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COURAGE TO REALISE LAMPSACUS
The MULICULTURAL SOCIETY OF MINORITIES
OF MINORITIES
The Internet as Chance

for our children

ABOUT THE BOOK
Do you want to help us
that we are no longer
regarded as dreamers,
although we might
be dreamers?

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PREFACE

The authors are no computer experts but simply computer users trying to cope with the nearly perfect chaos of the computer world. In the meantime this also included the Internet. The computer and everything around it increasingly has become the centre of our life. For one of the authors, Otto Rössler, the chaos in the computer constitutes a vital part of his research activities. For the other author, Wilfried Kriese, the computer with its programmes has become an indispensable aid, as it makes so many book projects possible, which would not have been realisable in 1985 neither in technical nor in economic terms. The computer is the salvation particularly for the writer Wilfried Kriese, because - due to his dyslexia - he and many other people with the same disorder would not stand a chance to keep pace with today's time if it were not for computers.

In 1989 Wilfried Kriese wrote his first book on a type-writer with an alphameric storage and a spell checker which was a great help despite the underdeveloped technology of that time. Today Kriese's life that is determined by writing and publishing would be unthinkable without computers. For a person with dyslexia the computer thus became what a white stick and guide-dog are for a blind person.

For the authors there is no doubt that the Internet will make its entrance in the next 10 or 20 years even among those people who are still fighting tooth and nail to prevent the progress of the Internet or who are not able to afford it. This does not mean that it would not be worthwhile to be sceptical. This book intends to encourage you in a critical spirit to become a co-creator of the world inside and outside the Internet.

For the Internet will strongly influence the culture and tradition of all countries, it may even lead to a new global culture.

Lampsacus is a means to bring together the world and to unite it to a "multicultural society of minorities".

Part I LAMPSACUS

WHAT IS LAMPSACUS?

Lampsacus was an ancient Greek city that became famous because it granted asylum to the Presocratic naturalist Anaxagoras, after he had postulated the idea that the chaos was controlled by the mind as explanation for the world and consequently had been outlawed in Athens. Thus both Anaxagoras and the inhabitants of Lampsacus became immortal.

At present, there is little trust throughout the world - as was the case in the past - that science might attain transparency of the world down to the infinitely small level, as Anaxagoras was the first to propose. For this reason persons seeing the future optimistically once again need a place of refuge. Accordingly, it has the name Lampsacus. Everybody can visit this place. Lampsacus has a long url on the Internet which is a bit difficult to memorize. http://www.cs.wayne.edu/~kjz/ lampsacus/.

Some day there will also be a second, real city of that name on the globe - "as a site you can touch" -. Soon so many persons will owe so much to the home town of all persons on the Internet - where all information requirements are fulfilled for free - that they will wish to drive there in huge numbers with their families in order to be able to touch Lampsacus as a real city. In this place that has not been determined yet and which will be ready to assume the role of ancient Lampsacus in reality you will find - as on the Internet - a Multicultural Society of Minorities (MSM). I.e. a society where different nationalities with their cultures and traditions will live and act together with other minority groups (such as obese people, lesbians, mentally ill, disabled, poor people, etc) and not against each other.

POSSIBILITIES OF REALISING L+MSM

The paragraph above sounded like a page from a prospectus for the Riviera. But everybody knows: there is no such thing as a "free lunch": Nobody will pay for your lunch without no strings attached. So where's the sting in the tail, or even the fraud?

So instead of going into raptures over the unique opportunities that Lampsacus offers to us (with the largest library, the largest university and the largest newspaper and the largest post-office of the world) we would rather do it "the other way round". Anybody who wishes to do so, can change from the camp of timid pessimist to the camp of future-oriented optimists. How? By thinking independently through all the oh-so-reasonable objections raised to Lampsacus, and maybe by even turning them around autonomously in his or her mind. For one will find one's own opinion only on the basis of a mature judgement. It helps a lot if all the counter-arguments are already on hand.

Indeed, scepticism of the readers cannot be large enough. Apart from promises you will not find anything else on the Internet site. Promises, however, are cheap, because they do not cost money. Thus money will become - as is so often the case - once again a fundamental problem, at least this seems to be the case, or not? No, as an exception to the rule there is a different problem this time. What is missing is a nation. Yes, this does not have anything to do with the "friendliest nation" (as Nicolas Negroponte calls the Internet users), what is missing is a host nation. For even the most well-meaning institutions of the world, the planned L+MSM (Lampsacus and the Multicultural Society of Minorities) need a sponsor so as to become reality. Incidentally, also a small country is suited for this purpose. There is, however, one problem: This country would have to be incurably optimistic. The rolling stone

thus could have struck itself. Have we cut the ground from under our feet? Is a real nation feasible after all?

There is a long tradition in a country of this world which makes it the ideal future host. However, if we simply stated the name of this country this might impair its ability to take this decision. For this reason, we cannot reveal its name. Conversely this also entails the risk that this country might miss the historic opportunity.

Nothing is so difficult to predict as the future. The development of the Internet and everything related to it is very fast-moving. We see a Multicultural Society of Minorities appearing on the horizon via a second Internet (Lampsacus) - like the sun lingering above the sea. Is there a possibility to grasp it like a mirage with a zoom lens or even like a non-utopia that can be realised already now?

FINANCING OF LAMPSACUS

Lampsacus is extremely labour-intensive. The numerous jobs that it creates have to be secured - at least for the circle of permanent employees - with a foundation. Which size does the foundation have to have in order to guarantee that the project can continue on its own once it has been started?

We believe that once funding has been secured that Lampsacus will see the light of the day. We were asked whether a small start would be better than no start. The answer seems to be no. 200 years ago a free-of-charge mail service for the entire planet only could have been established if a financially powerful fund had been founded with the assignment of making the impossible possible. We are thinking of an endowment fund of 10 Billion Dollars out of whose interest income an annual one billion dollars would be available for the creation and financing of employees, satellites and the acquired programmes.

Apart from the money problem, we are facing a logistical problem which is the fact that what we regard as the overheating of the high-performance engine of "progress" will remain digital within in the foreseeable future. Owing to the digital revolution, production is faster than consumption, thus automatically creating more leisure time, which, in turn, will result in the generation of less social welfare benefits. For this reason it would be sensible to use part of our leisure time for our fellow human beings; particularly in the industrialised countries, however, this must be regarded as not realisable.

It is unavoidable that the society of Lampsacus will adapt to the continuous technical and digitised progress, for instance, via reductions of working hours or more part-time work. After all,

like hard consumer goods, theoretical knowledge can be produced more rapidly than it is sold, or to put it differently, it is possible to produce much more than there is money or customers. It is only through distribution without charge that "progress via progress" is generated which will re-establish healthy economic growth for all. This means that economic progress presupposes progress in terms of information (that is free of charge). Lampsacus facilitates the surmounting of this global bottleneck.

This leads us to the burning question as to how many jobs Lampsacus will create?

Our answer to this question is: that it is simply not possible to predict in an age of technical and social changes taking place at breakneck speed whether 30000, 100000 or even millions of new jobs will be created. After all, this depends, as was already mentioned, on the framework conditions. For instance, with a 25-hour-week less new jobs are created and maintained than with 50 working hours per week. By the same token, the number of created jobs depends on the amount of holidays an employee enjoys per year and the duration of life hours of work. Nevertheless we are able to reduce this to a formula, even though we are no economists. The longer the hours that people work, the higher the unemployment rate. In order to combat this development, socially acceptable framework conditions need to be created by politicians, employers and unions. This is, at any rate, the opinion of French Socialist politicians. We believe that there is a foreseeable solution. We see that free access to information for all will create, first of all, the largest service company in the world, and secondly, will facilitate the access to and the creation of new jobs for a huge number of persons.

WHEN WILL LAMPSACUS BE REALISED?

It is an open question, when Lampsacus will be realised. it is even more questionable, whether it can become such a "brave" new reality with the qualities of a MSM. It is certain, however, that it is possible. Many things that became reality in the past were rejected at first, because they represented danger, for instance, the radio, cinema, TV, video, letterpress printing, computer, CD, down to the railway and space travel. It is probably better not to repeat the initial concerns in detail. After all, this book intends to give new insights as to whether L+MSM is to become reality. Are we already beginning Lampsacus in some spheres of life or are we maybe even right in the middle of it already?

IS PROFIT A MUST?

As early as in the time of the ancient Romans and Greeks people wanted to make profit. To this end they exploited their slaves and did not shy a away from wars in order to "bring peace" to their neighbours. Some people claim that profit and the greed for ever more wealth were the demise not only of ancient Rome and before that of ancient Greece, but also of several well-known and unknown small empires and social systems. In those days the world had not become a global village yet so that it was still easy to find an excuse for wars. Can Lampsacus make globalisation and peace possible, something that everybody is constantly spouting about, but that is actually in no way realised?

Is Lampsacus doomed to fail due to half-hearted practice as did past utopias? Although Lampsacus is not a utopia - for utopias are dependent on technical and moral developments that have not taken place yet - we still have to see to it that this plant is not destroyed due to the greed of individuals or a whole group before it actually is able to grow.

Even though Lampsacus is only an artificial world as yet, the following question is justified: is profit really a must? We will come back to that question. The word Internet was still a foreign word at the beginning of the nineties, however, by the end of the nineties, the Internet developed so rapidly that even computer experts were amazed.

In spite of its low costs the Internet is laid out as a market characterised by capitalism promising huge profits in the long-term. It is thus comprehensible that many parties try to get money out of the Internet users. Social concerns and particularly social action simply drop out. One gains the impression that a market economy resting entirely on capitalism, on the one hand, and social co-

existence, on the other hand, are incompatible. In Europe people are searching for a compromise that is to make the impossible possible. Is Lampsacus the solution?

In order to meet the danger of a social collapse everybody is called upon to take part in Lampsacus. This is possible now. One can create autonomous towns and countries with computer games which are positively or negatively influenced and modified by the correct decisions taken by the individual players.

It is certain for the authors, however, that Lampsacus will also be a game in the beginning, for not only children learn things playfully for real life, but also adults. Yet soon the games will be over, as L+MSM can be realised in the present, i.e. in the near future. The preconditions for this purpose have never been better. By interconnecting the personal computers in increasingly more households throughout the world, the Internet will be extended gradually at a global level. This means that persons in every corner of the world will be able to communicate at any time.

L+MSM inside and outside the Internet does not intend to make real profit, rather it regards the amalgamation of all peoples, with the maintenance of their cultures and traditions, without exploitation by modern slavery, as far as progress allows this independently from Lampsacus, as its profit. This does not mean, however, that the introduction of Lampsacus would not create a huge number of jobs and thus would boost the economy to an undreamt-of extent. Of course, the generated economic boom can be seen, if you like, as "profit".

PART II POWER AND MEDIA