

FRIGGA HAUG:
More Equal than Others.
A laudation on Christoph Spehr

In January 2001 the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung issued, for the first time, the Rosa Luxembourg Prize. The Prize was awarded following a competition to find the best answer to the question: »Under which conditions can social equity and political freedom be reconciled?« Christoph Spehr, a young historian and free-lance writer, won the prize for his paper entitled »More Equal than Others«. Frigga Haug the famous feminist researcher who is also co-editor of the journal »Das Argument« delivered the speech at the award ceremonies. Christoph Spehr's paper can be downloaded from the homepage of Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung (www.rosaluxemburgstiftung.de).

INGRID LOHMANN:
›<http://www.bildung.com>‹ –
Structural Changes in Public Education
Within the Information Society

The article focuses on the fundamental changes public science and education are undergoing in the so called information age. »Information society« along with the new »autonomy« imposed upon school systems (to cope with their dwindling budgets) and of course »the market« – these are some of the central ideological concepts which were conjured up to heighten social acceptance of what is in fact destined to eliminate public access to knowledge once and for all.

HANS-GERT GRÄBE:
The Role of Mathematics
in the ›Information-Age‹

If we consider the profound transformations taking place leading toward an information and knowledge society from the perspective of increasing significance of competence, we are led to question about range and structure of the knowledge to be obtained, updated and exchanged in a lifelong learning process. This article focuses on the increasing role of symbolic computations, a field situated in science and engineering between mathematics and computer science. It emphasizes the importance of knowledge, from the standpoint of both disciplines, in order to achieve a »culture of thinking« that exceeds far beyond the areas of these particular fields. It illustrates the dynamic importance of a »culture of thinking« in the computer age.

JOCHEN WEICHOLD:

The Parliamentarian and his Allowances Comments on the constitutional law issue of >appropriate< allowances for parliamentarians ensuring their >independence<

Allowances are a democratic achievement. It is through allowances that one can exercise the right to be a candidate for elections. The criteria for the ‚appropriateness‘ of allowances are (1) the degree of responsibility the parliamentarian takes and his/her place in the constitutional system, (2) an appropriate livelihood, (3) the proportionality between his/her allowances and other (regional, local level parliamentarian) allowances, (4) the balance between the development of parliamentarian allowances and general income development, (5) his/her attachment to the majority of the electorate (»social representation component«), and (6) his/her workload. Allowances are not a mathematical but a political issue. It is the parliamentarians, themselves who decide this question and present their decision to the general public. They cannot transfer this decision to any other body.

HELMUT THIELEN:

Leonardo Boff and Tarso Genro – Creative Thinkers and Supporters of the Left in Brazil

In his essay, Helmut Thielen, a Sociology Professor, at UNISINOS in Sao Leopoldo, Rio Grande do Sul/Brazil introduces two important figures of the Brazilian left. The author discusses not only their theoretical positions but he also seeks to show their attempts at putting their ideas into practice. So far these attempts have culminated in the World Social Forum that was convened in Porto Alegre at the end of January 2001 following the invitation of Mayor Tarso Genro. The meeting, designed to be a counter-event of the annual World Economic Forum in Davos/Switzerland and convening about 10,000 anti-globalization activists was held under the motto »A different world is possible«.

JOHANNES BECKER:

Cuba – Model for Developing Countries or Fossil?

Despite the profound crisis of the 1990s this Caribbean island remains firmly committed to socialism, to its social achievements and to its national independence. Written off by most political observers after the collapse of the COMECON (Council of Mutual Economic Assistance), the economy of this 11-million-people-state is recovering slowly. Apart from the high level of education, the expansion of tourism and the cautious overture to foreign capital are the main sources of assistance in these efforts. The disadvantage of this policy lies in a growing social gap between those who partake in and those excluded from the wealth sponsored by the US-Dollar. Cuba's survival finds a broad resonance in international politics.

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