

## Von der Kultur des Andersseins zur Kultur des Soseins

The Culture of being oneself as alternative to the culture of being different.

International understanding – or 44 legs an a ball. When soccer teams from different countries meet, one tends to think of the competitive element – who wins. In this competition – for which I am privileged to be the main speaker – other motives are emphasised. Of course there will finally be a winner – but I hope the winners will be each participant.

### The ball is round, the goal has corners.

What is so unusual about this event? Teams from different european countries meet, the teams consist of players with different mental healthy problems, and professionals in this field. There has been a high degree of public interest event, a model example of social-integration.

### Not all roads lead to Rome

According to Mackensen – “Ursprung der Wörter” – Integration means re-incorporation. As a sociologist I know there is no “beyond” the society. Only the alien is outside the society. How, then, can I re-incorporate someone who could not have been outcast in the first place? Even if some people thought that they didn´t belong to society – the only way to escape from the society is to emigrate. Democratic countries have to retain their citizens. I, at least, know no European Union country that can reject its citizens.

What then can integration mean:

### Who is the psychiatric client?

It is a fact that some citizens do not conform to the majority of the society, and that psychiatry is expected to get these somewhat peculiar members back into line.

It could be reasoned that psychiatry should aim to free ill people from their illness. But, would anyone consider re-intergrating a patient who has had appendicitis?

### Outsiders, witches, and ducking-ponds

No one denies that there are outsiders in a society, but they are still a part of society. Most games that are played in our culture add up, suma sumarum, to null: there´s a winner, and there´s a loser.

### Diversity and singularity

The following model seems to rule in psychiatry:

Integration means adjusting to the usual. Only so can the normal win. If this does not come about, then the not normal has won, and society, according to its rules has lost; that´s the logic of the adding up game. For psychiatry, however, this game has only losers – the person with mental health problems and society have both lost.

### Problem crashing or conflict solving

Historically, Europeans tend to see human relationships as a sort of combat. Combats, however, with few exceptions, end in a null game. If we turn to nature, and look at our garden with eyes wide open, then we must admit that, until man appeared, the predominant pattern was a plus result. A biotop is characterised by the fact that all constituent parts give and take – all gain from the symbiosis. We all know, however, that, in exceptional circumstances, there are only losers – the sum of the game is negative. In a human partnership it can often be observed that both partners think themselves to be losers, but both subordinate themselves to the other – if one sees oneself as the loser, then - according to the logic of our culture - the other must be the winner.

### Greetings from Darius and Galileo

The path from the culture of being different, which is to divisive, should lead to the culture of being oneself. In this culture both, psychiatry professionals and those with mental health problems will have a new role. In this culture the psychiatric artist who tries to form a new identity for his client will be as superfluous as the mental health mechanic, who is mandated by society to repair his patient's neurotransmitter. Modern society should transform to a winner only game, in which it is clear that every citizen is an important part. Nature has given us a multitude of genes not because we need them here and now, but in order to be equipped for future challenges. The richness of a society is the diversity of its individuals, not its uniformity. A short while ago, a Chinese friend with whom I was talking about my efforts to deal with mental illness remarked that I was on the way to destroying his mental health.

So much to the written discourse. My talk should be somewhat more entertaining, as written and spoken have a different underlying logic. Let the live version surprise you. The underlying content will be the same.

Karl Ziegler