

factor^y

Magazine for a sustainable economy



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Topic

VALUE-ATION

Value and Values Learning to value the Value of Goods the Value of Things
Small but Valuable Creatures More Valuable than Money Cash for
Treasure Appreciation – More, please! The Art of Appreciating Oneself

Appreciative Management

We hear and read about the call to talk about values again and again – and not only during periods of crisis. The topics are the necessity for or the pressure of changing values, the values of a leading culture, and a debate on values. Values are equated with moral and ethical principles, rather than creative values or the capital value of goods. However, how does the development of values work in our society? Which things or people are regarded as valuable or worthless? Moreover, how does another type of valuation lead us to more valuable management, i.e. a more appreciative life? ▶



This is the topic of this issue of the factory magazine: 'Value-ation'. After 'Be(a)ware' and 'Trans-form', our third hyphenated title 'Value-ation' sets the whole range of appreciation of tangible, personal and social values in the context of sustainable economy. With this in mind, we first take a look at economic terms like exchange and market value in 'Value and Values', then we will be 'Learning to learn the Value of Goods' through a critique of economic growth, and we point out 'Creatures with High Value' in a photo report. We find out that exchange values are based on something that is 'More Valuable than Money' and has to do with social appreciation as well, just like business ethics in 'Appreciation - More of That!' and the strengthening of one's self-esteem through 'The Art of Appreciating Oneself'. Our report on 'Cash for High Value' shows that moral concepts may change in some situations and that we are grateful for appreciation.

As always, we have included useful valuable figures and insightful quotations and we hope that this issue of the factory magazine will encourage another type of 'Value-ation' and more appreciative management.

Ralf Bindel
for the editorial team

(Translated from the German by Lars Zankl, Christine Gubo and Bianca Gerards)



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The Yasuni ITT initiative failed in 2013. Its aim was to keep the petroleum of the ITT area in the Ecuadorean Yasuni National Park underground against payment of half of the value of the oil. In that way, the unique biodiversity of the primeval forest was supposed to be preserved and the climate to be protected. Due to the lack of adequate international payments into the Yasuni ITT Trust Fund, the petroleum is now being extracted.



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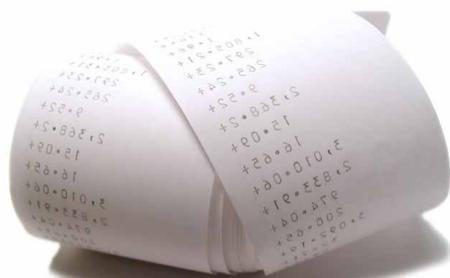
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»We spend the first half of our life sacrificing our health in the pursuit of money and we spend the second half of our life spending money to recuperate our health.«

Voltaire (born 21 November 1694; died 30 May 1778 in Paris), one of the most influential thinkers of the Enlightenment

2

A majority of 65 per cent of Germans would like to work between 30 and 40 hours per week; seven per cent would prefer not to work more than 20 hours per week only two per cent would rather not work at all. www.brandeins.de, "Die Welt in Zahlen 2011" (the world in figures 2011)

3

Almost every third person in Germany suffers from a psychological disorder within the time frame of one year. The issuing of medical certificates due to psychological strain has almost doubled since 1990 and in 2010 the number rose to a new peak. Volk der Erschöpften (the exhausted nation), headline of Der Spiegel's cover story November 2011

57

According to some surveys, 47 per cent of Germans think that long-term unemployed people are lazy and 57 per cent assume that the long-term unemployed are living a care-free life at the expense of society. The German Federal Employment Agency states that the actual quota of abuse amounted to only one per cent in 2009. Wilhelm Heitmeyer, Deutsche Zustände (conditions in Germany), issued by the German Federal Employment Agency

30

A report issued by the University of Duisburg-Essen states that for about 30 years, job satisfaction has been going down in Germany, regardless of one's qualifications and the size of the company. From the age of 50 onwards, there is a particularly sharp decline and on the basis of an international comparison, Germans are particularly dissatisfied. The reasons named are an intensification of work, difficulties in achieving a work-life balance, few pay raises and growing insecurity. www.iaq.uni-due.de/iaq-report/2011

80

According to a survey carried out by McKinsey, almost 80 per cent of Germans are convinced that in comparison to other luxury goods, their car will still yield the greatest value for them in the future.

Matthias Penzel, Autostopp? Autopop! (stop cars? rock cars!) Die Tageszeitung, 2/3 November 2013

20

Every year, 20 million tons of food are thrown away. This corresponds to 250 kilograms per citizen every year. Most of the food does not even make its way from the field into the supermarket because one out of two potatoes or lettuces either has a flaw or does not respond to norms. Every fifth loaf of bread stays on the shelf unsold. These costs are included in the prices we pay. Kreutzberger/Thurn, Die Essensvernichter (the food destroyers), 2011

8

According to the Global Peace Index, war and violence cost the world economy over USD 8trn in 2010. A quarter of that amount would be sufficient to avoid the worst consequences of climatic change, put into action the UN Development Goals and pay off the entire national debt of Greece, Portugal and Ireland. Global Peace Index 2010, www.visionofhumanity.org

3000

The tax exemption for ship and aviation fuels is the greatest indirect subvention worldwide. The United States forego USD 300bn per year. Hermann Scheer, *Der energetische Imperativ* (the imperative of energetic politics), 2010

18

In 2008, the German national debt has risen by 18 per cent due to the bank bailout. The German taxpayers' association reports that it now amounts to EUR 2trn. This corresponds to a debt burden of EUR 25,000 per citizen.

54

In 1997, the environmental economist Robert Constanza estimated that the total value of services to which we have access for free amounts to between USD 16 trillion and 54 trillion. This provision of food, water, air, raw materials, pollination, health and recreation of nature was worth between one and three times as much as the entire world's economic performance back then. Jessel/Tschimpke/Walser, *Produktivkraft Natur* (productive power nature), 2009

1/2

If we could manage to reduce the amount of food being thrown away by half, we could prevent the amount of greenhouse gas emissions we would avoid if we were to do away with every second car. Kreuzberger/Thurn, *Die Essensvernichter* (the food destroyers), 2011

4,2

One flight from Germany to New York and back produces approximately 4.2 tons of carbon dioxide emissions. If we still want to reach the 2-degree climate target, CO2 emissions cannot exceed 2.7 tons per capita and year through 2050. Niko Paech, *Rettet die Welt vor den Weltrettern* (save the world from the world savers), *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 2011

absolute value, **actual value**,
 applause, appreciation, assessment,
 assessment of value, **attentive-**
ness, bond, book
 value, brand value,
 change in value,
cheap, collector's value, **commercial value**,
 commodity fetishism, company value, **confidence**, con-
 tempt, corporate ethics, **correct**, crisis of value, **crisis value**,
 CSR, current market value, devaluation, **disdain**, earning power, empathy,
 estimation, evaluation, **exchange value**, expected value, **experience**, fair, **fair**
price, flow coefficient, forged money, gold value, **goodwill**, ground value, half-life, health,
 high-quality, **ideal value**, increase in value, **inferior**, interest, intermediate value, **in-**
trinsic value, intuition, kindness,
labour value, **VALU-ATION**, limiting value,
 maintenance of measured value, mean value,
 concept, **new values**, nominal value, numeric value, payment in kind, pH-value, **price**,
 purchasing power, **recognition**, recoverable, recycling, **reputation**, respect,
 scale, **scrap value**, self-worth, standard, standard value, **theory of value**, timeless,
 token, **truth value**, utility value, value as new, value chain,
 value judgement, **valuable**, value measure, value of
 age, value of goods, **value set**, value sign, value
 transfer, values, worthless, **zero value**

»Nowadays, people know the price of everything and the value of nothing.«

Oscar Wilde (* 16 October 1854 in Dublin; † 30 November 1900 in Paris), Irish author



Worth and Values

The assessment of value that predominates today is an economic one: the price determines the value. However, the actual meaning of a value lies in its use, in its quality. A shift from valuation to appreciation could change our view of things..

By Joachim Spangenberg

Translated from the German by Jan Maintz, Dorothee Schmidt, Lara Nettekoven and Susanne Mollen

In terms of linguistic history, 'worth' refers to things we value, things that are important to us. If we look it up in a dictionary, the term 'worth' in its etymology has a positive meaning. It has something of momentousness, a special quality. Nowadays, when talking about the worth of something, we generally refer to its price. What is interesting about this change in value is its history and how it is to be assessed.

When we talk about value in the singular, we are referring to a quantifiable and thus addable value which can be used to compare different goods and people; this means a value independent from subjective valuation and hence, objective.

This is what monetary value offers: by definition, prices are determined by the market, do not depend on people and help to make the value of goods comparable. We (sometimes) exchange things of the same monetary value directly for one another, or (in most cases) indirectly using money, that is through a monetary system. The classic economists (Smith, Marx, Ricardo) called this 'exchange value.'

However, they also knew 'use value.' Use value refers to how important something is for its user or owner, meaning a subjective appreciation. Therefore, a market process always results from the use value of a good being smaller for its owner than its exchange value (i.e.. the imaginary use value of another good is acquired with the proceeds): then we sell. In the end, everyone possesses – proportionately to his own purchasing power – the goods he values the most. On the other hand, if the value estimation is very high from the beginning, there may not be anyone who offers enough for a transaction to take; supply does not meet demand, so there is no exchange value. If the owners consider the goods to be absolutely essential and are in no way ready to sell, then there is a priori no exchange and thus no exchange value (price). The absence of price does not necessarily mean that something is worthless –on the contrary, it can be so valuable that a sale is not even considered and consequently it does not have any market price. ▶



Price does not determine value

Even today, no reasonable (even neo-classic) economist will deny that there are other values than those expressed with money. There is the intrinsic value of sensible beings, which applies independently of every use and has no price, or (what is less generally recognised) the inherent value of objects that are unique and irreplaceable: the Mona Lisa has an inherent value independent of any price, which cannot be expressed monetarily; an endangered bird species is valuable, but it has no market price. According to Kant, such objects have no price due to their irreplaceability, but they have dignity. In contrast to this, prices value different but interchangeable goods with respect to their instrumental values. Nevertheless, in the area of economics – and more and more in politics and society as well – the monetary value becomes the dominant, if not the only value to be taken into consideration. An example for this economization of thought is the increasing valuation of nature, ecosystems and their

productivity in monetary units. From the point of view of value theory, this represents an error of category: inherent values ('dignity') are mistaken for instrumental values – only the latter have monetary value. The oft-used argument, that a – questionable – monetary value is always better than a price of 'zero', illustrates this well. It means that the non-existence of a price equals the existence of a price of 'zero' and demands a different price instead of other decisive criteria, not solely based on monetary values (i.e. in cost-benefit analyses). Where does this restricted view come from? The earliest economists, the physiocrats of the 18th century, reacted to the crisis of the agrarian society in Louis XIV's time; they described the soil (today we say: the environment) as the source of wealth. In the early years of the industrial society in the 19th century, with its mass production and huge volume of labour, it was generally indisputable that human work was the source of all economic values, even when Smith, Marx or Malthus mentioned the necessary contributions of nature and environment. At the found- ►



ers' time, neoclassicism, which basically describes the economy as an exchange system, dominated – trade increased and globalization was stronger in 1900 than it is 100 years later. An intrinsic value of things was not of interest anymore. What counted was the exchange value or trading price. Work and (increasingly more importantly) capital were the production factors that created value.

Crisis of value and value of crisis

The global economic crisis interrupted the hegemony of neoclassicism in the field of economics; from the 1930's to the late 1970's, Keynesianism dominated. It did not focus on the micro-level of exchange, but rather on the regulation of the complex system of the national economy. After the failure of a common political Keynesianism during the crisis of the 1970's, the supply-oriented perspective of neoclassicism, fixed on the micro-level of exchange, gained the upper hand once 'again. Free trade became a dogma; markets could not be disturbed (i.e. through political in-

tervention or collective agreement), so that they could shape the 'objective real' prices, depict the consumers' values (their preferences), produce ideal solutions and maximize welfare. The dominance of the finance sector, which has developed in the course of globalization, only changed a little about the worldview. The 'market laws' were transferred to the financial markets and deregulated them (although Adam Smith had already excluded the finance sector from his deregulation).

The worldview remained simple and monetary; the economy was understood as exchange and money circulation: companies pay salaries in exchange for labour, then consumers buy products in exchange for money, the use value plays no role. Resources simply exist, rubbish disappears unseen (which corresponded to the state of the rubbish economy until the 1960s). When nature makes itself noticeable and does not behave according to these assumptions, when the procurement and disposal of material becomes an essential cost factor (in the manufacturing industry, on average a company spends double the

amount on material compared to that spent on wages or salaries, but spends only about two percent on energy), the day of environmental and resource economists will have come.

Cost-relevant environmental aspects were integrated into the money-oriented worldview. Resources have a price and nature has a monetary value (insofar as nature is relevant as a factor of production). Environmental burdens indicate a market failure. Since the polluter does not have to pay for the burdens, the market does not – as is legitimate at other times – deliver an ideal result. The solution is clear: The externalised costs that are not covered by the polluter have to be internalised and therefore have to be charged to the polluter's account; this is the 'polluter pays' principle. Then 'prices tell the ecological truth' and the market functions ideally again. For that, it is not necessary that the compensatory payments benefit the victims. However, this theory – connected to names like Pigou and Coase – is designed to correct the slight failure to meet certain targets. Ecological and social burdens, however, as Karl- ▶

Wilhelm Knapp already demonstrated in the 1950s, are not an avoidable side effect, but rather a functional principle of our market economies. Externalising does not equal market failure, but rather business success.

The value of determining value

Behind the evaluation of the environment as a monetary value is the belief in the market and its ability to offer ideal solutions – that is why the environment has to have a market price, meaning an exchange value, and for that purpose has to become a trade commodity (this is called commodification). In doing so, it is erroneously assumed that the economic optimum does not have to be socially or ecologically optimal, and indeed cannot be optimal, because it disregards all of the values that cannot be expressed in prices. As a result, the extinction of a certain species can be the economically optimal option under certain circumstances – it only has to be worth it and the species cannot have a market value that is too high. Instead of

relying on the market to find solutions, it would be necessary to take the information provided by the market as one factor among others that can, but does not have to, play a role in decision-making. Moreover, the factor's significance is to be evaluated in social and political judgement. Markets are institutions for the distribution of goods, the coordination of purchase decisions and for the collection of information, but they are neither legitimate nor optimal bodies of decision-making. The lesson is clear: we should neither overrate the function of markets and the significance of prices, nor should we underrate them. Furthermore, when making decisions, we should consider the significance of intrinsic and inherent values (the 'dignity' of goods) that cannot be measured in money. Still, trying to do so is a form

of 'sub-optimisation.' It is an attempt to make something as good as possible, which should not be done. Commodification is based on an error in reasoning. Its result is a weak foundation built on sand at best and a disaster for humans and the environment at worst.

Dr. Joachim Spangenberg is a biologist, ecologist and economist. He works at the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research UFZ and for the Sustainable Europe Research Institute SERI in Germany on criteria, indicators and scenarios for a socioeconomic development that respects ecological boundaries and secures the preservation of the ecosystem service.



»When a person claims that anything can be achieved with money, we can be sure that he never had any.«

Aristotle “Ari” Socrates Homer Onassis (* 15 January 1906 in Smyrna, Othman Empire; † 15 March 1975 in Neuilly-sur-Seine near Paris), Greek shipping magnate



Learning to value the value of goods

A different kind of appreciation of products, of the invested labour and resources is a way out of the resource-devouring consumption trap. We reward ourselves and others, both economically and aesthetically, with truly appreciative, material-loving consumer behaviour.

A plea by Christine Ax

Translated from the German by Lara Nettekoven, Theresa Lupek, Susanne Mollen, Ruthild Gärtner, Bianca Gerards and Miriam Eckers

As capable of circulation as products may be, the aim of a product can never be the enabling of economic growth by becoming 'recyclable' or 'capable of circulation.' Its purpose can only ever be the profit or the pleasure that a certain good provides; its usage and not its wastage. Even when it comes to recyclables: less is more. After all, the production of all artefacts and their preservation also requires, in addition to energy and resources, human 'living time' during production and during usage. It requires living time that is valuable.

Anyone who wants to appreciate products, the methods of their production and natural resources needs to ask for the products' utility, their purpose. Which things really give us satisfaction? For this purpose, we do not have to ponder obsessively over the question of what is truly of use. On the contrary, we can face the world in a different way, 'lovingly materialistically', in a positive sense, as the poet Pablo Neruda suggests. In his praise of small and the big things, Neruda conjures up their great variety of shapes, colours and materials.

To him, every single thing has its own value, and together they form a defining part of his life. "I have a crazy, crazy love of things ... , not just the grandest, also the infinitely small. ... Oh yes, the planet is sublime! It's full of ... everything ... that is made by the hand of man," Neruda writes. "No one can say ... that I loved only those things that leap and climb, desire, and survive. ... [M]any things conspired to tell me the whole story. [T]hey were so close that they were a part of my being, they were so alive with me that they lived half my life and will die half my death." Only that which we truly love is to us worth the effort of using and preserving it.



Things as life-long companions

Would it not be more reasonable to temper our consumer behaviour and possess fewer, but better things? Things that are good for life and made for life? Objects to which we feel related in a personal way? Things that, with age, gain in value or patina, for us or for others. And should we not consider more carefully what things actually mean to our lives before we allow them to play a role in them?

Ivan Illich, for example, shows us how these alternative measures of value work. In his writings, the author, philosopher and theologian has provided some basic approaches to thinking things against the grain. In 1978, he was one of the first to show in his book *Energy and Equity* that cars are consumers of living time or 'life time'. By no means do we save 'life time' or gain spare time, as one would assume, by using them. Illich factored in the time we spend financing the car by means of earning our income as well as the time needed for financing its use, for fuel, repairs, insurance, etc.

According to Illich's equation, working time equals life time. Not only does this equation help when considering buying a car, but also in the case of consumption in general. Almost as soon as we have bought something, we are already looking for the next bargain. Because it is fun, because we persuade ourselves that we really need this and that, or simply because we can afford it.

The things we do not buy do not have to be produced and earned by us. The less we purchase and produce, the fewer jobs have to be safeguarded or created again and again by the economy. For the more productive we are, the more we have to consume to be able to work.

Calculating marginal utility

In order to obtain a different appreciation of things and our consumption, we can also argue in a brutally economic way. Economists have come up with the notion of a 'marginal utility of things'. It means that the utility of a product cannot be increased in proportion to its number. If we buy ten rolls for breakfast ►



but have had enough after the second one, every additional roll loses value for us. A similar experience is shared by a thirsty reveller who confirms a “highly positive marginal utility” after his first beer, which declines to virtually zero after the fifth one, while after the tenth one, his pleasure reverts to the opposite.

The same calculation can be applied to the purchasing of products. If we buy twenty T-shirts, we are still only able to wear one of them at the same time, and the utility of the other T-shirts in our wardrobe is reduced accordingly. A growth-oriented consumer industry has to always react to this tendency of market saturation. It attempts to keep consumption running because it is neither the products that are scarce, nor the money, but the needs. Today, marketing and advertising specialists as well as designers are responsible for rising and permanent sales. Since the function of a new thing or device remains basically the same, it all depends on the look and the image, on the attitude towards life conveyed by the product. These factors have become the decisive driving force for new purchases, even if the old toast-

er, the old car or the winter jacket are still in good shape. Peer-group pressure is exerted on consumers, a gain in distinction and prestige is suggested and increased social esteem is promised to them.

Technical obsolescence also has the purpose of sales promotion. A long period of use by consumers has contra-productive effects on economic growth. The list of examples for planned obsolescence is long: it starts with light bulbs that originally were much more durable and fine panty hose that do not survive even the first wearing, and it goes on with printers or washing machines that upon expiration of their warranty usually show the same defects.

Some camera and mobile phone batteries stop working after two years. After they stop working, it is either impossible to replace them or the model can simply no longer be delivered. The question of whether this problem is planned by the industry in advance or is rather a mere coincidence is a matter of debate between consumer protectionists and manufacturers. In order to clarify how electrical and electronic



devices are marketed, the German Federal Environment Agency has initiated a new project. The fact is that manufacturers are not doing anything to change the situation. And why should they? The principle of planned obsolescence ensures the manufacturers that there will be a continual demand for their products. Due to the industry's very nature, they are disinterested in product sustainability.

Marginal Costs of Consumption

If we have come to understand the principle of marginal utility and its consequences, then we are in a position to value things differently and, thus, to change our growth-oriented consumer behaviour. If we consider the marginal costs as well, the lack of common sense in our previous behaviour becomes obvious. In business administration and microeconomics, the marginal costs are the costs that result from producing one additional unit of a good. We, as consumers, have to take them into account as well. The more things we purchase,

possess, maintain and have to dispose of later, the higher the psychological, social and ecological costs related to that kind of abundance are. If we understand our economy as a flowchart, resources like energy, raw materials, workforce and time have to be invested on one side in order to produce goods on the other side. It is like a huge machine that has to be kept going – the faster it goes, the faster we have to work and consume, wasting more and more energy and resources – just so we acquire things we don't really need, let alone appreciate. Understanding the principles of marginal utility and marginal cost we take one step further towards changing our valuation assets. Now that we know about the constraints on consumption, we can do better. Still to be considered is the factor of the workforce. In order to achieve a sustainable society, let us undo the Gordian knot that links the valuation of one's own work to that of someone else.

A Gift in Exchange for the Remaining Debt

Already today, many people combine their work with high ethical standards and are proud of their abilities and achievements, and not without reason. The price that someone is able to establish plays a decisive role. But when you take a closer look, you understand that something appears behind the monetary dimension that has nothing to do with money and that cannot be regulated by it either. Actually experienced enjoyment on the job doesn't need to be paid for; its remuneration exists in feeling pride and joy for successful, appreciated and sense-giving work. In return, the burdens which sometimes come with working have to be paid for; but money isn't the one and only currency for it. The relative value of work is determined by the market price, but never the absolute value of a human being who carries out this work for us. To pay a fair price for the work and one's working time is as important as to understand that the monetary remuneration for an effort comprises an aspect of deprecia- ▶

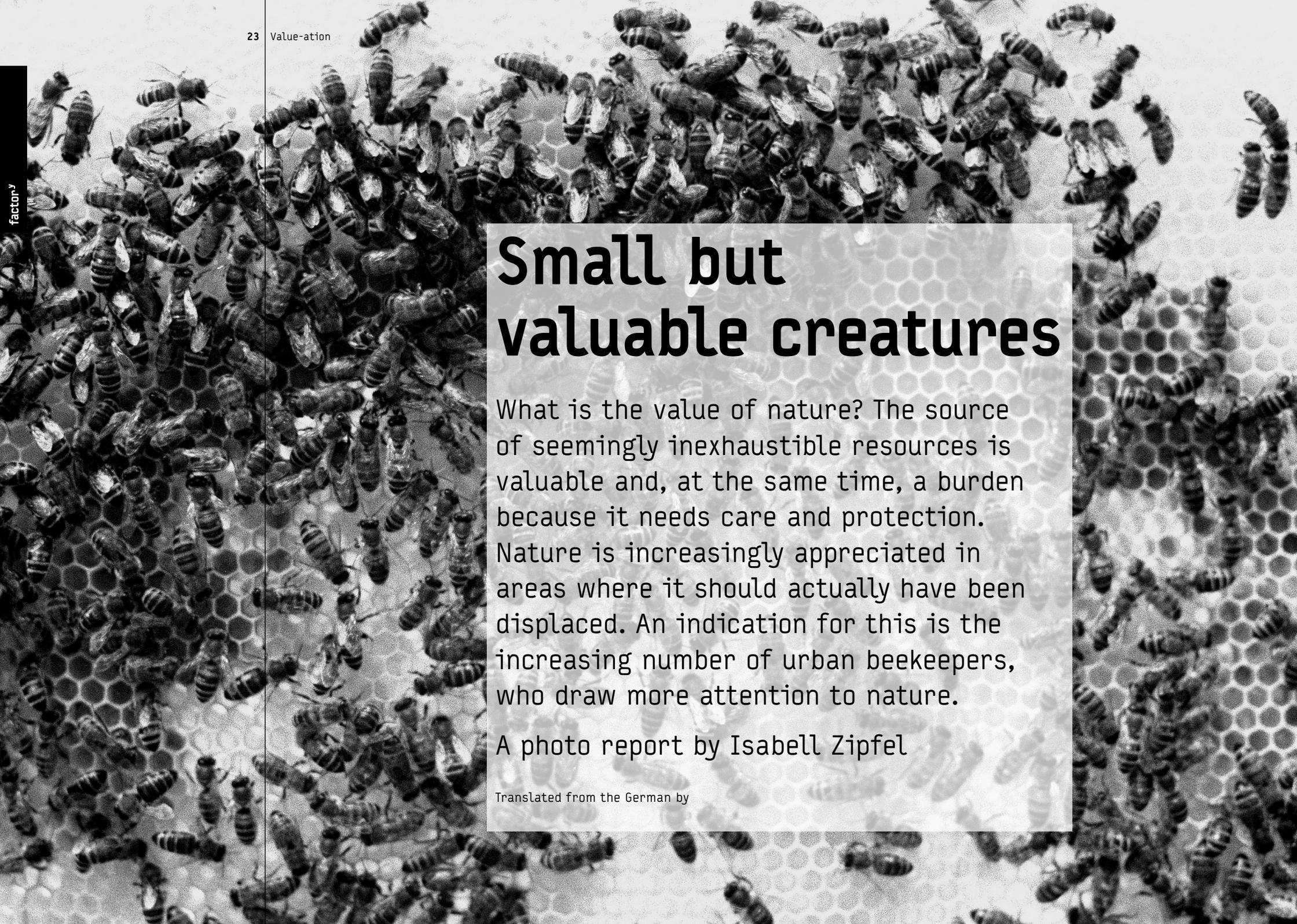
tion of the work and the human being. This is because all the abilities, the enjoyment of work and all the good things someone has put into work remain a part of the person and is, therefore, priceless. A certain debt remains as a part of every acquisition, which is only to be paid off through appreciation, respect and gratitude. Subtle sentiments are part of our culture and are expressed through polite gestures, such as a gift or a tip. It is a form of mutual appreciation, on one side by the person who has provided the service and on the other side by the person who has received the service.

Christine Ax, philosopher and author. The main topics of work, consumptions and appreciation are discussed in her books 'Handwerk der Zukunft' (the future of crafts), 'Die Könnensgesellschaft - Mit guter Arbeit aus der Krise' (the capability society - how good work will lead us out of the crisis) and 'Wachstumswahn : Was uns in die Krise führt und wie wir wieder herauskommen (co-authored with Friedrich Hinterberger)' (The mania of growth : what has led us into crisis and how we can get out of it).



»A swarm of bees in May
is worth a load of hay;
A swarm of bees in June
is worth a silver spoon;
but a swarm of bees in July
is not worth a a fly.«

Proverb



Small but valuable creatures

What is the value of nature? The source of seemingly inexhaustible resources is valuable and, at the same time, a burden because it needs care and protection. Nature is increasingly appreciated in areas where it should actually have been displaced. An indication for this is the increasing number of urban beekeepers, who draw more attention to nature.

A photo report by Isabell Zipfel

Translated from the German by



A professional beekeeper who relies on beekeeping for his livelihood. In Germany, most of the almost 88,500 beekeepers are amateurs.

In more and more parts of the world, honeybees are dying in large numbers. In recent years, more bees have died worldwide than ever before. While fewer and fewer bees are humming in the countryside, it comes as a surprise that their number is increasing in urban environments. There, hundreds of bees are active on rooftops, balconies, terraces and in backyards. In New York, London, Paris, Hamburg – and Berlin. For years now, there has been a new trend in many metropolises: the trend towards urban beekeeping. This is due to the fact that there are no risks whatsoever to the small creatures in the city. It is warmer than in the countryside, which means that the bees can be active for a longer period of time. Blossoming trees in the streets, fallow land and parks are ideal conditions for bees to work. Besides, there is no extensive use of pesticides in the city and the bees do not have any contact to genetically modified crops. This also holds true for bees in Berlin, which is one of the cities in Europe with the highest degree of biodiversity. The city has a diverse urban structure including lakes, forests, lots of parks and trees. By now, there are about 1,000 beekeepers working in the city – and the trend is rising. In total, they keep about 4,200 hives that produce approximately 150 tons of honey per year. No other region in Germany harvests as much honey as Berlin: 40 kilograms of honey on average per hive and year. In Baden-Wurttemberg, for example, they only harvest about 27 kilograms per hive annually.



In the cities, the number of amateur beekeepers is increasing. This is the case, for example, in a small park in Berlin-Hellersdorf. For most beekeepers, urban beekeeping is not just a hobby, but a way of life. They incorporate nature into an urban environment and demonstrate a healthy way of life.



A full-time beekeeper at work. Ecological beekeeping only permits beehives made of wood and straw. There are just a few full-time beekeepers left. And yet, they maintain 100 to 200 hives; amateur beekeepers, however, only keep two to seven hives.



A beekeeper's hat on one of Berlin's rooftops. It all started in 1982 with the rooftop beekeeping of the Parisian stage designer Jean Paucton. For private organizational reasons, this amateur beekeeper secretly started keeping a hive on the rooftop of the magnificent opera Garnier – this was thought to be a short-term emergency solution until he could move the bees to the countryside. He was astonished that the bees felt so comfortable on the rooftop and he acquired permission to keep a number of hives there.

In the countryside, however, bee mortality is constantly increasing. In Germany, there has been a decline in bee populations for years. It is estimated that one third of the bee population dies off every year. In the UK and the US, the rate is no less than 50 percent. There are parts of China where bees have already been completely eradicated. Bee mortality has multiple reasons. Bees kept in the country increasingly suffer from the use of pesticides, the extensive cultivation of monocultures and the Varroa mite. For a number of years, the Varroa mite has been considered to be the main reason for the epidemic bee mortality.

In Germany, bees are the third most important livestock animal after pigs and cows. Germans owe approximately 35 percent of their food to honey bees because they pollinate crops. The yield of fruit trees alone increases by up to 50 percent if they are pollinated by bees. Scientists estimate that the annual worldwide pollination of bees is worth about EUR 154bn per year. The economic value of bees in Germany is estimated to amount to about EUR 4bn per year, calculated from the pollution of the 100 most important crops.



An amateur beekeeper on a rooftop in central Berlin. Urban beekeeping even starts to interest young people, which pleases ageing beekeepers.



Urban beekeeping makes an important contribution to counteracting the worldwide bee mortality: it attracts attention for connections in nature, in places, where most people live.

The Deutschland summt project (Germany is abuzz) which promotes the appreciation of bees, has been followed by five major cities, including Berlin. The overall work performance of honey bees in cities is still poor in comparison with wild or land bees, which are responsible for a large part of domestic food production. The urban beekeepers can make the public aware of the precarious situation of honey bees, yet they cannot save them. Otherwise, all fruit trees and agricultural crops would have to be relocated to the cities. The honey bee can be rescued only with the help of wild meadows, less pesticides, the stemming of large-scale monoculture farming and a new appreciation of beekeeping – that is beekeeping in the countryside.

Isabell Zipfel is a photographer in Berlin who specialises on social topics.

The process of extracting honey. In order to achieve the best quality, the honey is neither warmed during extraction nor in the bottling process. Instead, it is put into vessels before the first crystallization.



Many (of the) professional beekeepers give up because they cannot compete with the cheap imports of honey from Eastern Europe and China. Yet, there are more and more amateur beekeepers, primarily in cities. In Berlin there are 800 amateur beekeepers who are members of one of thirteen beekeeping clubs.

»Things only have the value
that we give them.«

Molière (real name: Jean-Baptiste Poquelin; born probably 14 January 1622 in Paris; died 17 February 1673 also in Paris),
French actor, theatre director and playwright

Worth more than money

Bartering brings more profit than money and it keeps societies together. The respect of the barter partner in association with the appreciation of the object of bartering are social and cultural facts that form at the same time the basis for social relations. The ethnologist Prof. Dr. Hans Peter Hahn considers bartering clubs suitable for changing the conceived conditions of the economy. Ralf Bindel spoke to him.

Translated from the German by Christine Gubo and Lars Zankl



Prof. Hahn, you have been examining bartering clubs for a long time. Are they of any importance at all today?

I would claim the opposite, nowadays bartering clubs are of increasing importance. Bartering clubs are a current topic of interest. In the last ten to twenty years there have arisen new bartering clubs everywhere in Germany. This has to do with the fact that people recognise an additional value in acquiring things or exchanging services and assistance through bartering clubs.

You claim that it has also to do with social appreciation, regardless of the economic value.

In our standard economy we perceive the economic value of a thing always very firmly as only a quality of the thing. A device has certain features, certain abilities and that is why it has the value X. A piece of clothing of a certain quality costs Y.

But when the product is exchanged, it is more worth than it costs?

It is an important outcome of bartering research that it is not only the material features determine the value of things and their appreciation, and hereby I also mean the economic appreciation, but also the fact that it has been received from a particular person. Or that it is imposed on oneself to pass on things. Exchanging is not only a social process. Exchanging is a fundamental mechanism contributing to generating value. Things receive value by passing them on, to put it simply.

When, for instance, I create a piece of furniture and invest a certain number of hours in the process, I estimate the value of the item in relation to the dedicated working time and the required materials and then I try to sell it. If I exchange that object, I want to obtain at least its equivalent value in terms of time and material. Do you believe that this kind of calculation has disappeared within the normal economy?

There are rather simple parameters in the normal economy. We can even start with Karl Marx: there is the use value, which has to be at least as high as the manufacturing costs. What you mean with working time is the market value. And already Marx described the market value as the amount due to scarcity that people can give for a thing that they cannot obtain in a different way. And then a table can be worth much more. The bishop of Limburg has put into his conference room a table that cost EUR 25,000; to him, it was worth that much.



Someone made some big money on it. That is, however, not what matters to you.

What I care about is that people recognise the value in getting the table from someone special -- from someone who is, for example, in a bartering club or from someone who they believe manufactured that table in good craftsmanship. We can find something of that in the logic of labels. In addition, quality seals on labels are always reasons for a price increase in a normal economy. In connection with this, bartering clubs are superior and much more unambiguous, because they clearly state: if I am in a Frankfurt bartering club, I know that a Frankfurt craftsman worked on this table and I appreciate the fact that I can pick it up personally and get precisely this table and not another.

Germany has several rather small bartering clubs with an unknown number of members, but in your study you mention bartering clubs with over a hundred thousand members.

In Argentina, there were really exceptionally large bartering clubs that, for some time, essentially replaced the national economy. This happened when the national and financial crises in Argentina were severe and people lost their trust in the currency.



I have heard there are bartering clubs being created in Greece. Is that right?

This is related to mistrust in the currency as a form of money. Every time this mistrust arises, the personal value of getting goods from people that I know, who live in the same area and have the same needs as I have, grows. All these things suddenly become important again.

Yet this phenomenon is not something new, is it?

Bartering clubs or rather the logic of bartering is something that exists in basically every society in the world, alongside the money economy. The parallelism of a money economy and bartering is an anthropological constant. This slumbering ideal that it is better to get personal goods from someone you know in person always gains the upper hand when mistrust in a state currency comes to the fore.

Are bartering clubs per se more sustainable than global economies?

I am skeptical as to whether bartering clubs fundamentally have a tendency towards more sustainability and more responsible consumption. This may be the case, but there is no built-in automatism that people in bartering clubs have a greater awareness for eco-friendly consumption.

What about the regional money initiative?

I personally consider the regional money initiative as a kind of bartering club as well.

Don't they create some kind of token money (Regiogeld)?

Yes, but it is token money with social rules. Take a look at scalage: you get a coupon – which I would not even consider money, the value of which decreases if one does not use it within a pre-specified period of time. From my point of view, Regiogeld is the classic modern form of a bartering club. Regional currencies work according to a principle of regional limitation and fo-

cus on a particular group of people that basically everyone knows or can now.

But this all stands in opposition to the global monetary economy.

Yes, and it does fundamentally restrict the specification 'let economic value equal monetary value' – for example by means of the logic of scalage that makes the accumulation of such monetary forms simply impossible.

That means that bartering clubs and regional money initiatives really can be an alternative for regional economies, but are restricted to a particular region.

I don't even consider the geographical reference to be a necessary criterion. Regional money or bartering clubs are mainly based on their members' willingness to enter a particular kind of social contract and it is essential, that every single one of them refuses the rules of credit interest rate and debtor interest rate. Liability is created by the willingness of offering and acquiring things oneself offers or acquires according to particular social rules, and not

by being forced into a predicament by amounts of money.

So how is the value of a person's bartering good assessed or how does appreciation for it come about? What if I am nothing but a consumer because I do not have certain skills, or because I am too old, sick, or disabled – what contributions can I then make and how can their value be determined?

Which services or goods can a person offer in such a situation? This is actually a really difficult question. Where is the objective value of a good in a bartering club? At the end of the day, these questions show that every economic evaluation is in fact a social arrangement. The basic logic of a bartering club should include that people who cannot be productive on their own should receive goods without compensation.

Does this have something to do with social valuation, that I can be confident that the goods I provide or receive will be remunerated in some way or another?

I think the idea of a social arrangement is important in this regard, that is, the shared idea that any form of service can also be rewarded with goods. I mean, bartering clubs do not evaluate goods or services on a completely abstract level. They agree that a valuation has to be based on social principles, whereas the standard economic doctrine states that the valuation of a good follows market mechanisms. The latter is the principle of an invisible hand. And this hand fails in certain situations and with regard to specific groups of people.

And this social arrangement is a price list?

This would only be part of it. A more important question is which goods and services are accepted as a form of stocklist in the first place. That is far more crucial. For helping in the garden, I either get something in return or I don't. By the way, in our standard econ-

omy there are also stocklists, but we are simply not actively aware of the fact. Just think about medication. I am not allowed to sell you antibiotics. They are restricted goods, which only a certain group of people are allowed to sell. This hidden list of goods that can or cannot be sold and which may or may not participate in the market already exists in our minds, but we simply do not think about it.

Why is this of interest for you as an ethnologist?

A critique of evolutionary conceptions about money led me on to this topic. These conceptions are grounded in the idea that money is a superior form of exchange compared to all the other forms. This is a strictly Eurocentric perspective! It is a faulty idea of how an economy works in a society. In every economy there are many forms of exchange processes and the ones that are not monetary – and that is where we come back to the topic of bartering clubs – are very often far more important than we realize. That is the reason why I research bartering. ►

Will bartering have a chance to exist in the future, and not only as a research topic?

We will certainly not return to a society that functions without money. But during the present debate about what the Euro actually is, it is important to have a greater understanding of the background of certain issues: What does money-based exchange mean, which other forms of exchange are there and on what basis do we opt for one or the other. I think, in a way, that in our society we ignore the actual role of money and are not aware of the actual exchange practices we participate in every day. We think in terms of money but act according to a completely different set of rules.

Could a debate about bartering bring a different form of valuation of goods and services into public focus promoting sustainable development because fewer resources are used?

I see this as the goal of my argument. I want people to have a different understanding of what value is and that a monetary amount is not even sufficient to explain the economic importance of

certain goods. For this we simply need to actively and reflectively engage with the economic goods, we come into contact with on a daily basis. This is not only a question of ecological awareness but also a question of the channels through which economy penetrates our social framework. Or to put it the other way round, how our social relations define economic relations.

Prof. Dr. Hans Peter Hahn is an ethnologist and an expert on material culture, global consumption and cultural globalisation. He works at the Institute of Ethnology at the Goethe University in Frankfurt.



»The recognition of a value by the old is enough to render it suspicious to the young; the rejection of an ideal by the old is enough to make it popular among the young.«

Richard Graf von Coudenhove-Kalergi (* 16 September 1894 in Tokyo, Japan † 27 July 1972 in Schruns, Vorarlberg), Austrian politician and author



Cash for Values

Only the value of an object counts. Estimating value is a science in itself. The pawnbroking business is one of the oldest in the world and profits from the Eurozone crisis and currency uncertainties these days.

by Simon Wiggen

Translated from the German by Bianca Gerards, Ruthild Gärtner, Lars Zankl and Theresa Lupek

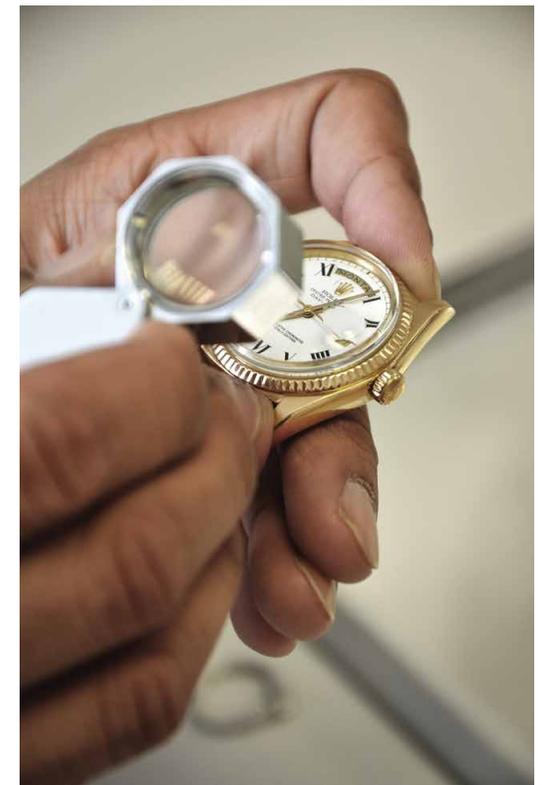
A small inclusion, a fine crack or an unclean cut – just one of these small irregularities makes a diamond lose value within a four-digit euro range. Khalid Malik from the Deutsche Pfandkredit AG (German pawn credit AG) takes a close look when he estimates the value of watches, jewellery and gold for customers who want to pawn their property. With the help of indicator acids, precision engineering tools and x-rays, he examines not only the surface, but also dives deeply into the inner workings of Rolex, Breitling and Co. Life plans and business concepts depend on his judgement, just as careers, insolvencies and dreams do.

Today, the office of the Deutsche Pfandkredit AG, which is located in a historic commercial establishment in the city of Essen, has little to do with a pawnshop in the classical sense. The atmosphere ranges somewhere between that of a bank and that of a jeweller's shop; the noise and stress of the streets disappear behind the glass door. Rings, necklaces and bracelets in display cases try to outshine one another – naturally, all of them made of gold,

platinum or palladium and decorated with diamonds. The walls are decorated with large-format posters showing fine watches in the price range of a mid-sized automobile. Customers can talk to Malik through the glass panes of one of two counters and place their valuable goods into the black drawers for examination.

Value and Truth

Then, the 38-year-old merchant for watches, jewellery and jewels disappears into the office space behind the counter, lowers the magnifying glass on his spectacles and verifies the authenticity of a watch on the basis of different characteristics. The reference number and the individual watch number on the case (both only a fraction of a millimetre in size), the calibre number inside the clockwork as well as the combination of watch glass, model and bracelet are only some of the elements necessary for a professional value assessment. Malik, who has been in business for more than 20 years, says that with only a few years of experience one knows very quickly ▶





whether a Rolex really is a Rolex or a good counterfeit. Besides the visual examination, the fineness of gold is determined by means of an acid applied to a tiny sample of the material. The authenticity of some objects is verified with the help of x-rays, and diamonds are also tested with electronic thermal conductivity instruments.

The lending process involves stress for both parties: The merchant has to assess the value of a piece of jewellery quickly; then the customer has to make his decision. Pawnshops still have a bad reputation, says Dr. Achim Illner, manager of the Deutsche Pfandkredit AG. He has to justify his entering into the pawnbroking business to his friends and acquaintances again and again. In the past, customers were exposed to the prices set by the pawnbroker, especially because there was often only one in town. Start-up founder Illner, who went public with the computer game “Crazy Chicken”, says that he and his colleagues want to change this image. In his opinion, the respectable and pleasant interior of the office in Essen is proof of this change.

Pawn shops in Germany currently benefit from the Eurozone crisis, stricter banking regulations and currency uncertainties. With turnover of EUR 580m, the year 2011 was the most successful in the 50 years of history of the Zentralverband des Deutschen Pfandkreditgewerbes (the umbrella organisation of the German pawn credit business). According to the organisation, more than one million Germans use pawn credits as a means to get through financial bottlenecks, and the number is rising. Experience shows that nine out of ten customers who need quick cash become regular customers in pawn shops. Among them are doctors, tradesmen, self-employed people and new divorcees.

According to Illner, the pawn credit business scores with its simplicity when it comes to granting loans. No information from the SCHUFA, Germany’s credit control agency, or on credit standing is needed. Only the value of the object counts. A pawnbroker can normally help out his customer with money after only a few minutes time. No bank can do that, he emphasises. ►



At one percent per month, the fees – that is the estimated interest – are indeed comparatively high. But they have not changed since 1961. A full 90 percent of the pledged objects are redeemed after approximately three months. The rest of the items are put up for public auctions.

Value Shift due to Age

Today, more and more luxury goods like watches, jewellery and gemstones are taken to the pawnbroker. In the past, cars also played a significant role, just like smaller items that are worth only a few euros. Customers more easily part with older items, says Malik. Nobody likes to part with a modern ring or the latest model of a watch.

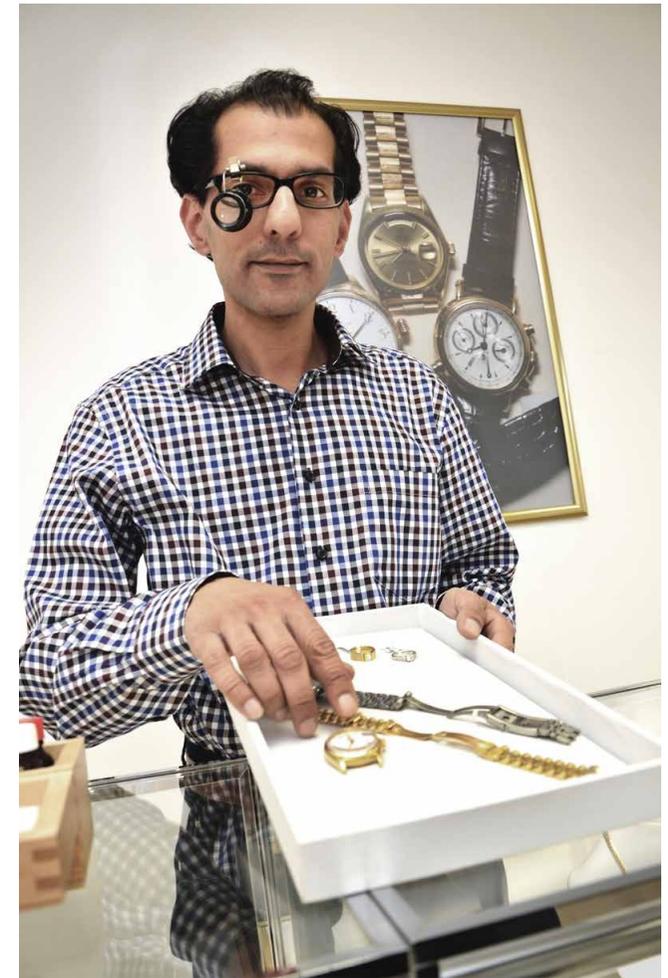
Even if one is able to redeem it after three months, it is much easier to pawn a piece of jewellery that has been stored in the safe for several years. And this is exactly what makes the expert's job all the harder. Apart from wear and tear, there is also the value to collectors and the value of material that needs to be considered, as their role changes

over the years. The initial selling price, however, becomes less important. This is where the expertise of the 38-year old pawnbroker is needed.

This has been Malik's dream job since he first did an internship with a jeweller as a 15-year old pupil. He is still enthusiastic about his work and while stroking a watchstrap made of real gold, he tells us that he works with beautiful and valuable items every day. Who else can say that about his job? He doesn't need to worry about his employment situation. Experts are in demand and his boss Illner founded the first online pawnshop in May 2013 – www.ipfand.de. Illner explains that they are not the first sector that uses the anonymity of the Internet because not everybody wants to be seen entering a pawnshop – no matter how noble the shop might appear to be.

Simon Wiggen is web editor in the press office of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Essen. The factory issue Do-it-Yourself featured an article by Wiggen for do-it-yourself entrepreneurs on how to turn an idea into a sustainable company.

Pictures: Simon Wiggen



»He is not worthy of wine
who drinketh it like water.«

Friedrich Martin von Bodenstedt (* 22 April 1819 in Peine, Germany † 18 April 1892 in Wiesbaden, Germany),
author and expert in Orientalism

Appreciation – more please!

Nowadays, employees and clients associate corporate culture with different moral concepts. Not only economic success is relevant but also social appreciation. The following examples will show that social appreciation also ensures an increase in value.

By Elita Wiegand

Translated from the German by Miriam Eckers, Sina Brauch, Ruthild Gärtner, Susanne Mollen and Theresa Lupek



Appreciation as part of a corporate culture is in conflict with profit maximisation and gains. It takes time and energy and its specific success is not really quantifiable. Social appreciation is one of the soft facts and there would be no time for any of those in hard times if it weren't for the clients and employees. They are characterised by an increased sense of responsibility and environmental awareness and they are also less committed to companies in which appreciation clearly doesn't matter. With the increasing shortage of skilled workers and the pressure on companies to distinguish themselves from competitors, the soft facts become hard facts. Enterprises are forced to reconsider and improve their corporate culture and values. With keywords such as social responsibility, CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility), and sustainable economy, also the media has taken up the issue of an appreciative corporate culture. Although these measures are currently voluntary for enterprises, they are increasingly becoming a popular differentiating feature.

Now, the only question is whether this is just a trend or an actual sign of long-term change. In times of global economic crisis and fierce competition, is it even possible for enterprises to be economically successful while basing their corporate culture on ethical values? The free-market liberal economist and Nobel laureate Milton Friedman says in his often cited article on the role of businesses in society that: “[t]he social responsibility of business is to increase its profits”. In other words, the ultimate objective of an enterprise is profit maximisation. Most entrepreneurs share this view and argue that they could not afford to integrate values into their corporate culture since, the enterprise and thus the workplaces have to survive under the conditions of competition. But are values and economic success really incompatible?

Businesses are required to comply with values

A group of scientists, Peus, Traut-Mat-
tausch, Kerschreiter and Frey at the
Ludwig Maximilian University of Mu-

nich, carried out a study for the Center for Leadership and People Management. According to this study, a corporate culture based on values is able to raise profits, increase the employees' contributions to meetings and reduce staff fluctuation over the medium and long term. Likewise, the study has shown that fewer employees have taken sick leave and even the reputation of the business has improved, because the employees have represented the company in a more positive light when in interaction with clients.

It is a fact that nowadays there is no enterprise that can simply ignore the topic of appreciation. Many businesses are undergoing a change in values and are making CSR part of their culture. They are required to comply with value-based management in accordance with stakeholder values that are also claimed by the shareholders. The number of sustainability reports indicating the internal and external values is growing, and establishing appreciation in companies has become a topic for consultants. The consulting agency Great Place to Work, for example, operates all



over the world and supports businesses in creating an employee-oriented workplace culture. Key values such as trust, respect, credibility, fairness, pride, and team spirit are examined more closely.

The institute conducts its own studies and draws up its own rankings. Its finding: among Germany's best employers, the commitment of employees has increased, absences from work have been reduced and recruiting costs have been lowered.

Competitions such as the top 100 rankings in 'Ethics in Business' or 'Best Employer among Medium-sized Businesses' establish alliances of businesses that live up to values and pave the way for a responsible economic increase in value. It is becoming increasingly attractive to distinguish and to position one's business with valuation. According to Werner Drechsler of the Düsseldorf-based Druckstudio Group, it is nevertheless not enough to be distinguished as one of Germany's best employers. He says that it is rather an ongoing process to maintain the value orientation and to work on it. The fee-based participation in the competition

'Germany's Best Employer' has paid off for the Druckstudio Group. Since then, the order backlog has improved steadily; the company has become more widely known and has acquired new customers through recommendations.

Taking on responsibility

Furthermore, social valuation in companies influences the value culture and the shaping of values in society. People do not want to be valued as employees only. They seek meaning in their work; they want to be involved in innovations that not only benefit the company and help to sell its products, but that also contribute to improving living conditions. The corresponding strategic management approach is referred to as 'positive leadership.' It is based on the positive psychology of American psychologist Martin Seligman. The idea includes a value culture in the company and promotes its strengths and talents. This results in the 'flow,' as researcher Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi calls the change: companies positively change their corporate culture when the work



is meaningful and important for society. The environmental compatibility of products, their sustainability or social projects are meaningful and valuable.

Longing for meaning

Anthroposophical business formations such as the chemist's chain dm, WALA, Alnatura or the GLS Bank, practise the creation of meaning per se. They have elevated the value culture to their corporate principle. The founders are close to the ideas of Rudolf Steiner; their first employees are for the most part also inspired by anthroposophy. The value system is based on the encouragement of employees, respect for the individual and for nature. Only recently, Götz Werner, the founder of dm, has emphasised that when someone does not feel valued he cannot make progress. According to him, the problem nowadays is that often the maxim 'trust is good, control is better' applies. He says that distrust ruins every commitment to management. This culture of trust is rewarded: every day, 1.5 million people shop at the dm

sundries chain, resulting in annual turnover of EUR 7.69bn.

While the managers of the anthroposophical companies follow their basic principle, many owners of medium-sized businesses are simply guided by traditional values. For Kirstin Walther, head of the juice press house Walther in Dresden, honesty, reliability and respect are especially important. She says that she wants employees to like working at her company, to feel comfortable and to be happy. Walther has adapted her business to this strategy. She says that ever since, she has been acquiring customers who value her and her products more.

Valuable crisis

Sometimes, however, companies have to face a crisis before they begin to consider values. Manufacturing at a lower price, reducing labour costs and saving taxes: these were the decisive factors for Lemken, a manufacturer of agricultural machinery, to relocate from the Lower Rhine to Russia. The Russian sense of quality, however, was by far not con-

sistent with the standards of Lemken. Materials were mixed up, dimensions were not adhered to, products rusted due to incorrect storage. Lemken remorsefully returned to Germany. The positive effect of the turnaround: the manufacturer changed the value culture in the company. Rigid structures were eliminated, hierarchies were flattened and work processes were optimised. Lemken introduced 'production cells' where teams plan and act independently. Every day, the latest business figures are announced on notice boards in the factory buildings, thereby providing transparency. Now, the company even refrains from imposing fixed working hours. Chief executive Nicola Lemken says that they are giving their employees considerable liberty that is based on trust. Furthermore, employees are motivated by a profit-sharing system. The amount anyone can pay into the company in the form of working hours or cash ranges from EUR 150 to EUR 900. If three fourths of the targeted profits are achieved, the employee gets his money back. If profits increase, the amount rises. Entrepreneurs and employees are ►

in agreement: the contribution to the success of the company, open communication, valuation and respect provide for a good working atmosphere.

Large Businesses with Values

In groups and large businesses, the positive leadership principle works the same. Already in the 1940s, William McKnight, the former CEO of the 3M technology group and manufacturer of adhesive products, established corporate guidelines according to valuation, confidence and individual initiative. Today, they are still in force and are constantly being updated.

The employees assess their employers positively because they are satisfied, thus the company is in the top 15 in the world's sustainability ranking 'Best Global Green Brands' and has been honoured many times as Germany's best employer. For its employees, 3M offers, for example, flexible working hours so that the employees can integrate their work in their personal lifestyle. The different working models range from home

offices to special working hours for mothers or fathers, which allow them to come to the office only on certain days. The company offers day care services at its locations where employees can place their children under three years old.

For the company it is important that everybody can decide for himself when he wants to do his work. The corporate culture is based on trust. This can also be seen in management. While many companies send their employees to workshops to get rid of their weaknesses, 3M encourages its employees to build on their strengths. Every superior speaks with an employee about his contribution to the company's success and defines common measurable objectives. The personnel manager of 3M, Jörg Dederichs, explains that dialogue is very important for them since it contains value. Furthermore, he says that it is also part of the dialogue to ask for positive things like: What does the employee like to do? What is his hobby? What brings him joy?

Elita Wiegand is a journalist and chief editor of the Internet portal WerteWandel.biz



»In order to appreciate freely and voluntarily the value of others, you have to possess value yourself.«

Arthur Schopenhauer (*22nd February 1788 in Gdansk; † 21st September 1860 in Frankfurt am Main), German philosopher, author and university professor

The Art of Appreciating Oneself

Our sense of self-esteem determines our joy of living, decides on success or failure in professional as well as in private life. A healthy sense of narcissism helps us to be creative, self-confident and resistant to anxiety as well as to performance and shopping addictions. Thus, the analysis of one's self-esteem also means a further step into another society.

From Heinz-Peter Röhr

Translated from the German by Swenja Bauer and Laura Göres



The self-esteem mainly develops during the first six years of life. Scientists largely agree on this. During this time, the course that will be of lifelong importance is set. However, many people do not realise to what extent early experiences may have a major influence on one's life.

Self-esteem is something that we always carry with us, which is always present, day and night, and which exerts a strong influence on our mood, determines the joy of life, and decides on success or failure. Hence, in a special way, is responsible for all the happiness in our lives. And since we are social beings, our happiness is decisive for the happiness of others.

Wrong Views on a Right Life

We believe that we do a lot for our self-esteem every time that we make an effort, do well, are successful, or care about our personal appearance like when we use make-up or put on nice clothes. However, our self-esteem remains rather unimpressed by such actions. Extreme efforts are potentially

harmful since they can result in the exact opposite of what we want to achieve. Furthermore, the consumer and performance-oriented society suggests wrong solutions. The person who has a lot is happy; the one that has less has to be unhappy. The person who works in a high position is valuable; the one that is unemployed is worthless. These clichés are often deeply rooted in our thinking. However, we often do not understand to what extent success, prosperity, power etc. are in many cases only 'tranquillisers'.

For instance, the striving for recognition is indicative of a disturbed self-esteem. In a strong performance-oriented society, it is success, career and wealth that are believed to result in strong self-esteem. However, Australian researchers have proven that a career leap does not make you happier. Generally, the joy of having been promoted is short-lived.

Even if your income rises and the higher position increases your status, you will still have to pay a price in the form of more stress and a greater workload, for instance due to overtime work, ►



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etc. People who sacrifice themselves for the sake of their career, who have no time for themselves or their family anymore, often lose a lot more than they gain.

Now, what can we do in order to effectively improve our sense of self-esteem? Are we at the mercy of our destiny or are there some promising solutions? Analysing our self-esteem makes it possible to understand the inner negative programmes that undermine it. Furthermore, such an analysis helps to understand which new programmes will lead to positive changes. This makes it possible to broaden our perspectives, to develop a new vision for our lives and make it become reality.

Most mental illnesses are the result of a disturbance of self-esteem. This applies to depressions, anxiety disorders, addictions and personality disorders. Analysing self-esteem is also a helpful and effective method for mobbing victims or people who suffer from burnout syndrome because it makes them see new perspectives on life and helps them to integrate them into their everyday life.

Understanding hidden programmes and installing new ones

Self-esteem is guided by inner programmes that have been acquired quite early in life. Of course, people are not personal computers but nevertheless, they follow special patterns that belong to them as if they had been programmed on a hard-drive and are part of people's 'operating' system, so to speak. With the help of an analysis of self-esteem, we can find harmful programmes, the so-called 'hidden programmes', which can then be edited.

A lot of people are not aware of these 'bugs' and try to get rid of them with the wrong methods when they use 'counter-programmes' like high performance, perfectionism or adaptation. With the help of an analysis of self-esteem, they can find 'new programmes' which will pave the way for a more independent and happier life.

New programmes are those which are naturally used by people with a strong sense of self-esteem. The solution is much easier than one might believe

as soon as the system of analysing one's self-esteem has been understood: "I am not welcome" turns into "I am welcome"; I cannot satisfy the requirements turns into "I can always satisfy the requirements or I can always satisfy my requirements". I did not have enough turns into everything I need is in me. In short, the new programmes turn negative thinking into positive thinking. But the problem is that the hidden programmes are firmly rooted in our personality and so, for the time being, people believe that they cannot behave in any other way.

Modern brain research has been developing very rapidly in recent years. So-called imaging techniques have made it possible to observe cerebral processes in detail. To their astonishment, scientists have found that our brain remains elastic even in old age. This means that people can improve themselves and install new programmes right now. Furthermore, our brain remains capable of learning so that every type of optimism is justified.



We can all learn to be happy

Those who have understood how to analyse their self-esteem will also be able to see hidden programmes in the everyday life of others, for example if a person struggles for recognition, if envy and jealousy are blatantly obvious, or if someone makes others reject him. They will be able to identify different counter-programmes or, at least, can classify them in a general way.

People who have been working on their hidden programmes will develop a better understanding for themselves and for others. They will find it easier to comprehend how people in our world 'operate'.

Heinz-Peter Röhr has worked for more than thirty years as a psychotherapist at the Fachklinik Fredeburg/Sauerland (a specialised clinic for addictions in Bad Fredeburg in the area Sauerland). This article is an excerpt with small changes taken from his book *Die Kunst, sich wertzuschätzen* (How to esteem oneself, not yet translated into English.) Published by Patmos Verlag der Schwabenverlag AG, Ostfildern 2013, www.verlagsgruppe-patmos.de. Can Stock Photo Inc. / Blueiris07



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»»Destruction comes through
acknowledgement.««

Helmut Qualtinger (8 October 1928 (Vienna) – 29 September 1986 (Vienna)), Austrian actor, writer and cabaret artist

factory^y – the Magazine for Sustainable Economy

Although the word 'factory' is mostly associated with the manufacturing industry and industrial production, it can also refer to 'factor Y', the factor by which energy consumption needs to change so that future generations will find themselves living in similar conditions. Such an understanding of sustainability implies that all aspects of economic activity need to be addressed with sustainability in mind, including consumer practices as well as the manufacturing and services sectors.

factory^y highlights the role of businesses in sustainable development and aims to draw the drivers of the economy into the public debate. Such development entails resource efficient economic practices for both producers and consumers as well as educating and informing them about sustainability issues.

factory^y is a free magazine that is published four times a year in PDF format as well as on the magazine's website www.factory-magazin.de.

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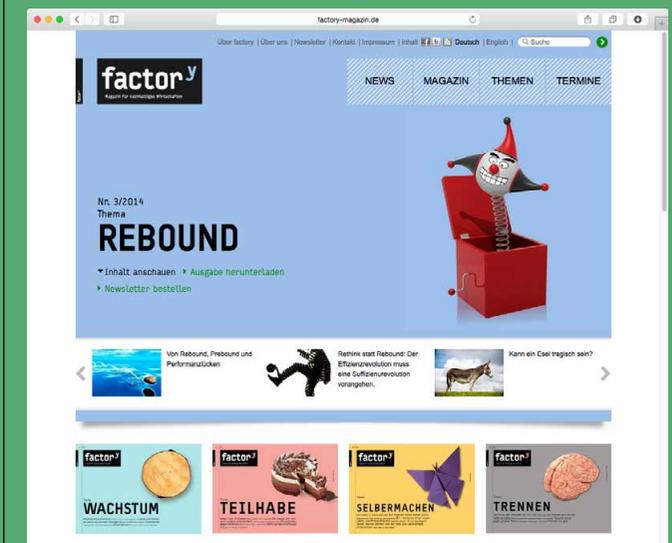
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