student.

The colonization and the associated untold atrocities committed by the colonizing countries like Great Britain, France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, USA, and others are often shattering and depressing for scholars and students. If lessons leave it at an account of violations of humaneness the students might leave the classroom with a sense of faint and awkwardness. Despite all vileness committed by human beings, there is always the other side in them – humanity. This humanity is needs to be called forth and be brought to development.

#### Conveying a perspective despite unbearable injustice

What kind of mischief the white man has done and continues to do to the colonial nations despite the conclusion of colonization is a historical reality, yesterday and today. It cannot be undone, whichever way you look at it. Many students ask what can

be done here. That means there is a natural reflex of resistance when young people are directly confronted with injustice. Nobody wants human beings to be exploited and maltreated. In this situation, we as educator and historian are requested to communicate a constructive outlook for the persons entrusted to us.

These were the reflections when I decided to invite a staff member of a relief organization to participate in my history lesson. The Swiss *Alex Weigel* is founder of the “Good Hearts Organisation”. He gave a report on how it came about that he lived shack-to-shack with the poorest of the poor and how the Nairobi situation is outlined to people. After two hours, the school bell rang and the exciting history lesson came to an end to everyone’s regret.

#### Swiss humanitarian tradition: “Good Hearts Organisation”

Alex Weigel is the founder and the guiding spirit of the “Good Hearts Organisation”. The name is program. According to Weigel, help is only successful if it works from one human being to another and from heart to heart. His help organization stands in the humanitarian tradition of Switzerland. His model shows what a single person may achieve, once the decision is taken. His achievements are beyond doubt.

He was deeply impressed by a journey to Kenia with his daughter and the visit to Kibera, the biggest slums of Nai-

#### “Good Hearts Organisation”

ak. The aid organisation was founded as an association in Spring 2009 by *Alex Weigel*, who as a former employee of “World Vision” had been able to gather some experience in the field of development cooperation together with several friends and acquaintances. The organisation’s main concern is to help and to protect children, adolescents and young adults with the aim to achieve sustainable improvements for individuals and the society.

Because the project manager Alex Weigel lives on site in Nairobi, it is guaranteed that the affected people benefit directly from all financial donations and that they don’t sink into the mire of corruption. There is a good contact with *Jacques Pitteloud*, the Swiss ambassador in Nairobi, who said in an interview about the organisation:

“It reaches the right people [...] and doesn’t go to expensive organizations for which I am very grateful, and I would be happy to welcome a delegation of members of the organisation in Nairobi sometimes.”

Since 2011 “Good Hearts Organization” has participated in Nairobi as a food aid distribution center within the scope of the “World Food Program” of the UN.

robi. It has made him turn his life upside down. He said: “Some three years ago I have been to Kibera with my daughter. What I saw impressed me deeply. I could not help supporting those people’s cause.” This is why he decided to strike camp in Switzerland and move to Nairobi. Daily, he can follow with his own eyes the hardship/misery in which tens of thousands of people live, without any hope whatsoever to ever break up this vicious cycle. “It was clear to me that I could help only a few people compared to the gigantic population – no one knows exactly how large it is. But with each whom I can help I feel a bit better. It was worth the effort.”

#### Just one toilet for 1000 people

The pictures Alex Weigel presents with his report do confirm the impression he conveys with his words. All attendants are deeply impressed. “Contrary to the majority of people and even though I

**"Helping going from ..."**

continued from page 15

live in the slums, I have a stone house. Many people live in clay huts without running water and without sanitation. Often 6 to 8 people have to live together in a room of 3 by 3 metres. There is no sewer system. In the rainy season the water washes dirt and feces into people's huts so that everything becomes soaking wet." Incredible – there is only one toilet for 1000 people.

Speaking to the people in the slums, Alex Weigel learned what kind of help was needed most – medical treatment and schooling. Without hesitation in January 2009, half a year after his visit in Kibera, the newly founded school for girls started in a small clay hut. In no time at all, the "Kid Star Academy" grew so that in two years there were already 70 students aged 3 to 8 years and six advisors. The clay hut turned into a building with corrugated sheets. Schooling means life to the children. Many of them eat barely once a day. Who attends school, receives two meals per day and receives medical care. A female doctor who previously practiced

in the wealthy neighbourhood of Nairobi does work in the slums now and tries to relieve people's needs a tiny bit.

**The reward: children's shining eyes**

Children love to come to school. The shining eyes on pictures disclose it. They want to learn which provides the possibility of maybe escaping the misery some day. But going to school means also escaping the tightness and depression at home for a few hours and do something meaningful. Children are immensely grateful and seek closeness with the responsible persons, Weigel says.

Alex Weigel plans a new and larger building as the number of students is permanently growing. He has the premises already. Money is needed now to build the schoolhouse. The help organization is financed by way of donations only and Weigel is hoping to collect some money by such presentations. This way he visits Switzerland on a regular basis to find supporters for his humanitarian project. With pleasure he reports and discusses his work in classrooms or other settings.

He has other projects at the back of his mind, too. He is dreaming of an infirmary

for all those people who are forced to live here misery. Despite of adverse circumstances, he could realize everything he tackled. His deep conviction and his compassion with people help to overcome setbacks, as well. His greatest reward are the children's shining eyes which are shining brighter over time.

The audience was visibly moved. Young adults are touched by the misery other people have to put up with and a person's heart committed to them. Their own worries are seen in a more realistic dimension. The present situation in the slums of Nairobi, the knowledge of its historical roots plus the knowledge that the West continues to deprive the native people of Africa's natural resources for their own benefit are essential for the understanding of the situation of many African countries.

Alex Weigel is a person who has drawn the consequences. He makes a humanitarian contribution and is completely dedicated to the children in the slums. For this, these children will be grateful to him for a lifetime.

Account for donations: IBAN CH 34 8147 4000 0085 5476 6

[www.goodhearts.ch](http://www.goodhearts.ch)

## 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

### Subscribe to Current Concerns – The journal of an independent cooperative

The cooperative *Zeit-Fragen* is a politically and financially independent organisation. All of its members work on a voluntary and honorary basis. The journal does not accept commercial advertisements of any kind and receives no financial support from business organisations. The journal *Current Concerns* is financed exclusively by its subscribers.

We warmly recommend our model of free and independent press coverage to other journals.

Annual subscription rate of  
CHF 40,-; Euro 30,-; USD 40,-; GBP 25,-  
for the following countries:

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hongkong, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Qatar, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, USA

Annual subscription rate of  
CHF 20,-; Euro 15,-; USD 20,-; GBP 12,50  
for all other countries.

Please choose one of the following ways of payment:

- send a cheque to *Current Concerns*, P.O. Box, CH-8044 Zurich, or
- send us your credit card details (only *Visa*), or
- pay into one of the following accounts:

CH:	Postscheck-Konto (CHF):	87-644472-4	IBAN CH91 0900 0000 8764 4472 4	BIC POFICHBEXXX
CH:	Postscheck-Konto (Euro):	91-738798-6	IBAN CH83 0900 0000 9173 8798 6	BIC POFICHBEXXX
D:	Volksbank Tübingen, Kto. 67 517 005, BLZ 64190110		IBAN DE12 6419 0110 0067 5170 05	BIC GENODES1TUE
A:	Raiffeisen Landesbank, Kto. 1-05.713.599, BLZ 37000		IBAN AT55 3700 0001 0571 3599	BIC RVVGAT2B