

Editorial



'Ubuntu', an old African maxim; 'I am because you are.'

These wise words come to us from a vast, multicultural continent with an almost infinite number of languages, outlooks and beliefs, most of which we know nothing about.

We should explore that mystery in the context of this motto. 'I am because you are.' The concept reaches out to us because it makes 'you' the foundation for the centre of my existence. In its broadest sense it goes way beyond the reality of biological parenthood to mean the very core of a person as a social being that cannot exist without the 'you'.

And because it is also thoroughly Christian, it preserves all the attributes of acceptance. This allows us to conclude that other cultures – the word being synonymous with the embracing of values – which appear strange to us cannot, in fact, be so remote and alien if they advance such insights.

If 'Ubuntu' means something to us – and who can doubt it? - then our own

culture can also offer values to people outside our own cultural heritage.

Our aim is to do this unambiguously with Pearls of Switzerland, now in its seventh edition.

We believe that with this portrayal of Switzerland, a country and a nation rooted in European culture and history, alternative but equally valid ideals can be shared with people beyond our cultural circle.

In this respect we are maintaining a Swiss tradition of balancing opposing views, a practice which is also upheld by the many international organisations which are located here in Switzerland.

What could be more vital in today's world?

Theodor Heutschi
Publisher