

in: Kostas Bairaktaris (Ed.): "Proceedings of the European Congress against Discrimination and Stigma, for User-Orientated Reforms in Psychiatry and the Right to Alternatives", Thessaloniki: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki 2010, pp. 35-52 (corrected version)

Recommendatory Report for the Proclamation of Peter Lehmann as Honorary Professor of the School of Psychology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

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According to the Internal Functioning Regulation of A.U.Th. (Greek Government Gazette, 1099/5-9-2000, vol. B, article 72) and the Standard General Internal Regulation for Institutions of Higher Education (PD160/21-10-2008. G.G.G. 220/3-11-2008, vol. A, article 42), the General Assembly of the Department of Social Clinical Psychology has unanimously decided to propose to the General Assembly of the School of Psychology of A.U.Th. to award Mr Peter Lehmann with an Honorary Doctorate. The report for the School of Psychology on the scientific and humanistic work of the candidate was entrusted to Messrs Kostas Bairaktaris, Associate Professor of Clinical Psychology, Phoebus Zaphirides, Psychiatrist, Associate Professor of the Psychology of Addiction, and Mrs Maria Dikaiou, Social Psychologist, Professor of Social Psychology at A.U.Th.

Resume

Peter Lehmann was born in 1950 in Calw, Germany. He studied at the Pedagogical University of Berlin at the Department of Educational Sciences, Social Work and Social Pedagogy and graduated in 1977 as a social pedagogue. During the same year, he experienced a major interruption of his life course which led to his involuntary and unwarranted introduction in a public psychiatric hospital in Germany. During his confinement, he lived to see a series of violations of his physical integrity, his human decency and his human rights, as well. After he left the hospital, his rights were also devalued by excessive medication administration, denial of access to his personal file etc.

These personal experiences led him, in 1979, to take scientific and humanistic action against psychiatric arbitrariness and for the defence of human rights of people with psychiatric experience; both in Germany and internationally.

With great zeal and consistency he played a leading part, scientifically and practically, in: the development of self-help and self-organization of people with psychiatric experience, emphasizing the defence of their rights; the critique of the traditional psychiatric model; the confrontation with the oppressive institutional psychiatry and the action against discrimination against people with psychiatric experience; raising awareness about the consequences and the negative "side-effects" of psychiatric drugs and ECT and on the reduction of the withdrawal effects; the claim of the right to access to psychiatric files and to provision of psychosocial

support during periods of crisis in contrast with the biologically oriented psychiatric actions; finally, the development and defence of alternative to psychiatry solutions.

Peter Lehmann continues incessantly, up until now, his action for the defence of human rights of people with psychiatric experience both in a theoretical – scientific level and in a humanistic one. Professionally, he is a publisher in the area of relevant issues with Berlin as his basis.

Scientific, Humanistic and Auctorial Work

His total work is multilayered, with various scientific, political and social dimensions, as it extends from the writing of books and articles to the creation of organizations and agents committed to the claim of the rights of people with psychiatric experience. The list of his writings and activities, consistent with the views, the action and the philosophy of Peter Lehmann is one of great extent, including a multitude of books, articles and publications.¹

Participation in conferences and seminars with a presentation and participation in the organization of conferences and seminars

From 1980 until today, Peter Lehmann has participated as a speaker in many national (German) and international conferences and seminars organized by self-help movements and groups, organizations of mental health professionals and social organizations. He has also participated as an organizer, member of organizational committees and educator in tens of conferences and seminars concerning the rights of people with psychiatric experience, self-help, self-organization, psychiatric drug abuse and alternative to psychiatry theories and practices.

Organizations, Agents, Tutoring, Committees

It should be pointed out that the involvement of Peter Lehmann in organizations and agents is a major one. His course, as a defendant of the rights of people with psychiatric experience, comprises initiatives – in a national (German) and international level – of the directly involved, aiming mainly to enhance their social status; to reinforce their bargaining power and to achieve their representation in relevant national and international organizations in a long-term process of cooperation, but also through a creative and confrontational effort within these new collectives.

1980: Founding member and Board Member (1984-1990) of the Irren-Offensive (*Lunatics Offensive*), the first self-help organization comprised exclusively of people with psychiatric experience in Berlin. Resigned in 1990.

1981-87: Member of the editing team of the *Die Irren-Offensive* journal.

1980-82: Assistant lecturer at the Technical University of Berlin for the issue: Psychiatry, Social Pedagogy and non-psychiatric help.

¹ The detailed catalogue of his works is omitted here due to lack of space. The original Research Report including the full catalogue can be looked at in the website of the project: www.socialexclusion.gr

1987: Founding member, since then Board member of PSYCHEX (Switzerland).

Since **1988:** Member of the Counseling Committee of International Center for the Study of Psychiatry and Psychology (ICSPP).

1989: Founding member of the Verein zum Schutz vor psychiatrischer Gewalt (*Organisation for the Protection from Psychiatric Assault*), Berlin, 1995-99 board member, and website administrator until his resignation in 2001.

1990: Member of the organizational committee of the conference “Alternativen zur Psychiatrie” (*Alternatives to Psychiatry*).

Sine 1990: Co-editor of the *Journal of Critical Psychology, Counseling and Psychotherapy* (England).

1991: Founding member of the European Network of (ex-) Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (ENUSP), 1997-99 ENUSP Chair, since 2000: Website administrator, since 2004: Board member as a representative of the North-Eastern Europe Region (Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Austria, Poland, Russia).

Sine 1994: Member of the German Bundesverband Psychiatrie-Erfahrener (BPE - *Association of People with Psychiatric Experience*), Board member from 1994 to 2000.

1995-96: Assistant lecturer at the Psychologisches Institut of the University of Vienna, issue: “Alternatives to traditional psychiatry”.

1997: Founding member of the World Network of (ex-) Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (WNUSP)

1997-99: Representative of the Dachverband Psychosozialer Hilfsvereinigungen (Dachverband Gemeindepsychiatrie – *Umbrella Organisation for Psychiatric Community Care*), Member of the Executive Committee of Mental Health Europe, European outlier of the World Federation of Mental Health.

2000: Member of the representation committee, together with Kerstin Kempker and Iris Hölling, in the conference “Alternatives 2000 – A new vision of recovery”, National Empowerment Center / Tennessee Mental Health Consumers Association.

2002: Founding member, since then board member of the organization Für alle Fälle (*In Any Case*)

Sine 2002: Member of the MindFreedom International (MFI) and its designated representative to the UN.

2003: Founding member of the Berliner Organisation Psychiatrie-Erfahrener und Psychiatrie-Betroffener (*Berlin Organisation of [ex-] Users and Survivors of Psychiatry*) and, during the same year, as an ENUSP representative, founding member of the European Patients Forum (EPF).

2004: Member of the organizational committee for the conference “Networking for our human rights and dignity” – ENUSP / WNUSP, Vejle, Denmark.

Since 2004: Member of the International Network Toward Alternatives and Recovery (INTAR).

Since 2005: Member of the Patients Rights Advocacy Waikato (New Zealand) and member of the National Association for Rights Protection and Advocacy (NARPA).

2007: Representative of MFI, ENUSP and BPE, member of the organizational committee for the international conference “Zwangsbehandlung in der Psychiatrie” of the World Psychiatric Association in Dresden.

2008: ENUSP representative, founding member of “Europäische Demokratische Bewegung für Seelische Gesundheit“ (*European Democratic Movement for Mental Health*).

2010: Member of the organizational committee for the conference “Joined congress against discrimination and stigma, for user-oriented reforms in psychiatry and the right to alternatives”, in Thessaloniki, in collaboration with the School of Psychology of A.U.Th., the Self-Help Promotion Program and the Panhellenic Committee of (ex-) Users and Survivors of Psychiatry, September 2010.

2010: Member of the organizational committee for the international conference “PsychOUT: A Conference for Organizing Resistance Against Psychiatry“, May, 2010, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Canada.

Analysis-Evaluation of his work

The analysis and the evaluation of the above work is subjected to certain particularities, which should be taken into account by anyone who wishes to study as well as evaluate Peter Lehmann’s scientific and humanistic work. Peter Lehmann blends admirably and very creatively felt experience with scientific discourse and action, thus promoting alternative perspectives and practices.

Anyone who aims to evaluate his work should understand and respect his experiences, but also what arises as a different discourse and practice; that is, their consequences on the critique to mainstream and traditional psychiatric approach and practice as well as on the quest for a common place for the individuals, their relationships and their meeting: the place where they can exist as human beings and historical subjects with equity and equality in their dignity and human rights. Thus, the expert should de facto quit the approach that puts the Other as a one-dimensional object of his scientific interests and try and delve into a dialogue where the desired outcome is the quest for a new scientific approach and a humane relationship, resigning himself, of course, from the scientific monologue and, consequently, from the abusive use of power which is so generously granted to him, as an expert.

Below we try to compile an imprint, maybe arbitrarily, of his total work available to us, dividing it into units.

Having studied the total work of Peter Lehmann, scientific and humanitarian, we distinguish these three main fields:

Rights of people with psychiatric experience

Judging by the type of approach and analysis that the candidate uses in his texts, it is quite obvious that he characterizes people with psychiatric experience as the population group subjected most of all to discriminations. He acknowledges the fact that during the psychiatric treatment, the right to protection of social dignity is constantly violated; and so is the right to protection of physical integrity, since, according to International Law, any action against physical integrity constitutes corporal violence punishable by law. Usually the affected one is not informed on possible “side-effects” of his willing or unwilling treatment. Often his condescendence is blackmailed out of him, especially in institutional milieus or it is the outcome of sheer violence. Of particular importance are the scientifically verified views in his texts, concerning the consequences of use of methods like ECT and psychiatric drugs.

The breaching of articles of the European Convention for human rights is treated as the main form of human rights violation; articles such as: the obligation to respect human rights (article 1), the ban of torture and insulting treatment (article 3), the right to freedom and security (article 5), the right to dignified treatment (article 6), the right to appeal (have recourse to law) against the violation of human rights etc. A typical example of violation of rights is what is allowed to the physically ill but is not allowed to the mentally ill: The right to access their medical file. An object of especially negative criticism is the arbitrariness in case of forced hospitalization and the use of mechanical and chemical methods against the will of people who are in a critical crossroad in their lives.

Actions against psychiatric violence

We notice that Peter Lehmann plays a leading part in the fight against psychiatric violence in multiple levels: politically, legally and in the field of informing public opinion, always, as he mentions himself, in the spirit of a “humanistic anti-psychiatry”, interpreting “anti-” as something more than just “against”; rather as something “alternative”.

Psychiatry as a positive science, as it claims to be, cannot respond to the request of solving problems of basically social nature, like mental problems.

The renounce and fight of violence against the mentally ill are considered within the texts and the actions as questioning the main psychiatric paradigm, its abusive use of power and the violence that arises as an outcome. A focal point is the questioning of the psychiatric-medical monopoly that results from a one-dimensional scientific approach that has often consequences not only in the treatment of the sufferer and his/her social control but also in the exercise of violence in order for this control to be achieved.

His political action includes not only the confrontation with the representatives of psychiatric violence but also the claiming of the right to speech and expression in milieus and agents of local, national and international range; the right to freedom and choice of alternative forms of support; the right to representation and self-organization; the right to user-controlled services and paid user-participation in the education of staff.

His legal action is highlighted by interventions aiming not only to the defence of human rights but also to the case-specific penalization of their violation. The right to compensation for injuries, the right to choice and the right to information for any action as well as the right to access to the psychiatric file all demand the appointment of independent agents to monitor the respect to these rights and take action in case of complaints of violation.

In his actions of raising public awareness, he encourages anyone involved not to barricade themselves inside the constructed discriminations against them and to constantly and daily fight to deconstruct the negative stereotypes, whose creation was also enabled by their being treated officially as dangerous madmen. This field of self-information also entails the revelation of the unholy and profitable alliance between psychiatrists and pharmaceutical companies, which does not only lead to the abuse of medication, causing harm to the health of people with psychiatric experience, but also consciously narrows the scope of search for alternative supporting practices. The community-wise penetration and pervasion of this profitable corruption, also explains the recently observed phenomenon of vertical and horizontal spread of psychiatric drugs. On one hand, we have the increase of population groups as a result of the “psychiatrization” of daily life and on the other, their widening, age-wise (“annoying, hyperactive, maladapted, aggressive children”, “annoying elderly”, “unhappy” or “problematic” men and women). The orientation towards the absolute chemical control of human behaviour and daily life promotes a new form of social control and also the increase of use of violence and the thwarting of the search of alternative solutions to critical issues and situations.

The confrontation with psychiatric drugs as tools of psychiatry

In reference to the publications on psychiatric drugs, one should stress the broad response, discussion and debate that was stimulated – not only in the expert circle but in a wider range of people – by Peter Lehmann’s book “Der chemische Knebel” (*The Chemical Gag*), even back then in the ’80s.

The position according to which psychiatrists use psychiatric drugs not therapeutically but as a means of control, being aware of the negative consequences of their long-term use is verified through a historical approach of the development of psychiatric drugs and the constant stretching of the circle of users. It is thereby claimed that the harmful effect of the psychiatric drugs is known to psychiatrists through means of animal, plant and even human testing. Asylums, institutions and psychiatric hospitals have for the last two centuries been the main places of experimentation and arbitrariness. They (the psychiatrists) know, from long-term observation, exactly how their chemical ingredients attack the central and the autonomous nervous system, the muscular system and the soul. They are aware of their consequences from biopsies, “case” studies, long-term and comparative research. They are also familiar with the art of turning harmful effects into “side-effects”, like in the case of anti-psychotic medication that can cause harm amounting as high as 80% in liver denaturation and dyskinesia, 66% depression resulting even to suicide attempts and various other injuries. Especially in women, their long-term use causes a tenfold increase of chance of breast cancer and a 30-year median reduction of life expectancy.

The author in his texts supports passionately the need for information on risks and “side-effects”, the denunciation of use of force for the administration of medication as well as the denunciation of the threat of ECT as the sole alternative to psychiatric drugs.

He claims that psychiatric drugs, apart from being profitable for the pharmaceutical industry, they consist the only tool for the improvement of the medical status of psychiatrists; a tool integrated in their one-dimensional scientific paradigm: they can be used on everyone – from animals to political opponents. They misguide people to perceive and accept critical situations as unresolvable. Especially neuroleptics turn the so-called artificial hibernation of the organism to an alleged alertness, turning a physically sane person to a kinetically disturbed one, thus creating the so-called “Parkinsonpsyche”.

The writer claims the necessity that the knowledge derived from the experience of people with psychiatric experience concerning psychiatric drugs be explained and broadly publicized, in a language that can be understood by a non-medical population and evaluated independently from the pharmaceutical companies, in a direction oriented towards the users’ best interests. This calls for the organization of seminars, conferences and the creation of media (digital and printed) that will satisfy this need.

The resistance to psychiatric drug abuse is connected to the quest for and the establishment of alternative practices and the right of everyone directly involved to freedom of choice for or against psychiatric drug use, in collaboration with his kin or friends.

Collective resistance and the organization of self-help

A key notion in the texts but also in the practices and interventions of Peter Lehmann is the individual and its transformation from a passive object to an active subject. The common experiences of discrimination, oppression and violation of basic rights is to be the common place of collective organization. He supports that people with psychiatric experience are not lobbyists. So they should all together search for self-help and alternative practices. This is the only way in which they can invalidate the prejudices and the crystallized views referring to the experts on the one hand and the patients, on the other. He characteristically understands real self-help as a “grassroots” movement, raising objections to the controlled – by experts or pharmaceutical industries – users or families’ organizations and he contrasts this with a critical confrontation towards those who exploit them for profit or in order to reproduce their own scientific and professional existence on users’ expenses.

Self-help in all local, regional, national or international levels should include multiple sectors and actions; it should reflect all attempts of control by third parties and omniscient experts; respect should be a prerequisite; so do solidarity and equal participation in the process of decision-making. The collaboration with scientists can be productive when it is disinterested and it aims to a co-existence in solidarity.

The activation of the self-help potential is considered of vital importance, since otherwise, people with psychiatric experience will not be able to solve their problems; chronicity will spread; vocational incompetence will increase; structures and agents of confinement and con-

trol will be created and huge economic resources will be allocated to the expense of the alternative practices of the individuals themselves and the respect of their rights.

No real reform can be realized without putting real self-help in a prominent place and gaining its support.

National networking (Germany)

Watching, through the texts and experiences of Peter Lehmann, the self-help movements of people with psychiatric experience and their networking in a national level, one can observe a tense and confrontational relationship between two basic trends: a reformist trend and an anti-psychiatric trend with the traditional, dogmatic and patriarchal psychiatric tending to weaken the stance of humanistic anti-psychiatry, represented by Peter Lehmann.

Since the middle of the '70s and under the direct influence of May '68 on the development of critical scientific discourse and the social movements for the defence of human rights of socially excluded people and groups, certain local self-help groups, pure or mixed, are created in Germany. In German speaking places (Berlin, Vienna, Zurich, Bochum) activists create the so-called "Lunatics Offensive" (Irren-Offensive), groups orientated towards anti-psychiatry, putting main psychiatric paradigm, its institutional practices, its nosological descriptions and constructions under radical questioning. Searching the connection with various social critical movements and in coalition with critically oriented non psychiatric patients, various initiatives in anti-psychiatry came up in the '80s. Visualizing a psychosocial care beyond psychiatry, they boosted the self-help sector and the right to self-determination and they developed a framework for a national organization and networking.

In 1992, the Federal Organisation of (ex-) Users and Survivors of Psychiatry is created as a pure organization of people with psychiatric experience, putting the emphasis on the experience of people themselves, in dealing with critical situations and the denouncement of traditional psychiatric practices.

In 1990, a year after the wall fell, we have for the first time in Berlin the organization of a conference under the title "Alternatives to Psychiatry". This attempt towards a national networking failed, since there was neither preparation nor cooperation and communication as to a critique to psychiatry and the experts' role and a socio-psychiatric approach to the needs of people with psychiatric experience.

Today, various self-help organizations participate to community services, boards, social services and try to constitute a lobby for the defence of their rights. They try to organize alternative seminars for educational purposes and for the handling of problems – as they define "problem" – and critical situations beyond the control of the experts and the enforcement of their theories and practices. This attempt, as one can observe judging by the up-until-now experiences, is not a history of successes. The basic principles of mutual acceptance, mutual help and solidarity should not be taken for granted. Conflicts and dispute often have a negative impact and they drain self-help of its attractiveness, resulting to many, disappointed, returning to the usual frameworks of psychosocial services, no matter how good or bad they

may be, and turning into consumers and users of services, passively delegating the management of their fates to others.

International Organization and Networking

Beyond the creation of self-help groups locally and nationally (mainly into USA and Europe), people with psychiatric experience initiate, in the beginning of the 90s, their attempt for an international organization. Peter Lehmann, as an acknowledged activist for the defence of human rights as well as for the search and application of alternative to psychiatry support practices, is a key actor in these attempts. A crucial bend is, in 1991, the get-together and organization of various independent self-help groups in order to form the European Network of People with Psychiatric Experience. Afterwards, there is an attempt, in the margins of various conferences or of World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) and its European outlier Mental Health Europe (MHE) – which is dominated by professionals of the psychosocial sector and NGOs – to organize a world organization of people with psychiatric experience, without of course changing who is to be in control.

In the end of the '80s, a small number of activists, all people with psychiatric experience, advances democratically to the preparation and creation of an independent and pure organization of people with psychiatric experience, under the name of ENUSP; they also advance to connect it internationally, with WNUSP.

We observe that in these self-help organizations, there is an ongoing series of dispute and discussion on issues of self-definition or determination. This dispute is especially focused in questions of self-determination as “user of services” or as “survivor of psychiatry”. The need for a compromise leads to the acceptance and coexistence of these two terms. Another crucial debate is on whether or not should people with psychiatric experience be characterized as “disabled”. The one side highlights the advantages that arise from being identified as disabled (privileges, welfare allowances) whereas the other equal the acceptance of the disability identity with a de facto acknowledgment and acceptance of their determination by sciences like psychiatry; that is, their reduction to incapable and of limited capacity people. This debate is ongoing and, depending on the conditions, coalitions with other agents of socially excluded groups arise.

The consequences of this international networking as far as the representation of both ENUSP and WNUSP in international organizations and forums as UN, WHO or EU is concerned are deemed very important.

The scientific debate: Towards a new theory of knowledge and practice

What arises by studying the work of Peter Lehmann is the alternative discourse and the substantial critique that is exercised to the traditional models of psychiatric science. This discourse calls attention – through the prism of the person with psychiatric experience – the devastating consequences of psychiatry, when in its institutional or not institutional form reduces the subject and, thus, human existence, into an object. This discourse stresses that

within the framework of an extreme positivistic approach, may it be theoretical or practical, the human is treated through the lens of symptomatology and the cause for this symptomatology is looked for in factors that legalize medical treatment, devaluing at the same time the so-called socio-psychiatric approaches and using social and psychological factors as an alibi for this legalization.

In total, Peter Lehmann's work acts as a stimulator for other scientific approaches, other practices and, perhaps, for the quest of a new scientific paradigm.

The approaches found in the texts and the actions of Peter Lehmann should not be underestimated and taken simply as "testimonies" or "narratives". Neither should the discourse of people with psychiatric experience be captivated in the analysis of the experts, thus reproducing the traditional scientific monologue and, consequently, the dominance over the subjects. In these texts, which have arisen whether from personal experiences of the candidate or from collective or individual experiences of other people with psychiatric experience, one can detect a different scientific discourse; a discourse that stems from the long-term experience of psychiatry theoretically and practically, under the viewpoint of the subjects themselves, its correlation with human rights and the consequences that its exercise has on these rights.

The psychiatric asylum and institutional psychiatry is recognized as the focal point of these violations, internationally and nationally. In these places of confinement, where psychiatry was invented and constructed, rose the great Psychiatrists. In these places the beginning of the exercise of uncontrollable power can be traced; that is, the exercise of violence through mechanical-physical methods to begin with and, afterwards, through surgical and pharmaceutical ones.

Furthermore, the vital connection of psychiatry with justice constitutes a structural element of the psychiatry branch entailed both in the theory (dangerousness) and in the practice (involuntary confinement). Constructed and hypothetical beliefs are also the views that claim that mental illness like, e.g., schizophrenia and psychoses are characterized by supposedly common causes, courses and prognoses.

This hypothetical and monolithic approach automatically strangles the multiple personal, social, cultural, economical and historical factors under the influence of which human existence lives and interacts.

Peter Lehmann goes as far as to insist that, according to their own experience, the turn from these models/paradigms are the presupposition for a quest for alternative theories and practices and that we should see madness as a new chance to process reality. On the contrary, the confinement to the monolithic positivistic model of thought and the reduction of human to it does not allow us to approach the subject as a whole, as a multidimensional being. This, of course, results to us not being able to provide the right support in cases of crises or important life-events and to resort to temporary or long-term restraints, mechanical or chemical, with all the long-term harmful consequences and the eradication of any personal potential for self-help or collective support and solidarity.

Under an empiricist-scientific viewpoint – and not under a hermeneutical theoretical approach and the practice of experts – do people with psychiatric experience come to conclusions about

independent self-help, about a different perspective on reforms, as well as alternative theories and practices. The pressure on behalf of the experts to constantly invent hypothetical theories for the understanding of mental and emotional problems and suggest the respective professional solutions is beyond what directly concerns people with problems.

In order for someone to respect and process, according to Peter Lehmann, through a theory of knowledge, the extreme situations and the situations of madness, one should approach them as an opportunity to process the dominant reality (with the risks that this includes) of the subject but also of oneself. Thus, one can pass from the psychopathological subject to the person with history and potential for action.

Whether this perspective leads to a shift of paradigm or to an abandonment of the old ones, remains to be answered. Still, this question is a guide for many of the people with psychiatric experience, who liberate themselves from their problematic situations, to constantly search and fight for the possibility to form a new, emancipated empiricist-scientific theory and practice, without misjudging the danger of being assimilated and exhausted into a mere supplement of the system of psychiatric violence.

Conclusions – Suggestion

We are aware that the suggestion to award the title of honorary professor of the School of Psychology to Peter Lehmann constitutes, apart from an important gesture, also a special action with a symbolical content, since it refers to a person with psychiatric experience.

It is this psychiatric experience, thought, which provided him with the occasion to draw conclusions and unravel practices that did not only help himself, but also thousands of his fellow human beings. He is proved to be a profound scholar of the history of psychiatry and its practices, through the lens of one directly involved.

Peter Lehmann is a widely acknowledged personality, not only as a writer and a publisher, but also as an active citizen and an advocate for thousands of marginalized people who due to their stigmatization as “mentally ill” are subjected to a global violation of their rights, may it be within or outside psychiatric institutions and services.

His scientific and humanistic contribution to the development of self-help movements of people with psychiatric experience expands beyond Germany’s national borders and spreads to a European and international level. His action as a counselor, through national and international organizations, for international organizations aiming to the rehabilitation and defence of the rights of socially excluded groups constitutes an important factor of his renown.

His scientific-theoretic work is not only important lengthwise; it also poses new epistemological questions and issues which question the current scientific approaches, tracing new paths for their revision, theoretically and practically.

His publications on practices of violence, on psychiatric drug abuse and on the quest for alternative to psychiatry practices are tools of support, involvement and self-help of the interested ones themselves. They also constitute important stimuli for us experts, as well, not only if we want to stand critically against our own theories but also if we want to search for a different

approach and practice, a different, that is to say, “meeting” with the people with psychiatric experience.

We believe that the award of the title of honorary professor to Peter Lehmann will give internationally a boost to the self-help movements of people with psychiatric experience and their fight for the defence of human rights. It will also give a boost to the defence of rights of people with psychiatric experience in Greece, where this fight is still in its infancy.

Finally, we believe that this award is important for the School of Psychology itself, since through this action not only does it confirm its opening to new scientific approaches, but it also connects this opening with its contribution to the attempts to reverse social exclusion; with its contribution to the search and application of theories and practices that do not violate human values and rights.

THE REPORT COMMITTEE

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