

Current Concerns

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The West gambles peace in Europe away

by Willy Wimmer



Willy Wimmer
(picture ma)

In the two years 2014 and 2015 the whole horror of the past century has been passing by before our eyes, once again. These are the years that tell of devastation: 1914 and 1919, 1939 and 1945. It is a terrible chain of events that might be perpetuated, because it determines our lives today and will go on to do so far into the future. In this particular cal-

endar of misery there was one bright spot, that were the two years in 1989 and 1990. Both a good reason not only to commemorate solemnly but to increase talents then received in the biblical sense. A reason for us to celebrate, of course, simply because of the impact that they had on us, the Germans. Much more, however, for the battered continent, for the other promising picture of the "Common European House" it seemed to be more than just a vague utopia. Negotiate, rather than shoot and kill, suddenly seemed to be possible. Today, when we ought to celebrate, only one thing can be stated: from dull, brazen arrogance every effort has been made to make this memory of 1990 and 1989 fade away. Looking back at the policy that has been significantly shaped by us since that turning point in

history, we have not done justice to the possibilities which had emerged from this radical world political change. Quite the contrary, we are about to betray them all together. As demonstrated by the war against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the civil war in Ukraine – both violating international law – the shooting and dieing have again become the dominant perspective in Europe. When shall we put a halt to our sliding down this slippery slope, if not now?

On 1 April 2015 in the Berlin *Theater am Schiffbauerdamm*, Rolf Hochhuth has taken his 84th birthday as an opportunity to compassionately and captivatingly warn of the 3rd World War. We really wonder whether on 8 May 2015, these words will be completely

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War in Yemen: Blockade of emergency relief supplies a war crime

Message of the President of the "International Progress Organization" to the United Nations Security Council

Vienna/New York. In a message addressed to the UN Security Council [on 5 April 2015], Dr Hans Köchler, President of the Vienna-based *International Progress Organization*, urged the international community to take coercive action under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter ["Action With Respect To Threats To The Peace, Breaches Of The Peace, And Acts Of Aggression"] to enable the delivery of urgently needed medical and other relief supplies to Yemen.

The domestic conflict and the foreign military intervention by a Saudi-led coalition has brought about a catastrophic humanitarian situation, particularly in the port city of Aden. The total aerial and naval blockade imposed by the Saudi military has made it impossible for international humanitarian organizations to carry out their task. Tons of medicines, surgical instruments and water sanitation kits cannot be delivered, and medical teams, on standby in the region, cannot reach the country because of the blockade imposed by Saudi Arabia.

The President of the International Progress Organization stated that this behavior constitutes a serious violation of international humanitarian law, in particular of

the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949. Under the Convention, parties to a conflict are under the strict obligation to allow humanitarian assistance to the people affected by the fighting. The behavior of the Saudi-led coalition, potentially leading to the death and suffering of thousands of innocent civilians, amounts to an active prevention of humanitarian aid and constitutes a war crime under the statute of the International Criminal Court and other instruments of international criminal law.

The International Progress Organization also condemned the repeated indiscriminate attacks by the Saudi air force on civilians and civilian installations in Yemen as serious violation of international humanitarian law.

The President of the I.P.O. reiterated the organization's position that the attack by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and her allies against the Republic of Yemen constitutes an act of aggression against a sovereign member state of the United Nations. Apart from the illegality of the action under international law, foreign intervention in a domestic dispute such as the

one in Yemen will only make the conflict more intractable and bring the risk of a wider conflagration.

The Security Council should take immediate action against the foreign military intervention in Yemen, including an end to the unilateral humanitarian blockade, and instead impose an arms embargo on all parties to the conflict and consider referring the situation in Yemen to the International Criminal Court in conformity with Article 13(b) of the Rome Statute¹. Those who are responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law, including grave breaches of the Geneva Convention of 1949, must not enjoy impunity, the President of the I.P.O. emphasized in his message to the Security Council. •

¹ "Article 13

Exercise of jurisdiction

The Court may exercise its jurisdiction with respect to a crime referred to in Article 5 in accordance with the provisions of this Statute if [...]

(b) A situation in which one or more of such crimes appears to have been committed is referred to the Prosecutor by the Security Council acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations [...]"

(Article 13(b) of the Rome Statute)

Source: http://www.i-p-o.org/IPO-nr-War_in_Yemen-05April2015.htm

Will Austria terminate their EU membership by end of June 2015?

The petition can lay the groundwork for this if citizens get active!

ir. Since the approval of the bipartisan EU exit referendum by the Interior Ministry on 7 January 2015, many people have woken up and now want – thankfully – to contribute disseminating the arguments for the withdrawal from the EU and the recovery of a free, independent and neutral Austria.

Historical uniqueness

For five years, our small team has struggled to get the groundbreaking referendum officially registered. At the first start the nearly ten thousand municipal official or notarial signatures were rejected by the Ministry and the Constitution-

al Court. The second attempt, (we had to collect some ten thousand new municipal official or notarial certified signatures, making a total of twenty thousand), succeeded. The referendum as the most powerful instrument of direct democracy, which the Austrians – still – have at their disposal, had to be accepted by the responsible Minister of the Interior, i.e. a member of the Government. By decree of the Ministry the public registration week for the nationwide referendum has been set on 24 June to 1 July, i.e., from Wednesday until (incl.) Wednesday. For eight successive days Saturday and Sunday, all Austrians can officially sign at their appropriate local authori-

ty or municipal council and thereby vote for the withdrawal from the EU. Many citizens of other states do not have laws that allow a referendum. For example, our German neighbors have no referendums at a federal level!

Official reason for the EU exit referendum

Just about all the promises that were given before joining the EU 20 years ago, which then resulted in the majority “yes to EU membership”, were broken. Instead of recovery, there has been a huge downturn

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“The West gambles peace in ...”

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ignored in the Bellevue Palace, a short distance away, or even in the Plenary Session of the German “Bundes-tag”. The speeches in this context, which the German Federal President delivered in Poland last year, seem to endorse this impression more than we would have liked in Germany and in Europe. The line which the provided speakers for at the memorial service in the “Reichstag” on 8 May 2015 seem to take, make us fear that now they are about to “unsheath” against the Russian Federation in the truest sense of the word and especially against the current President *Putin*. The images of the past are determined by both, the *Hitler-Stalin Pact* and by the boundless, million-fold suffering that was caused by this war, as well and especially in Russia, as it had existed before the disintegration of the Soviet Union. There is every indication that we will gamble away our chance for ever. Instead of making the end of the Cold War the starting point for a present and future German policy, the West – and therefore inevitably we Germans along with it – behave as if it was the 8/9 May 1945. The “Reichstag” as the seat of the German Parliament is a parliament building and not an opera.

All of Europe hold their breath when they think of the Minsk II Agreement. Europe has not solved the problems, but bought some time. Time that lies between us and a possible outbreak of a larger war in Europe. It is the high time of propaganda, and you cannot stop marveling. This marvel is based on the German and Western activity with regard to Ukraine going on for years, which culminated in the shameful silence and damnable inaction in view of the Maidan massacre, the burnt victims in the union hall of Odessa and the

behaviour towards the hundreds of deaths in the crash of the Malaysian airplane on the territory of Ukraine; not to mention the fall of the Ukrainian government, previously freely elected and worth negotiating, against which a coup had been staged from the inside and from the outside.

The West has not only played with fire, but burned the stage. German media pictures, showing the alleged participation of American soldiers stirring up the Eastern Ukraine in the Spring of 2014, made a lasting impression. But a certain behaviour by the West and hence Germany in this context evokes political dismay, i.e. the practice to make forget one’s own previous deeds, as soon as it is about the Russian proceedings. It should make those responsible in Berlin stop and think when hearing what former Chancellors or long-time Brussels celebrities publicly declared about the devastating policy the West has pursued towards the Russian Federation.

What should they think in Moscow, when hearing the German Mr “Bundespräsident” talk in Poland? What should they do in Moscow if only one thing is unambiguous and clear at the end of the Cold War: It is Moscow and the Russian Federation, i.e. today’s Russia, that the cold shoulder is being turned to. Surely you can understand the development since 1992. They did not want and do not want the Russians sitting at the European table, and certainly not in an own apartment in the common “European House”. Today, only two things are clear resulting from the policy consistently pursued by us in the West: in a country that is simply not allowed to belong, people will finally put up with that condition and domestic turbulences will surely follow. But this is the same in our own country, as demonstrated by the last two NATO Secretary-Generals’ continuous

requests for higher military spending. After the people in Western Europe have been made ever poorer by the United States’ expropriation policy, the last shirt is now to be taken off for higher military spending that we have caused ourselves.

The men from Norway and Denmark are strange creatures in the NATO weather house. When there was a serious threat in Europe because of a envisaged Soviet attack, these two countries’ official representatives stood out by their footnotes against NATO decisions and their ducking away. Today they are in a haste to contrive on the Russian border, what once drove Japan into the war: the evident strangulation by neighbours who have turned into enemies. We might try to forget our history, although it catches up on us again and again. Why should Russia forget *Napoleon* and *Hitler*?

And what about commemorating all that misery? On Easter Saturday the “Süddeutsche Zeitung” accurately headlined “Abuse of Commemoration” by which it meant – unsuspected and even less surprising – Moscow, of course, with its military parade – a parade which in recent years has in fact been attended by German chancellors. The press pictures from Moscow apparently prompted a speech against it in the German “Bundes-tag”. Recent examples of such events may suggest which pictures we might see in future. But the “Süddeutsche Zeitung” is falling short. The official Berlin does not just offer a speech. Stylishly as ever the Federal Minister of Defence makes the army dance. “Let’s dance the waltz” is the motto on 9 May, the day of the “Wehrmacht”’s surrender to the Red Army at the “Ball des Heeres” (Ball of the German Army) in Berlin, probably in Berlin-Karlshorst. •

"Will Austria terminate ..."

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in Austria on almost all fields: from the rising unemployment, rising government debt, the loss of purchasing power of the masses, the rising crime to the increasing "farm deaths" and the massive deterioration of the environment. Many believe that the EU decision-making levels are controlled by large corporations such as atomic, genetic engineering and pharmaceutical companies and international retail chains, which give no chance to a more small-and-medium enterprise, less crisis prone and environment-friendly oriented economy.

In addition, peace is threatened severely by political actions of EU member states. The EU violates international law more and more frequently which governs the self-determination of peoples as the basis for freedom and peace. Austria's participation in the economic sanctions against Russia is inconsistent with the statutory permanent neutrality of Austria. We want again a free and neutral Austria and no "colony" of Brussels or Washington, and we certainly do not want to be involved in foreign policy conflicts which clearly do not concern us and are a severe threat to peace. Resist the beginnings; otherwise it might be too late!

The secret negotiations on the Transcontinental Free Trade associations TTIP and CETA that have been driven forward for years now by EU and USA/Canada, can be pre-empted for Austria safely by the withdrawal from the EU. The same is true for Austria's annual net membership contribution to the EU for 20 years (!). Of these sums, amounting to billions of Euros each year, Austria gets only a small portion back, which is called "funding" in a propagandistic sense. Austria may not even decide on how to use the funds itself – funds that are a return out of their already paid contributions(!).

Under the bottom line this has been an annual loss-making business for Austria for 20 years which has been causing social cuts and a general cutback of government services to the citizens.

There is no mentioning of any payment obligation in case of withdrawing from the EU treaty. On the contrary, Austria would not only save the annual net payments for the membership, but also all the payments for the so-called "Euro-bailouts." The multi-billion deposit obligations of Austria in the ESM would disappear, as well as the horrendous warranty for the EFSF. Austria could re-introduce its own currency, the Schilling, and follow a monetary policy that primarily backs the interests of the Austrian economy.

Withdrawal from the European Union is legally backed

The withdrawal from the European Union is legally secured in a separate article of the EU Treaty.
Art. 50 TEU.

Para. 1: Each Member State may decide, in accordance with its constitutional requirements, to withdraw from the Union.

Para. 2: A Member State which decides to withdraw shall notify the European Council of its intention. Based on the guidelines of the European Council, the Union shall negotiate with that State an agreement on the details of the exit and conclude the agreement, the framework for the future relationship to the Union being taken into account. The agreement shall be negotiated in accordance with Article 218 para. 3 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the Europe-

an Union. It is concluded by the Council on behalf of the Union; the Council shall act by a qualified majority, after approval by the European Parliament.

Para. 3: The contracts will no longer apply to the State in question from the effective date of the withdrawal agreement or, failing that, two years after notification referred to in paragraph 2, unless the European Council decides unanimously. In consultation with the concerned Member State to extend this period.

This article is commented on in depth in the standard commentary textbook "The Law of the European Union" by Grabitz/Hilf/Nettesheim [published 2014; Publisher C.H. Beck oHG] in commentary textbook I, explained by Dörr on 13 pages.

Schon gehört? Bitte weitersagen!

AUSTRITT aus der EU

überparteiliches

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Eine einmalige Chance!

Das **EU-AUSTRITTS-VOLKSBEGEHREN** ist eine einmalige Chance, der Bevormundung durch „Brüssel“ in fast allen Lebensbereichen eine klare Absage zu erteilen, um wieder ein **freies und neutrales Österreich** herbeizuführen. Daß es überhaupt zustandekam, haben alle Österreicher den gesetzlich geforderten, fast zehntausend Bürgern und Bürgerinnen zu verdanken, die es bereits in der Einleitungsphase unterschrieben haben! Das war die Voraussetzung für die **offizielle Genehmigung** durch das Innenministerium. Damit ist nun klar, daß der Austritt aus der EU rechtlich und politisch einwandfrei möglich, korrekt und durchführbar ist, wenn genügend Bürger dies mit ihrer Unterschrift auch nachweislich verlangen.

Der offizielle **Text des Volksbegehrens** lautet:

„Der Nationalrat möge den Austritt der Republik Österreich aus der Europäischen Union mit Bundesverfassungsgesetz, welches einer Volksabstimmung zu unterziehen ist, beschließen.“

Betreiber des Volksbegehrens ist nachstehendes unabhängiges und überparteiliches Personenkomitee:

Inge RAUSCHER, Obfrau der „Initiative Heimat & Umwelt“
Helmut SCHRAMM, Angestellter
Mag. Markus LECHNER, Volkswirt
Renate ZITTMAYER, Bäuerin
Dr. Franz-Joseph PLANK, Obmann der Tierschutzorganisation „Animal Spirit“
Hon.Univ.Prof. Dr. Heinrich WOHLMEYER, Ressourcenökonom

The National Council has every right to decide on Austria's withdrawal from the EU! Even more so because such a decision is subject to a mandatory referendum so that in the final say is with the citizens – EU supporters and EU opponents, all alike. The purpose of this referendum is therefore a deeply democratic one, which no one should bypass.

Summing up, the withdrawal from the European Union intends to shelter the Austrian people from further harm. By many of our citizens the EU is perceived as a crippling, centralistic instrument of paternalism with ever increasing signs of dictatorship, which does not seem fit for the future. Smaller independent states offer much bet-

ter chances of an ecologically friendly, sustainable economy and way of life, which will give future generations "breathing space" – in the broadest sense!

Submitted in person to the Ministry of Interior in Vienna on 17.12.2014

Source: Wegwarte, Volume 25, Issue 2, April 2015, Announcement of the Initiative Heimat & Umwelt (abridged)

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Europe does not need a German “central power”

Political dimensions of the crisis in Greece

by Karl Müller

The way, how in Germany (and not only there) certain people write and talk about the development of Greek government debt, Greek politics and Greece's relationship to the other countries of the European Union, and in particular to Germany, fulfills several purposes. One of them is the struggle for the future balance of power in the EU and in Europe. It is no coincidence, that the German-Greek relationship is the main point of focus. For it is about the Germany's position within the EU and in Europe and about the way how that Germany intends to deal with other sovereign states in Europe. Greece is merely a precedent.

Particularly in Germany the interpretation is widely spread that the Greeks had surreptitiously obtained the access to the Euro with falsified statistics. They are to be blamed for having misused low interest rates in the Euro area in order to live beyond their own means. They have bogged down in corruption, mismanagement and horrendous debt. Now, when all that has been revealed, one holds, they

need a strong hand from outside, especially a strong German hand in order to be brought to their senses. The Greeks' resistance against this version is regarded as reprehensible; for nobody, especially not Germany, would be any more willing to throw money down the throat of a country and a people, who wanted to lead a good life and at the same time wanted to go their own way, but at the expense of others, especially of the Germans.

We do not have space here to examine all these assumptions and to prove them wrong or to look closely and differentiate. Much more interesting is the question of purpose and attitude behind such assumptions.

At the November 2011 CDU Congress in Leipzig, *Volker Kauder*, parliamentary party leader of CDU and CSU in the German “Bundestag”, gave a clear message in just a few words: “The German language is spoken in Europe, now.”

The claims of the German Federal President *Gauck*, of the German Defense Minister *von der Leyen* and German Foreign Minister *Frank-Walter Steinmeier*,

followed this announcement to the effect that Germany had to take over more “responsibility” in the world, thereby referring not only to military deployments around the world, but also to the “tasks” in the EU and in Europe assigned to Germany by these politicians.

German professor claims: Germany must be the EU's “taskmaster”

The latest book by Herfried Münkler “*Macht in der Mitte. Die neuen Aufgaben in Deutschland*” (Power in the Center. Germany's new role in Europe) represents the latest and to date most detailed Menetekel (the “writing on the wall”) in regard to the role intended for Germany. Herfried Münkler is a professor of political science at the Humboldt University in Berlin and right in the middle of the German power networks. Just as *Gauck*, *von der Leyen* and *Steinmeier*, Münkler also speaks of more German “responsibility” and “obligation”, but despite all euphemistic rhetoric and numerous spins, Münkler

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EU army clearly contradicts “Perpetual Neutrality” and the Austrian Independence Treaty

ÖVP treats Austrian constitution with contempt!

“If the ÖVP [Austrian People's Party], as one of the ruling parties, clearly argues in support of a common EU army in its recently presented new party programme and thus is willing to conform to EU militarisation even more closely, it further undermines the Federal Constitution and therefore acts unmistakably contrary to the provisions of neutrality and thus unconstitutionally,” says an appalled *Inge Rauscher*, spokesperson for the forthcoming *EU exit referendum*, which will be held from June 24 to July 1, 2015. “An Austrian participation in an EU army would be a clear and definitive breach of neutrality.”

The Federal Constitutional Law on Austrian Neutrality - which we recommend for reading at least once to our “people's representatives”, in particular ÖVP Vice Chancellor *Mitterlehner* and ÖVP Secretary-General *Blümel* - establishes in Article I: “For the purpose of the permanent maintenance of her external independence and for the purpose of the inviolability of her territory, Austria of her own free will declares herewith her permanent neutrality which she is resolved to maintain and defend with all the means at her

disposal.” And further below: “In order to secure these purposes Austria will never in the future accede to any military alliances nor permit the establishment of military bases of foreign States on her territory.”

By its “common foreign and defense policy”, in particular since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty - i.e. the actual “EU Constitution” - the European Union has given itself a limited “*ius ad bellum*” (right to war). These EU missions all over the world can also be “wars on terror”. But terrorism is a notion hard to define. With the concept of terrorism in a third country, for example, the invasion of that third country and its occupation can be justified. This Foreign and Security Policy - euphemistically called “peace policy” - has clearly broken away from the UN ban on violence. This authorisation to war, tied to the obligation for rearmament and common defense - even far from home - is clearly directed against Austria's constitutionally enshrined neutrality. “Austria joined the EU in 1995 - after a barrage of fear-mongering and lies that were drummed into the Austrians before the referendum - as a neutral country. The government at the time promised before

this referendum on 12 June 1994, among other things, that Austria's perpetual neutrality would stay unchanged. But also that promise has long since been broken - see Austria's participation in the economic war (sanctions) against Russia. With the recent motion of the ÖVP, neutrality is to be carried further to the grave!

A people such as the Austrian one, was not struggling for sovereignty and freedom as a “perpetually neutral state” for 10 years after the terrible Second World War, to now, 60 years later, submit to the interests of a NATO / EU alliance, clearly declared as offensive. We want peace through genuine neutrality. The will of a nation's citizens to be neutral and to remain it for all time, as Chancellor *Leopold Figl* (also ÖVP!) promised the Austrians and the peoples of the world - ‘Austria is free!’ - in 1955, is in to be respected by all means. All surveys have shown that the Austrians want to be neutral and to stay neutral. Therefore YES to the *EU exit referendum* from 24 June to 1 July 2015 in all Austrian municipal offices”, concludes *Inge Rauscher*. •

Source: APA-OTS press release dated 31.3.2015

Germany's actual responsibility regarding Greece

Greek reparation claims are entitled

by Dr phil Henriette Hanke Güttinger

For quite some time, Greece has been under massive pressure by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Central Bank (ECB) and the EU under German auspices. Winfried Wolf¹ correctly compared this situation with a war "The Greek economy is literally shot up with the 'Troika's savings package attacks consisting of the IMF, the ECB and the European Commission." The current Greek government, and also that of 2012, proposed a political opposition. The Greek Parliament resorted to a sterner action that was long overdue. The Greek Finance Ministry in Athens was commissioned to research its archives, how much Germany currently owes Greece up to today. The debt is primarily due to reparation payments from the time of the Second World War. In September 2012, Deputy Finance Minister Christos Staikouras oriented the Greek Parliament about the ongoing investigation: The archived material will be gathered, scrutinized and evaluated by a group of experts. On 7 April 2015, the new Vice-Finance Minister Dimitris Mardas submitted a preliminary result of the investigation to the Greek Parliament: Germany's debt for reparation payments to Greece amounts to 278.7 billion euros.

To really understand the Greek financial crisis and the overdue German reparations, one must go back to the 1940s and consider not only the German war crimes, but also the post-war crimes of the Allies.

The German invasion of Greece

In the fall of 1940, the Greeks had repelled an attack by Mussolini's troops and were now supported by a British expeditionary force. Hitler saw that Germany's access to the Romanian oil and the planned attack on the Soviet Union was jeopardized. Therefore at the beginning of April 1941, German troops additionally invaded Yugoslavia and Greece, which they rapidly occupied.

The small, well-functioning Greek economy was immediately and systematically plundered by the occupiers. All assets that were not nailed down, were shipped to Germany. Then the Greek economy was focused on the war economy of the "Reich": supply of raw materials for the Axis powers, the supply of the occupation forces and the payload of the occupation costs. Following an investigation², the historian Karl Heinz Roth

assumes that annual raw materials in value amounting to 45 to 50 million Reichsmarks had had to be delivered to the "Reich", such as bauxite, lead, chromium ore, copper, coal, manganese, petroleum, molybdenum, nickel, iron pyrites, zinc and tin. Also agricultural products such as cotton, resin, olive oil, rice, raisins, silk cocoons, tobacco and sugar went to the "Reich".

Greece also served as the base for the German access to North Africa and the Suez Canal. The Greeks also had to shell out corresponding costs for logistics and supplies.

Famine in Greece

During the winter 1941/42 the Greek population had to bear the devastating consequences of the German occupation policy. Due to famine and its consequences, especially in the medium and large cities more than 100,000 people lost their lives, primarily children and the elderly, even though the ICRC did its best to meliorate the disaster with food supplies.

Destroyed infrastructure and massive loss of human lives

With the growing Greek resistance, the occupying power intensified its unsparing approach even further. Whole villages were destroyed and their inhabitants killed. Also according to Roth, the retreat of the German army in Greece from the autumn of 1944 was lined by widespread destruction: 1,600 villages, 350,000 houses, commercial vessels, port facilities, road and railway bridges, stations, transport networks and the demolition of the Corinth Canal. He assumes that the German occupation policy cost about 520,000 lives (with a Greek population of 6,933,000).²

Allied trample on right to self-determination of the Greeks

One is vastly mistaken to think, that with the expulsion of the German occupation, the Greek people had regained their freedom. Although in September 1944, the Greek People's Liberation Army ELAS (its majority consisting of communists and socialists, but also many others) had independently driven out the German occupiers on their own, the Allies thwarted the creation of a free, sovereign Greece. In October 1944, Churchill and Stalin had divided the spheres of influence in the Balkans in a secret agreement: a 90% majority in Romania for Stalin, a 90% majority for Churchill in Greece. Yugoslavia would be controlled 50% to 50% by

the USSR and the British. USSR would control 50% of Hungary and 75% of Bulgaria.³

Churchill planned a right-wing government with a Greek king for Greece. To suppress the former members of the Greek resistance, Churchill created a Greek secret army of royalists, anti-Republican and former Nazi collaborators. As a consequence the Greek resistance in 1946 took up the armed struggle against the British and the right-wing government. The British, who found themselves in dire straits, called on the US to come to Greece.

In March 1947, President Truman appealed to the Congress, inter alia, with the argument that Greece was among the free nations "whose support must be included in the policy of the United States." With the approval of the Congress, American troops landed in Greece. By the end of 1948 the Greek partisans⁴ were defeated, who had previously freed Greece from the Nazis at the cost of high casualties and then also defeated the British. "The end of the civil war meant total victory for the Greek Right and its patron, the United States," said British journalist Peter Murtagh in "The Rape of Greece".⁵ Following in the footsteps of the British, the US could now build their future military power in the Mediterranean at the beginning of the Cold War. Athens – so Daniele Ganser – was "the hub of all CIA activity in the Balkans and the Middle East, as far as Iran."⁶

This is the historical background against which the question of reparation has to be discussed. •

¹ Winfried Wolf. *Kahlschlag: Sparprogramme zielen auf Staatsbankrott*, in: "lunapark21, zeitschrift zur kritik der globalen ökonomie", 15/2011, page 56

² Karl Heinz Roth. *Kahlfrass: Die Zerstörung der griechischen Volkswirtschaft 1941–1944*, in: "lunapark21", pages 42–51

³ David Horowitz. *Kalter Krieg: Hintergründe der US-Außenpolitik von Jalta bis Vietnam*, Berlin 1976, page 49

⁴ Also, using chemical weapons (Napalm). cf. Daniele Ganser. *NATO's Secret Armies – Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe*, London 2005, page 215

⁵ Peter Murtagh, quoted in: Ganser, p. 215

⁶ Ganser, p. 217

Greece: Drachm or tragedy?

by Pierre-Gabriel Bieri

The new Greek Government puts pressure on the EU. One thing is absolutely sure: It is for the Greeks to find solutions to bring their country back on its feet. And for this purpose no option must be excluded, however radically it may be.

Greek Prime Minister *Alexis Tsípras* is the new enfant terrible of EU policy. His party *SYRIZA* won the last general elections by far, after having launched a campaign against budget consolidation, for the increase in public spending and for tax hunting of the great fortunes.

The takeover of this grouping of the extreme left made the international bankers break out in cold sweat, while at the same time the Greek were affirmed with enthusiasm by the socialists of the whole continent. But the sight of these young politicians who dared affront unabashed Brussel's technocrats, also aroused a certain interest in the euro skeptics who saw this as a glimmer of hope for challenging the haughty European structure. The

coalition of *SYRIZA* with a small right-wing conservative party, reinforced this impression of an anti-EU-front although it is rather an expression of a political tactic than a similarity of profiles.

Postponing the confrontation until later

This first impression was raised to question at the end of February by the first agreement between the new Greek government and the Troika – which does not call itself Troika any longer. This agreement is interpreted quite differently. It seems that both parties have sought to reach a consensus – the creditors rather moderate, the debtors significantly more so. Or rather, to postpone the confrontation until later. The former grant a postponement of four months, during which they would cautiously maintain a state of which they fear, above all, that it could say goodbye to the European Union and its currency. The latter currently renounce

demanding the cancellation of their debts – which does not mean that they will pay for them – and announce reforms that we do not know whether they will be really implemented; for the most part they now rather focus on the tax hunt of the rich than on the creation of wealth.

All this offers hardly any cause for enthusiasm. The electorate of *SYRIZA* is disappointed and reproaches the newly elected, whereas the representatives of the EU, congratulate each other for having demonstrated their legal strength, at least verbally, though not their political and financial one.

To make things even more complicated, and perhaps to gain time, the Greek Government maintains pressure on their European negotiators, by entering talks with Russia and China. At present, it seems unlikely that this will lead to an actual support; but in the end this is a legitimate ac-

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"Europe does not need ..."

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speaks more "openly" than the German politicians and demands that all available German instruments of power within the scope of this "responsibility" are to be employed. As is generally known, power is the ability to impose one's will onto others.

In short, Münkler's thesis is the following: The project of a politically united Europe has failed, the centrifugal forces within the EU have greatly increased, since the euro crisis at the latest, and there was a risk of European chaos within the EU, but also on the outskirts of the EU (North Africa, Levant and Eastern Europe/Ukraine). Therefore EU Europe needed a leading and regulatory power, using all its instruments of power in order to counteract the centrifugal forces – in other words: a new hegemon.

This hegemon could only be Germany. And the fact that – not least because of its history – Germany could only be a "vulnerable hegemon", would have its advantages; because therefore the German instruments of power would only be used with moderation and rationality and also more easily be accepted by the other EU countries. Nevertheless for the German "net contributor" to the EU it is true that: "paymaster" can permanently be only the one who is willing to play the difficult role of a "taskmaster". In the last chapter of his book, Münkler lists up "the portfolio of the different kinds of power", speaks

of the economic, the ideological-cultural and the very important military power, which in Germany, however, is "unfortunately" the most controversial one, to end with one last spin: "The influence of the power in the center is the greater, the less the space, whose center it is, is involved in military conflicts and has to defend itself against threats. The power in the center best pursues its interest by acting as peace power. Whether circumstances allow so, of course, is a different matter."

Is Greece to be the precedent? And: is all that really about German interests? In the decades following the Second World War, the US was the obvious "leading and regulatory power" in the part of Europe not included in the Warsaw Pact – the only exception being Yugoslavia. With the end of the Cold War, there was a brief chance to create a continent of sovereign nations in Europe in which the people and states might live and work together on equal footing and in peace and solve conflicts on their own at the negotiating table. In 1990, the CSCE states adopted the Charter of Paris in which this wish was expressed.

The United States very quickly disappointed this wish. But the United States has overstretched its direct instruments of power. Today, the US is still a strong military power whose military expenditures are as high as that of all other states in the world together, but they overstretched their power, and the land itself is exhausted. The original plan of the "world's only superpower" has not worked out. But the goal to rule the world, was nevertheless abandoned. In the

nineties, *Zbigniew Brzezinski* expressed the plan, to secure the US domination of Eurasia by a Franco-German leadership duo in Europe. France seems to have been dropped. Were all the talks of the "central power" nothing but old wine in new bottles?

Or is there really a fundamental claim to power by German political elites, as well directed against the United States, though it would in no way reflect the will of the Germans – this is what all demoscopic investigations indicate, the Germans, however, are not allowed to decide directly – but which nevertheless strongly urges towards materialization? Or is the "game" still more perfidious, as it was once before in German history: Shall a hubris be generated, so that war can rampage again in Europe ... so that someone may be the smiling third?

Whatever is the case, all such plans are a strike against historical experience and the will of the people of Europe. Whether on behalf of the United States' interests or on the basis of one's own lust for power: Europe and its people will be the victims, even the German people. Europe can no longer take and tolerate a state wanting to set the tone of political leadership, especially if this is to be done in a subtle manner, as can be read in Herfried Münkler's book. The other peoples of Europe feel clearly, that Germany is striving for domination, may it also hide behind numerous euphemisms. So there are indeed many reasons to be benevolent towards Greece and the Greeks, and many reasons for skepticism about the "new tasks for Germany in Europe".

Greek reparation claims against Germany are nothing new

Supreme Court in Italy: Germany must pay compensation to Nazi victims!

On 4 June 2008, the Italian Supreme Court published its decision in the *case Distomo*: Greek Nazi victims may enforce compensation claims against Germany in Italy. This judgment of the Supreme Court of Italy is groundbreaking!

Background: On 10 June 1944, a German SS unit raided the village of Distomo near Delphi during the German occupation of Greece and killed 218 residents, including many children, women and old people. The survivors and the relatives of the victims have never received any compensation from the Federal Republic.

The deceased lawyer *Ioannis Stamoulis*, who had successfully fought for a compensation of about 28 million euros for the victims before the Greek courts. The *Areopagus*, the Supreme Court of Greece, confirmed the judgment in 2000. Despite the

final decision, the Federal Republic has not paid a cent until today. Upon intervention by the German side, the Greek government even stopped the garnishment of German property in Greece.

Therefore, the plaintiff applied for declaring the Greek judgment enforceable in Italy at Italian courts. At the lower courts they got their right. Thereupon the lawyer *Joachim Lau* from Florence impounded German properties in Como/Italy ("Villa Vigoni") in 2007. The German government appealed.

Now today the called-on Court of Cassation in Rome decided that the Greek plaintiffs from Distomo in Italy may take enforcement measures against German property. According to the Court of Cassation, the German State enjoys no immunity in such a trial because the basis of the

dispute was a war crime, and because such judgments from other EU countries must find recognition.

Finally this decision cleared the way to help the people of Distomo to get a fair compensation. If Germany continues to refuse payment, the seized German property in Italy would have to be auctioned.

In addition, the Supreme Court ruled that the deported Italian soldiers (usually referred to as *Italian military internees*, short IMI) must be compensated for Nazi forced labor by the Federal Republic of Germany. Germany had excluded them from payments from the Fund "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future".

*Press release of the Working Group
Distomo, Hamburg, 4 June 2008*

(Translation Current Concerns)

Reparations claimed from Germany

The Executive Board of the *bar association of Thessaloniki* (DSTH) claims German war reparations in a resolution approved unanimously at the meeting of the corporation a few days ago. The resolution was passed on to the public.

In the resolution, the bar association of Thessaloniki requires the German Government, "to fulfill its commitments to Greece, which comprise German reparations of every kind springing from the

actions of the Third Reich in Greece during the Second World War." It is emphasized that namely for Thessaloniki repayment of the money paid by the Jewish community of this city to ransom their members from forced labor in various industries and areas of Macedonia is to be added.

In addition, the same resolution emphasises Germany's obligation to return the archaeological treasures which were

looted during the German occupation. "The German Government, which so often refers to the idea of a united Europe and to the obligations of its members, now has itself to meet its obligations to the States of the EU, especially when they result from the actions of the Third Reich during the Second World War."

*the truth committed from 23 June 2012,
Original source: Newsbeast.gr*

"Greece: Drachm or tragedy?"

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tion! If the EU has lent Greece absurd sums for purely political reasons beyond any economic sense, some powers competing with the EU might be tempted to at least pretend to play the same game.

The Euro question

In principle, the creditors of Greece are right in preaching a Spartan regime. The only problem is that neither the Germans, nor the EU-commissioners or the international donors have the right to dictate the Greeks what is right; rather, the Greeks themselves are responsible to put their

country on its feet again. The budget consolidation for the interior is difficult to implement, but in case they are imposed from outside, they will certainly be perceived as humiliating and there will be no chance at all of implementing them.

We will get to hear that the EU representatives will have a say because they are the ones who have been lending money for years. Perhaps that is just the problem. Why have they taken such a risk? In order to look good? In order not to have to admit that at that time Greece did not meet the conditions to introduce the common currency?

Former French President *Valéry Giscard d'Estaing* declared that the Greek

economy can not make a new start and recover with such a "strong" currency like the Euro, and that the exit from the monetary union – organized and controlled – would be the best solution. Why not? The question is delicate, but it deserves to be asked. One should even get away from looking at the EU construction as a sacrosanct organisation, from which the smallest retreat would be an intolerable insult. In order to avoid a Greek tragedy, it is worth thinking about it – both in Brussels and in Athens. •

Source: *Patrons* No 03/2015

(Translation Current Concerns)

Legal background of the Greek reparation claims

In the Paris Reparations Agreement of 1946 the German war crimes against Greece were billed at 7.1 billion US dollars. A few years later, under the threat of the oncoming Cold War, Germany was already needed by the Allies in the struggle against communism. For this reason, it was agreed in the London Agreement of 1953 that the recognised reparation demands against Germany should be postponed – until a final settlement in a later peace treaty. Greece, which was not among the victorious powers, had no say in this.

However, the Federal Republic of Germany made so-called global agreements with the West European countries in the

1960s, with which lump-sum compensation payments were made. A corresponding treaty was concluded with Greece for the sum of 115 million DM – a mere fraction of the actual debts. However, the victims of the armed forces crimes, forced labour or resistance fighters, for example, were explicitly omitted from these payments, and individual claims in the treaty expressly excepted. The Greek government has always maintained that no final settlement was reached with this global agreement – and even officials in the Federal Finance Ministry have conceded in writing that the Greek reparation claims were not fulfilled by this global agreement.

After the German reunification, the time had come to negotiate a final “Peace Treaty”, as mentioned in the 1953 London Agreement. But this was deliberately avoided and a so-called “2+4 Agreement” was concluded, which admittedly settled the renunciation of reparation claims, but only with the four “Great Powers” among the former Allies. Greece and several other countries were given no share in the solution of the agreement. They were unable therefore to make claims – or even to renounce them. •

Source: *A Song for Argyris*, Appendix B, Fontana Film http://www.fontanafilm.ch/DOKFILME/argyris/pdf/Argyris_Appendix_B.pdf

The International Committee of the Red Cross on famine in occupied Greece

From the time of their arrival in Greece in 1941, the Italian and German occupying forces took possession of all the available food resources, thereby creating great difficulties. The ICRC entered into negotiations with the occupying powers, and with the United Kingdom and Turkey, in order to organize relief work in Greece. From October 1941 to August 1942, the ICRC managed to bring 45,000 tonnes of food into the country. But during the terrible winter of 1941–1942, only 7,500 tonnes arrived safely. The famine then grew to terrible proportions – in Athens and several other cities, the rate of mortality was four or five times higher than it had been the previous winter.

The ICRC subsequently obtained authorization from London to deliver 15,000 tonnes of Canadian wheat to Greece every month. With the help of the Swedish government (which supplied the means of transportation) and the Canadian authorities (who provided the goods), ships made 94 trips from Canada to Greece, bringing 17,000 tonnes of

food there each month between September 1942 and March 1944. From April to November 1944, the monthly deliveries rose to 29,000 tonnes.

Supplying the Dodecanese

Although Greece was liberated in October 1944, the Dodecanese islands remained under German occupation until 8 May 1945. During this period, the population received no further supplies from outside, and its situation became catastrophic. With the agreement of the belligerents and Turkey, the ICRC undertook to bring relief to the archipelago in small boats which it hired in Izmir. Four operations took place between February and May 1945, and a total of 2,700 tonnes of food, clothing and medicines, supplied by the British government and Greek settlers abroad, were delivered to these islands and distributed among the population. •

Source: CICR Resources from 4 February 2005

<https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/misc/57jnx2.htm>

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The door to the selection of human beings must never be opened

Press conference of the committee "No to PID" (Pre-implantation diagnostics)

thk. On 30 March the national committee "No to PID" invited to attend the start of the campaign in the media centre of the "Bundeshaus" (Parliament Building) in Bern. The national committee "No to PID" clearly spoke out against the introduction of pre-implantation diagnostics (PID) and against the amendment of the Constitution on 14 June. The supposedly harmless constitutional amendment (Art. 119 Para. 2c) throw open the doors to the specific selection of human beings. The revision of the Federal Act on Medically Assisted Reproduction of Federal Constitution (Implementing Act BV Art. 119) already approved by the parliament on 14 December 2014 cannot become law until the Swiss people and cantons amend the constitution on 14 June. This revision of the law which is highly problematic allows pre-implantation diagnostics including examination of embryos for chromosomal anomalies of all kinds (chromosomal screening) as well as the deep-freezing of surplus embryos. The non-partisan committee "No to PID" rejects these changes and their consequences with all determinedness. Therefore on 14 June the committee is running against the amendment of the constitution.

Podium members were representatives of different parties. The alliance from right to left was successful here, as *Marianne Streiff*, of the Evangelical People's Party (EVP) and Member of the National Council, emphasised at the press conference. In her opinion it is not a political, but an ethical question. "The national committee is composed of representatives of the Civic Democratic Party (BDP), Christian Democratic People's Party (CVP), Evangelical People's Party (EVP), Swiss Social Democratic Party (SP), and Swiss Popular Party (SVP)". Present at the press conference were the Members of National Council *Christine Bulliard-Marbach* (CVP), *Christian Lohr* (CVP), *Marianne Streiff* (EVP), *Dominique de Buman* (CVP) and

Sylvia Flückiger-Bäni (SVP). *Marianne Streiff* indicated that with the amendment of the Constitution Art.119 it is permitted to produce more embryos than necessary for an in vitro fertilisation (IVF). That means, more embryos are produced than needed for a pregnancy. Therewith surplus embryos existed which could be used for uncertain purposes. They could be deep-frozen or misused for research purposes, so the concerns of the No-committee.

The Swiss parliament (National Council and Council of States) had substantially modified the Federal Council's proposal for the revision of the Federal Act on Medically Assisted Reproduction which wanted to permit PID only for parents with a severe hereditary disease. According to the parliamentary decision now, all embryos resulting from a medically assisted reproduction could be screened for genetic defects and also chromosomal abnormalities (for example trisomy 21). According to the No-committee ethical barriers would be brought down meaning indeed a paradigm shift in medicine. "We want to prevent that the door to selection of human beings will be opened". For *Marianne Streiff* PID "clearly is an instrument for selection of "a life worth living" and "an unworthy life". Even Councillor *Alain Berset* warned both chambers against the danger of "selection" and "eugenic tendencies" inherent in these methods of examination.

For Member of National Council *Dominique de Buman* the extension of article 119 is a further step towards a limitless reproductive medicine. With regard to the US-American practice, he said: "Is PID allowed as a start it is not a big step towards the approval of designer babies". This might lead to a selection of sex, eye- and hair colour as well as mental and physical abilities. So called "rescue babies" were already being discussed.

National Councillor *Sylvia Flückiger-Bäni* is alarmed: "With the planned con-

stitutional amendment nearly no protection of the embryo is going to remain." In case the law that follows was enacted, the constitutional amendment, which aims at lifting the ban on the deep-freezing of embryos, thousands of surplus embryos could be deep-frozen. This is what *Sylvia Flückiger-Bäni* opposes because "human life is a miracle and never must be degenerated to be a means to an end".

Member of National Council *Christine Bulliard-Marbach* criticised PID to be not a progress but the opposite. "Instead of doing research for new therapies, possibly disabled or ill people are simply eliminated." Moreover she pointed out that PID could "never test all known genetic defects at the same time".

Member of National Council *Christian Lohr* warned against the discriminating consequences of PID for people with disabilities. "If we continue on this path, we are stigmatising people with disabilities as 'not worth living'. People with disabilities would be seen as unwanted and avoidable risks and burdens in case the amendment was enacted. This would have severe consequences for our living together in society. He believed that PID would exert a strong pressure on future parents to avoid disabled life, he argued.

This press conference meant the start of a public discussion which has to be urgently conducted between citizens of our country, in which the ethical question mentioned by member of National Council *Streiff* must be paramount. In the following two interviews members of National Council *Christine Bulliard-Marbach* and *Marianne Streiff* explain their reasons why they stand up against the introduction of the new constitutional article. *Current Concerns* will accompany the important public debate on PID with additional articles.

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

“Eugenics must not gain entry into our society”

Interview with National Councillor Christine Bulliard-Marbach, CVP Fribourg



Christine Bulliard-Marbach (picture thk)

Current Concerns: Why do you oppose the amendment to the Constitution? What would happen if the article was adopted?

National Councillor Bulliard-Marbach: I speak out quite clearly against the amendment because I am

against selection. I oppose the fact that medicine should decide whether a life is worth living or not. My conviction thereabout is so strong that I do not want something like that to happen. Eugenics must not find its way into our society. It can not be that we humans may choose what a child is to look like. This is what it would amount to.

What are the objectives pursued by eugenics?

Here it is me determining what the genes of a developing human being are to be; that is unethical. We know examples from history about such ways of thinking, that is something we must absolutely not encourage.

What would be the consequences of his constitutional amendment?

It opens the door to selection. If the constitution permits us to implement such things, they will be practiced – and that is what I am desperately warning against. We must not forget the effects this will have upon young couples who do not like to do these check-ups. They would be exposed to an enormous pressure. Above all it would concern women who have become pregnant naturally and who do not use all these methods and who would like to let the baby develop naturally. For this reason I consider this very dangerous; for every human being has a right to live.

What are you thinking of?

We know examples of persons who suffer from Trisomy 21. These are happy human beings who have feelings and show them, who can be cheerful or sad, precisely like all other human beings can. In this sense, I have got a strong conviction which is quite clear.

How about parents with a hereditary handicap?

If the parents have got a hereditary disease PID is certainly something which should be used. I am not opposing that. Here, medical progress should be applied. But this is no reason to select embryos at any price. In that case we will have several of these embryos. If the first does not match, we will take

the second one, and then the third one, etc. In the end the question remains what is to be done with the surplus embryos.

Who is to decide that?

Yes, here the parents enter a very difficult situation if it is up to them to decide what they are going to do with them. We have got to leave certain developments to nature, with which we must not interfere. It is for this reason that I am clearly against PID in every case. I am not opposing the application of PID in case of severe hereditary diseases where there is a probability that it might be transmitted.

To what extent is the pharmaceutical industry interested in this development?

You may certainly assume that there is an interest. It deals with business, and it is about that business here, of course. In case it is reasonable, the bargain may be concluded. But for me the ethical question is more important, and economy has to take a backseat. The pharmaceutical industry has got a direct interest in it, that's for sure. But that is not only negative. We need that pharmaceutical industry for scientific progress. But it always depends for what purpose and for whom.

Mrs National Councillor Bulliard-Marbach, thank you very much for the Interview.●

“The protection of life as the ultimate principle”

Interview with National Councillor Marianne Streiff, EVP Berne



Marianne Streiff (picture thk)

Current Concerns: Why did the National Council extend the draft law, as proposed by the Federal Council, on healthy couples, as well?

National Councillor Streiff: Many parliamentarians

think that everything that is feasible is also correct. As for medicine, we will be able to clarify many more such conditions, as, for example, chromosomal abnormalities such as trisomy 21. Therefore, according to the majority of the parliament, we should not restrict ourselves to genetic diseases, but be allowed to make other checkups as well.

This leads us on a slippery slope. They were already talking about the “saviour babies”, who many members of the National Council and the Council of States wanted to introduce. For us, this is a path in a direction that humanity should not go.

What must a layman understand by a “saviour baby”?

This is an embryo, who is suitable as a genetically compatible donor of stem cells for an affected sibling.

Another aspect is the question of discrimination. What is discriminatory in the process of embryo screening?

The discrimination is that it determines which life is worth living and which not. Everybody who lives with a disability, which shall then be excluded by the diagnostic process, will implicitly hear, that a human being like him or her is

unwanted. This is obviously discriminating the disabled people of today.

You said in the press conference that the whole thing was really not a political issue, but a question of ethics. That is absolutely true, isn't it?

Our approach to these things depends on our view of man. We quasi decide what human being is worth living and who shall not live. Doesn't such attitude not contain the goal that we want a society without any illness or disability? Do we have room in our society for the disabled? Do we consider people with a disability as enrichment or as an obstacle for all of us? This depends on our view of man (“Menschenbild”). It is based on an ethical conception, isn't it? And associated with a religious attitude, as well.

A slow erasing of the teacher

Indian higher education system is being undermined at many levels

by Krishna Kumar, professor of education at Delhi University
and former director of the National Council of Educational Research and Training NCERT

Reformers of higher education appear to be totally disconnected with the realities that surround teachers. This may be because many reformers perceive teachers as being unimportant or, rather, an impediment to change. Another common perception is that ideas and practices can be borrowed from Western – especially American – universities and straightaway implemented in India. Many of these recycled ideas have adorned the pages of government reports for decades.

A concerted drive to enforce them gained momentum under UPA-II [under Manmohan Singh]. Now, a torrent of such ideas has hit the higher education system. The institutional apparatus is groaning with chronic pains, but reformers are no more interested in old problems. They feel it is best to ignore old woes and move forward with new ideas. This is, of course, a guess. No one knows what policy is shaping current reforms. All we get is an overarching justification; namely, that in order to get into world rankings, Indian universities must quickly copy the American universities.

A few years ago when *reservation* [a kind of quota places in the Indian education system] was extended to the other backward classes (OBC) [a collective term used by the Indian Government for educationally disadvantaged and deprived classes], one assumed that universities would focus on enhancing systemic capacity and quality. It became clear quite soon that the term “quality” didn’t necessarily mean higher standards of teaching. For many new-age administrators, quality had a physical connotation. It meant a gloss-

ier website, smart classes, CCTV cameras, and so on. Even as quality became the avowed goal, class size grew, libraries dwindled, and the teacher’s role and status changed. I remember being told by a senior officer that teaching would no more be a career. He clarified that the teacher’s role had changed and there was no need for long-term engagement. In a modular course structure, he said, different individuals can come in for short periods to ‘deliver the content’. Technology will provide the back-up for students to develop their knowledge and maintain continuity.

Is this the new policy the University Grants Commission (UGC) [commission for licences and benefits for universities] is following? It is hard to say. After the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) announced its vast recommendations, the UGC got somewhat sidelined. The NKC was a new-age enterprise. Its report(s) exuded a spirit no one had ever seen in government documents. The NKC’s fire and foam caused a general confusion. No one knew how much support it had in UPA-II.

A parallel vision for rejuvenation of higher education was proposed by a committee chaired by Yash Pal, the scientist. His report took a more compassionate view of the existing system and suggested steps to strengthen it. One of the old weaknesses it chose for attention and advice was the disconnection between senior faculty and undergraduate students. Neither the UGC nor the HRD [Human Resource Development] ministry gave Yash Pal’s holistic philosophy much thought. Ultimately, his remedial voice got submerged in the din of piecemeal radicalism.

One radical measure the UGC has pushed in recent years is a scoring device to quantify the credentials of a candidate for selection as a teacher. This system has given an unprecedented boost to fraudulent research publications and participation in conferences. Hundreds of journals that charge the writer for quick publication have cropped up. Certificates of participation in conferences have become valued pieces of paper. This kind of trivialisation of academic work parallels the corruption that recognition and accreditation procedures have promoted in professional education. The academic landscape has lost what little grace and integrity it had.

Courses on offer have multiplied, leaving young students confused and their temporary teachers clueless about any larger curriculum design or purpose. In any case, the manner in which Indian universities have implemented the semester system leaves little room for sustained engagement with knowledge.

Unlike the West, where teachers devise their own method of assessment, the semester system has been enforced in India without touching the old exam system. The only change is that the stationery on which one submitted the confidential exam paper now includes a compact disc. Secrecy of names and marks continues to be symbolised by the lac seal that adorns official envelopes and sacks. Some universities now prefer to gather all the evaluators in a large-size room the way school boards do. There they sit and speed through hundreds of answer

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“The protection of life...”

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The advocates are arguing with the pressure from abroad and that Switzerland must conform. How do you see that?

For me, this is altogether clear: Not everything that is feasible must be put it into practice. We must not bow to any pressure from abroad just because those who want to apply such a procedure have greater leave to do so. For me, this whole preimplantation diagnostics does not mean any progress, but a dangerous step back. If you look at history, we see that there was such kind of selection once before. Do we want that?

To what extent is the economic aspect relevant?

The pharmaceutical industry and the research sector – this cannot be argued away

– have a great interest in it. If you imagine that all the couples that can be artificially inseminated want to take these tests, it becomes clear how much money you can make with it. Here, too, there are economic interests involved; that cannot be denied.

How could one initiate a dispute among the population about this ethical issue?

What will happen if we do not consider the protection of life as the ultimate principle? We need to seriously discuss this issue in society. We need to point out, what the consequences are if you no longer protect life, but decide which life should be protected and which is not worth any protection. This must become a central topic.

What would be the consequences if the protection of life was no longer considered the ultimate principle?

It would lead to a complete loss of solidarity towards people with a disability. This question also influences discussions about the end of life or serious illnesses. How much may a human being cost us? Is it worthwhile to accompany a serious illness? In that case we will soon end up with the question of euthanasia. If a man or a woman has the impression that he or she was a burden to society and would cost too much, we will have completed a development, which is very dangerous for our society and human life. We have to prevent that with a No on 14 June.

National Councillor Mrs Streiff, thank you for the interview. •

(Interviews Thomas Kaiser)

Student data as goods

A debate in the United States casts shadow on Europe

rl. With the introduction of electronic data processing in the private and public sector we are able to collect information, deliver messages, manage our personal business or obtain books, music and movies in digital form in a few seconds. On the other hand, the opportunities for misuse have grown rapidly: storage of telecommunications data, including conversation content by the NSA, comprehensive monitoring via camera with face detection (London), collecting and linking of personal data from different domains, browsing habits on the Internet. Consumer habits are stored and evaluated in order to increase sales when buying goods (loyalty card) in stores or on the Internet. Specific customer profiles are created and used for promotional purposes.

The past 20 years have also not passed the field of education without leaving traces. Many classrooms are equipped with computers where students complete tasks, the teacher digitally stores his marks, students' tardiness or bad behaviour (for example via *LehrerOffice*). Various data are then forwarded and collected centrally, sometimes evaluated.

Such personal data are of high interest in many places. Now also student data as for example when using tutorials or the use of the Internet have become the target of big corporations.

According to the "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung" of 25 March a dispute between major learning software manufacturers and parents associations currently take place in the United States about the right on the students' personal data. Major educational corporations would like to have access to the way individual pupils deal with the tutorials. Of course, they claim, only in order to optimize the soft-

ware. Parents object that through the disclosure of this personal information, the privacy of their children is disregarded and it is not clear what else will be done with the data.

In autumn 2014, the industry then worked out a declaration of commitment of dealing with educational data. The statement was meanwhile signed by corporations like *Apple*, *Microsoft* and later, after some hesitation, also by *Google*. According to this statement, parents would actively have to request the examination of their children's records and then request corrections if necessary.

Now, a democratic representative, *Jared S. Polis*, initiated a draft law that fell far back behind the proposal of the corporations. Consent for the disclosure of personal data would then depend only on the headmaster.

Data on students are not only interesting for the manufacturers of learning software to improve their software or to specifically incorporate coordinated advertising. These data could then be compiled and make exact profiles that provide a relatively accurate long-term picture of a student's performance and readiness, the skills in individual subjects, the result of learning effort on certain days of the week and specific times. If such data were public, the possibilities of progress at school and in the professional sector could be severely restricted. Of course banks, landlords, advertisers and many others more are strongly interested in such data. The data management of the school in regard to omissions or disciplinary problems has not yet been included in this data collection.

The parents demand the right to decide on their children's data. Corporations

may not use these data without consent for other purposes. In January, *Barack Obama* promised to ensure that data collected in the classroom are likely to be used for educational purposes only.

When the provider for educational technology *ConnectEDU* applied for insolvency in April 2014, 20 million student records were offered for sale in the bankrupt's estate. The further use of the data was unclear. This provider has been supported with 500,000 US dollars by the *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation* before it failed. The Foundation had invested 1 million USD in a project of educational data *InBloom* that had collected millions of student data. Data security could not be guaranteed. *InBloom* discontinued.

Now we will see whether the legitimate interests of the parents can prevail in the dispute about the student data or if the elected representatives in the House of Representatives decide against the interests of the parents and for the industry and the *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation* via the lobbying of groups.

In Switzerland, too, different providers with different educational software programs and "educational platforms" are entering the market. More and more schools purchase electronic media from major educational groups. Cantons connect their school communities to centrally collect data about students' marks, absence or disciplinary behaviour. This development is encouraged because together with the introduction of *Curriculum 21* Switzerland-wide test series are planned. Many parents have not yet realized the extent to which their children are now electronically recorded – and will be even more so in the future.

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

"A slow erasing ..."

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sheets. Instead of one annual exam, we now have two. The questions asked are of the same old type that the guidebook industry loves.

The semester system is now going to be followed up by a so-called choice-based credit system. One of its declared goals is to facilitate student mobility from one university to another. This is supposedly a priority in a country where guardians sigh with relief when their hunt for a tiny rented room for their ward ends. One is told that credit transfer and uniform syllabi will also facilitate faculty movement. These measures, reform-

ers feel, will throw fresh energy into the tired veins of what a former HRD minister called "a sick child", referring to the higher education system.

The sickness now pervades every limb in the child's body. Reformers seem determined to continue damaging the system. Their indifference to ground reality can only exacerbate the crisis. They will, of course, keep wondering with legitimate innocence why Indian universities don't figure in world rankings.

This article was first published in "Hindustan Times" on 2 April 2015.

Source: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/analysis/slow-erasing-of-the-teacher-higher-education-is-being-undermined/article1-1332972.aspx>

¹ The University Grants Commission (UGC) of India is a statutory organisation charged with coordination, determination and maintenance of standards of university education. It provides recognition to universities in India, and disburses funds to such recognized universities and colleges. (cf. Wikipedia, www.ugc.ac.in/)

² The National Knowledge Commission is an Indian think-tank charged with considering possible policies that might sharpen India's comparative advantage in the knowledge-intensive service sectors, constituted in 2005 by the Prime Minister *Manmohan Singh*. In particular, the Commission was to advise the Prime Minister's Office on policy related to education, research institutes and reforms needed to make India competitive in the knowledge economy. (cf. Wikipedia, www.knowledgecommission.gov.in/)

“Humanitarian aid – the heart of our Swiss values”

Annual meeting of Swiss Humanitarian Aid and the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA)

by Thomas Kaiser

Anyone who visits the annual meeting of *Swiss Humanitarian Aid* and the *Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit* SHA, witnesses in one afternoon the spirit that constitutes humanitarian Switzerland, what its commitment is all about and how it succeeds in the urgently required mission in our world. The number of victims of disasters has gone up worldwide in recent years. Due to this development, the question arises: Are there ways to identify risks at an early stage and to counteract them effectively and successfully? The title of the annual Conference of Humanitarian Aid was indeed: *Understanding risks – reducing disasters*.

Manuel Bessler, head of SHA, introduced the topic. He explained the importance of risk management in a world that is regularly hit by disasters of any kind. Given the political-military disasters dominating the last year, natural disasters such as earthquakes or floods played a subordinate role. Currently, a special challenge is the plight of refugees in and around Syria. Federal Councillor *Didier Burkhalter* expressed this in his speech. For him, the “humanitarian aid is a matter of the heart: it’s the heart of our Swiss values; it is the core of our commitment, our activity, as well as the focus of today’s meeting”. *Didier Burkhalter* expressed his particular concern about the situation in Syria, about the huge number of suffering people, especially women and children, and the inconceivable misery. They were the victims of contrasting interests of the great powers, he said. *Burkhalter* put his hopes on the United Nations Security Council, which should initiate the necessary steps for a peaceful solution. One could not solve the conflict by humanitarian aid, it had to be solved politically. Further conflicts concern the international community. These include the violent conflicts in Central Africa, in South Sudan, in the Ukraine and most recently also in Yemen, where about 16 million people are dependent on support due to the economic crisis and a lack of water supply.

In addition to the political and military disasters, however, there is also concern about the negative impact of climate change by which about 20 million of the world’s refugees are affected, according to the UN. In total, there are 55 million people who fled their homes – this is seven times the population of Switzerland – and lack the essentials for survival. Since the Second World War to date, never have there been so many people on the run. *Didier Burkhalter* raised the question of Switzerland’s contribution to alle-

viating the situation given the great experience and appropriate instruments that the country owns to help concentrated and successful: by “heart and mind”. He spoke of a “paradigm shift in humanitarian commitment”, where one increasingly aims at prevention and tries to make provisions before the disaster occurs. According to estimates of the United Nations the amount of annual loss caused by natural disasters is \$ 300 billion. The UN Conference in Sendai/Japan, a city which was severely destroyed by the 2011 earthquake and the subsequent tsunami, discussed the possible reduction of disaster risks. Switzerland played a leading role in this, the Swiss experts were renowned worldwide and “enjoyed a good reputation”. People in Switzerland gained valuable experience in dealing with natural disasters in their own country with its difficult topography. So, already in 1876, Switzerland had a forest law, which was unique in Europe. *Burkhalter* praised “the sophisticated population protection system”, in which “disaster risk reduction [had] a high priority”. These experiences of Switzerland played a central role in the Sendai preparatory conferences, which were held in Geneva, as well as at the Sendai Conference itself. In the affected areas Switzerland established shelters against cyclones. For instance, that blew across the country at a storm force of up to 300 kilometers per hour.

In Pakistan with the help of the native population, the *Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation* (SDC) built protective structures and walls on steep slopes that could prevent a washing out of the ground and subsequent landslides. It was a difficult task to persuade the people that constructions high up on the hillside protected the village far down in the valley. But by close cooperation between the SDC and domestic helpers, this project was brought to a successful end.

In the context of risk-management, the SDC started a project on disaster prevention together with the Moroccan Government in an earthquake zone. Switzerland repeatedly provided support during disasters in Morocco, so it seemed natural that the Moroccan Government asked Switzerland for support in establishing a national rescue team in 2008. The SDC took on this task together with the rescue chain. The *Swiss Rescue Chain* has a “certification of the International Advisory Group for Search- and Rescue services (INSARAG)”, which certifies that a search and rescue team can do rescue operations in the situation of major disasters, espe-

cially after the great earthquake. During training, realistic exercises were conducted in Morocco and in Switzerland to prepare the team of approximately 100 specialists for the challenging task and the certification. After a 70 hours-examination, Morocco received the international certificate as the first African state and the 40th state worldwide. So this team is as well entitled to official operations in case of disasters in other countries.

In addition to this team of professionals, which were trained by Switzerland, SDC supports the training of 800 Moroccan civilian volunteers to strengthen national security. The volunteers are to be able to deploy faster in the narrow alleys of the Moroccan cities like Fes or Sefrou, for instance, even before the professional forces reach the site. They are equipped with important material such as uniforms, gloves, fire extinguishers, hydraulic pumps, first aid sets, etc., which they take home in part.

The Moroccan ambassador was present at the event in Berne and expressed his gratitude for the Swiss commitment and emphasised the great contribution of Switzerland. Its commitment to civil protection and humanitarian aid, so the Moroccan ambassador, did not only have a beneficial impact on his own country, but was going to strengthen the civil protection world-wide. He was also pleased about the good performance of both the professional rescue teams and the organisation of volunteers who can be used immediately in a situation of disaster.

In the end, *Manuel Sager*, Director General of the SDC, stressed that disaster preparedness is an integral part of a sustainable development. “Disaster preparedness bridges the gap between humanitarian assistance and cooperation in development”, which contributes not only to protecting the livelihood of the people, but as well helps protect the developmental progress against natural disasters. The humanitarian operations of Switzerland in all continents of our world are huge. In addition to the SDC’s long-term professional help, there is the *Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit*, which is primarily recruited from volunteers for ad hoc deployment in a disaster area. The operations are limited in time and should address the largest needs after an earthquake as was the case some years ago in Haiti or the flood disaster in Pakistan or in other countries of the world with emergency relief, even before the long-term reconstruction aid can

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"It has always been an incentive in my life to help other people, and this is also an important part of Swiss tradition."

Interview with Catherine Leutenegger, member of the Swiss Care-Team and former member of the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit



Catherine Leutenegger
(picture thk)

Current Concerns: What prompted you to register with the Humanitarian Aid Unit on your own accord?

Catherine Leutenegger: Basically, I am a helpful person. This is certainly connected with the fact that I am a

trained nurse. Here it is the set task to help others, to alleviate suffering. In my later occupation as a flight attendant I was also always in touch with people and it was my job to help them.

Was there a trigger event?

Yes, that was Saddam Hussein's invasion in Kuwait. I was living there at that time. After the Iraqi invasion, I returned to Switzerland and was unable to return to Kuwait for 10 months, until the war was over. In addition, I was out of work. I had worked for Swissair as a temporary-flight attendant, but now they had no means of em-

ploying me. So now I was there, it was winter, I had no clothes, no possessions, I felt like a refugee in affluent Switzerland. That was a very difficult time for me. Jobwise, there was the fact that I had no job, and in my private life, things were not going well, either. Every day I walked past the "Platzspitz" park ("Needle Park"), which was near my pied-à-terre, which I had in Zurich. In this initially hopeless situation, I thought to myself, if I could help out there, I might be able to earn a little pocket money. They actually took me and so I was at the Platzspitz park from November 1990 until February 1991, and I tried to help the addicts.

What did you do after February 1991?

I knew a doctor who worked for the Institute for Social and Preventive Medicine and was a co-worker of Felix Gutzwiller. Through him, I got a job at the vaccination centre. Here, various people were vaccinated who worked for humanitarian aid. So I came into contact with Toni Frisch, who later came to lead the humanitarian-aid section at the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and others who were vaccinated before they went on international missions. And so I had the wish to help with humanitarian missions of this sort as well.

How does one get to work for the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit?

Since my field of work brought me into contact with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), I applied to them for a stint. I was accepted and assigned to the medical sector. After that, I attended training courses. Motivated by a patient in the vaccination centre and to better prepare myself for the job and to test whether in case of emergency I would be able to cope in an earthquake mission, I decided to travel to Pakistan and work in a leprosy hospital. I quit my job at the Institute for Social and Preventive Medicine and travelled to Pakistan. First I worked in the provinces. That was depressing: Being surrounded by great poverty, filth and disease, and all that at temperatures around 40° C, of course without air conditioning but with a lot of mosquitoes, was a major challenge.

Did you stay there for a longer time?

No, I asked for a transfer to a hospital in the city of Karachi. So then I came to the leprosy hospital. That was in September, and it was extremely hot there as well. There I met the doctor and catholic nun Ruth Pfau;

she is comparable to Mother Teresa, but in Pakistan. She established the leprosy hospital and committed herself to field work, i.e. she travelled to the valleys of Pakistan as far away as Afghanistan and trained young assistants who accompanied her when she did this work. She has been doing this for nearly 50 years. She was born in 1929.

So you came to Karachi. Did this suit you better?

I had a room in one of the departments of the hospital. The problem in Pakistan is that women are not allowed to work, so they have to rely on helpers from abroad. I then visited the slums of Karachi together with the leprosy assistants, and we looked out to see whether there were any women who already showed symptoms of this disease. I saw the slums there, and this has left a lasting impression on me.

How did you communicate with the people?

Since I do not speak Urdu, but only English, and the people there speak only Urdu, I could not speak to them in detail myself. So I measured their blood pressure and pulse rate. But these people were not seriously ill. They get very cheap anti-tuberculosis drugs and are quite well provided for. As a well-trained nurse I felt a bit under-challenged. After a while I got the impression that I could not do what I would have liked to accomplish there. So I decided to travel around all Pakistan quite alone in my salwar kameez (robe), to Islamabad, to Peshawar, right up to Chitral on the Afghan border. I only took a toilet case, a book and a pillow with me. I travelled alone, which would be impossible today.

Could you apply later what you had learned?

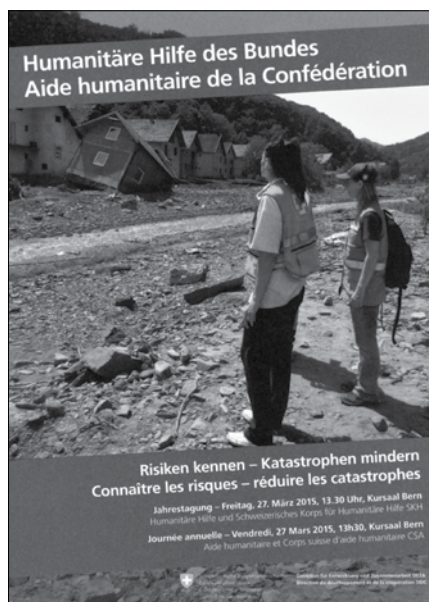
On my return, I worked as a flight attendant again and was also on hand for the Swiss Humanitarian Aid. Unfortunately, I was not sent to a mission by them. A restructuring was being implemented at that time. The areas of responsibility had become more complex. Today, if you are deployed to an earthquake mission, you need a wealth of expertise about drugs and their effects. Working in that field you have to prepare and put together the infusions. That's a very challenging task. Later, when Toni Frisch was the head of humanitarian aid, he was often a Swissair or Swiss passenger and I served him and told him I would like to be further involved.

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"Humanitarian aid – the heart ..."

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start. This beneficent task couldn't be attained without the volunteers. Catherine Leutenegger is a voluntary and tells us in the following interview, what urged her to sign in at the Swiss disaster relief unit and what consequences it had for herself and her life.



"It has always been an incentive..."

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Later you worked with a Swiss Care Team, as well.

Yes, the Care Team was formed after the Luxor massacre in 1997. In 1998 I was directly called into action when the Swiss-air plane crashed near Halifax. And a year later, in 1999, I flew again to Halifax as a crew member. In 2000 there was the crash in Nassenwil. I was also in action then. Since then I have not been called up. If I spoke Spanish, I would probably be in action in Barcelona at the moment. In any case I am on call.

What was your task after the tragic crash of the MD-11?

I speak Italian well, so I was allowed to attend to an Italian couple: They had lost their only son, who had wanted to travel from the US to Switzerland by plane. At the same time you always give human aid to your colleagues as well, since we were all badly affected because the crew of the MD11 had been colleagues of ours, whom we had lost. There was also a huge sea of flowers for the victims at the airport. I did not want them to wilt so quickly, and so I collected vases all over the airport in order to preserve this splendour of flowers for a long time. Also we were in action all the time at the care centre, so we were there if someone felt the need to turn to us.

Why did you fly to Halifax again in 1999?

After a year there was a big mourning ceremony there with all the family members and the entire Swiss Air management. The relatives and I as a crew member flew to Halifax in a jumbo. There was a big memorial. We, the flight attendants, formed a sort

of guard of honour. When the couple from Italy discovered me – they had taken another aircraft to Halifax – they came to me spontaneously and hugged me and would not let me go. This touched me very deeply. It was a moving experience, and it was hard for all of us to keep our composure. It was not until much later that I could afford to recognize my own need to grieve, when a relative died who had been very close to me. That is also the reason why the crash in the French Alps three weeks ago affected me very deeply.

You have always sought challenges where-by you can give something to others, where you can help or support them.

Yes, of course you have to ask yourself time and time again, what is my motivation, why am I doing this? Maybe it has – consciously or unconsciously – something to do with personal recognition.

Why should it not be so?

Yes, why not? On the one hand, there is the recognition that we give to ourselves inwardly, no one knows that about me. That runs in our family. Each of us siblings has a very active personality. This is particularly evident in the case of my brother who first worked for television, then was a member of the National Council and is now in the Zurich City Council. I have the know-how on a humanitarian footing. I have no family and in a sense I am free. Why should I then not involve myself actively with helping others?

After all, this gives quality to life. Another person who is in a similar situation in life opts for something else: he does a lot of travelling, he does this or she does that, but he has not made the decision to support others who are in distress.

This surely has to do with the fact that I have travelled all over the world as a flight attendant. Although you mostly keep to the big cities when you work in this job, but you also see the poverty and misery of the people in Karachi.

Other people see this poverty too, but then they tell themselves, how lucky they are to be able to live in Switzerland.

These people may be afraid, but it's different with me. I do not know fear in this sense. For example, I got my glider license at a young age. I told myself, when I work at a hospital, because of my training I understand some things about medicine. When I travel as a flight attendant, I need to understand something about flying. I could not afford a pilot license for a motorised aeroplane. At the time, my gross monthly salary was Fr. 2800.--. I only just managed to afford the glider license.

Is helping others also something that was alive in your family, as well?

It originated from the time when I came to Switzerland. My father worked with the FAO [Food And Agricultural Organisation]. Maybe, without my realising it, this has a little rubbed off on me. That is quite possible. My father died relatively early, he had multiple sclerosis, and I regret very much that I could not talk with him about all these things. It has always been an incentive in my life to help other people, and this is also an important part of Swiss tradition.

Mrs Leutenegger, thank you very much for this interview!

(Interview Thomas Kaiser)

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The pictures tell us: “We want peace, not war!”

The art exhibition “The sky is burning on the horizon – Art in Eastern Switzerland under the spell of the 2nd World War” at the “Kunstmuseum Thurgau” in the Charthusian Monastery Ittingen

by Urs Knoblauch, culture publicist, Fruthwilen, TG

The beautiful former Carthusian monastery from the 15th century is embedded in the idyllic Thur countryside. In 1977, the buildings, the large garden and the Baroque church were exemplarily refurbished, redeveloped and enlarged under the motto “maintain and revitalize” by the Canton Thurgau to become a cultural center. Until today, the Monastery is still the pride of the Canton. It is home to the Museum, guest houses and seminar rooms along with a large organic farm and a shop as well as a bookbindery and a restaurant in the old mill. “The operating concept is based on monastic values, culture, spirituality, education, care, hospitality and self-sufficiency.” There are more than sixty men and women working in the vineyards, the dairy, in agriculture and forestry and plant nursery.

Art, ethics, human sympathy and humanitarian assistance

The current exhibition in the unique, atmospheric and intimate museum rooms at the Art Museum has borrowed its title from a landscape painting by *Adolf Dietrich*. The artist has captured the intense evening moods at the “Untersee” (a part of Lake Konstanz) in numerous pictures. The 1939-work marked the beginning of the exhibition. A vision, right before the outbreak of war. It shows an almost black sky, on the horizon though a fiery-red sky that seems to be on fire. Thus, the dark, harsh and strained situation of the population in the East of Switzerland during the 2nd World War is intuitively accessible. It is deserving that the “Kunstmuseum Thurgau” largely arranged the exhibition to the major part out of their own large collection. Many pieces of art have been rarely shown to date. Therefore, it was possible to also honour great works of forgotten and underestimated artists. There are mostly painters of realism, who dealt “with the terrible reality of near war” by means of various techniques, each in his own way. An issue that is very up to date! In the individual rooms impressive works and artists are presented thematically, showcases with documents and explanatory text panels show biographical and historical references. The museum director *Markus Landert* writes and explains: “Times of war hit artists hard. Who actually thinks of art, when



Adolf Dietrich, “Abend am See”, 1939, “Kunstmuseum Thurgau”

life and existence are threatened? Even though Switzerland remained untouched during the Second World War, the situation for the population was not easy. Food shortage, refugee flows, but also the uncertain news situation determined everyday life in the country.”

There are pictures by famous artists like *Frans Masereel*, with an extensive and impressive linoleic sequence on the insanity of war. Likewise, we find many excellent works by painters and artists from Eastern Switzerland like *Carl Walter Liner*, *Ernst Graf*, or *Carl Roesch*. Touching photographs by *Hans Baumgartner* about the daily routine of war and by *Theo Frey* with his famous recordings of the “Rütli rapport” with *General Guisan* and the refugee flows through Switzerland. The Swiss population and the Red Cross provided exemplary humanitarian aid. They helped the German war-stricken children and families across the lake. Also, the works of the critical Appenzeller illustrator *Carl Böckli*, known as “Bö”, for the opposition magazine “Nebelspalter”. The monumental 92-part work by *Jakob Greuter* is a discovery. A simple, intelligent and compassionate worker, an “empty out bucketeer”

at the St Gallen garbage collection, as autodidact, independently elaborated and artistically and passionately depicted the whole war situation, based on magazines, photographs, drawings and texts. Even the artist *Hedwig Scherrer*, who with her striking pictures and texts has denounced the “murder industry” (1934–35), is hardly represented in usual exhibitions.

The exhibition is on view until 30 August 2015. The entire museum and the monastery is well worth seeing and in every respect a worthwhile trip. In the basement of the museum an excellent work of concept art by the American artist *Joseph Kosuth* is accessible. In the stone floor, he has enlarged and engraved a page of the former handwritten list of books in the monastery library, which was destroyed during the Reformation.

Information: “Kunstmuseum Thurgau”, Charthusian Monastery Ittingen, CH 8532 Warth

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