

Prof. Tuija Pulkkinen
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Fribourg, 29th of September 2010

Dear Mrs. Pulkkinen,

In 2005, the European Geosciences Union (EGU) - whose President you are - has established the "*Louis Agassiz Medal*": "*in recognition of the scientific achievements of Louis Agassiz*" (www.egu.eu).

Those achievements are listed in the EGU's home-grown Louis-Agassiz-Biography, which suffers not only from minor inaccuracies, but also from very serious omissions. These omissions concern Agassiz's scientific and his moral reputation.

The EGU's biography mentions Agassiz's interest in glaciology, but remains silent about the important fact that he used and understood the Ice-Age-Theory as part of Catastrophism and Creationism, two totally erroneous worldviews. Your biography remains equally silent about Agassiz's defence of polygenesis, another of his fundamental scientific errors. The EGU's biography is also silent of the fact that Agassiz opposed Darwin's *Origin of Species*, from 1859, date of its publication, up to 1873, the year Agassiz died. Almost all his colleagues turned away from him and his pseudo-scientific natural theology.

But the most intolerable omission of the EGU's biography of Louis Agassiz is his extreme racism, his unbelievable disdain and disgust for Afro-Americans and particularly for "*half-breeds*". Today's example for people Agassiz didn't want to see on earth is President Barack Obama.

Louis Agassiz advocated among other measures against "coloured" people: **Apartheid** (the "*negroes*" should settle in certain areas of the Southern States and there - separate from the "*whites*" - live with restricted rights) and **Ban on reproduction** (the "*half breeds*" should - "*by all means*" - be prevented from reproducing).

I presume that the EGU – when it established the "*Louis Agassiz Medal*" – has been totally unaware of Louis Agassiz' staunch racism. I also presume that those scientists who accepted the "*Louis Agassiz Medal*" have been equally unaware of Louis Agassiz's fanatic racism, which the Swiss Government condemned publicly in 2007, saying that Louis Agassiz "[...] *advocated racist views which go far beyond the racial interpretation paradigm that was usual at his time. There is no doubt that today's Federal Council condemns his racist ideology.*"².

¹ Your website says about Agassiz: "*In 1832 he was appointed professor of natural history at the University of Neuchâtel.*". The truth is that Louis Agassiz has never been a professor at the University of Neuchâtel. In 1832, there was no university at Neuchâtel, not even an Academy. The University of Neuchâtel was founded in 1909, 36 years after Agassiz passed away.

² www.parlament.ch/cv-geschaefte - auch zu finden unter: <http://www.louverture.ch/AGASSIZ.html>

From 26th of March 2010 till 6th of February 2011, the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, situated in your hometown Helsinki, shows an exhibition ("*It's a Set-Up*"), which showcases i.a. Sasha Huber's installation "*Rentyhorn*". Renty was one of the many slaves daguerreotyped for Louis Agassiz in 1850 and used by Agassiz in public conferences to prove the inferiority of Afro-Americans. Sasha Huber³ published: *Rentyhorn*. (Helsinki: Kiasma, 2010) which includes my article on "*Louis Agassiz and Adolf Hitler*" (see attachment).

It is against this background that I should like to request, Madam President, the revision of the EGU's flawed Agassiz-Biography. An accurate biography of Louis Agassiz will certainly call into question the legitimacy of the "*Louis Agassiz Medal*": to honour scientists with a Medal named after one of the leading 19th century racists doesn't seem to be a good idea.

I am looking forward to receiving your comments and a positive answer.

Yours sincerely,

Hans Barth

A copy of the present letter and its attachment (Hans Barth: *Louis Agassiz and Adolf Hitler. Documents in racist mania.*) will be sent to Professors Alley, Raymond, Oerlemans, Wolff and Eicken, winners of the "*Louis Agassiz Medal*".

³ www.sashahuber.com