

## From the Protection of National Minorities towards Managing Diversity

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*Gej iber werter wi iber a minenfeld; ejn falscher trot, ejn falsche bawegung, un ale werter, was du hostot ofgetsiljet a gants lebn off dajne odern, weln tseflukt wern mit dir tsuzamen.*

*Niemand hat mich gewarnt, ich solle mich vor Wörtern hüten, die trunken sind von Mohnblumen des Jenseits. Geh über Wörter wie über ein Minenfeld, ein falscher Schritt, eine falsche Bewegung...und alle Wörter...werden mit dir zusammen in Stücke gerissen.*

[But nobody warned me to beware of words groggy from otherworldly poppies. I became their slave. And I cannot understand what they want. Or whether they love me or hate me. They make wars in my brain like termites in a desert. Their battlefield reflects in my eyes like the glow of rubies. And children turn gray with fear when I tell them: "Good-dreams ..."]<sup>1</sup>

### ABSTRACT

*The following five theses focus on the nascence and the tragic outcome of a state-model which emerged in Europe in the 19th century and which postulated a unity between a state and the people living on its territory. As the aftermath proved, such a fictitious "imagined community" had to deal with real different disruptive factors such as the existing linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity. The national-state model turned out to be a blind alley. The requirements for a successful implementation of basic liberal principles in a modern rule-of-law-state are a change of paradigm, a development of a multinational state conception which considers the diversity of ethnicity as a positive principle, which should be protected by the state.*

**Keywords:** National minorities, linguistic diversity, nation- state

### 1. THESIS 1

As a "medieval relic" originating from a multinational European form of state and society, Switzerland has preserved this form of government and shaped it to a modern type of multinational state (Sutzkever & Blum 1996). The difference of this concept of state from the nation-state becomes visible