

# Current Concerns

The international journal for independent thought, ethical standards, moral responsibility,  
and for the promotion and respect of public international law, human rights and humanitarian law

English Edition of *Zeit-Fragen*

## EU Basics

### Your Guide to the UK Referendum on EU Membership

by Professor Richard A. Werner, D. Phil. (Oxon)

*cc. On 20 June 2016, three days before the British referendum on an exit from the European Union Professor Richard A. Werner published the following text. It is of fundamental significance – before and after the referendum.*

The British people should be clear about just what they will be voting on at the EU referendum this Thursday. What does it actually mean to stay in the EU? What does it mean to exit?

Concerning the second question, the dominant issue in the debate has been the question whether there will be a significant negative economic impact on the UK from exiting the EU. Prime Minister David Cameron, together with the heads of the IMF, the OECD and various EU agencies have given dire warnings that economic growth will drop, the fiscal position will deteriorate, the currency will weaken and UK exports will decline precipitously. George Osborne, the chancellor of the exchequer has threatened to cut pensions if pensioners dare to vote for exit. But what are the facts?

I have been trained in international and monetary economics at the *London School of Economics* and have a doctorate from the University of Oxford in economics. I have studied such issues for several decades. I have also recently tested, using advanced quantitative techniques, the question of the size of impact on GDP from entry to or exit from the EU or the Eurozone. The conclusion is that this makes no difference to economic growth, and everyone who claims the opposite is not guided by the facts. The reason is that economic growth and national income are almost entirely determined by a factor that is decided at home, namely the amount of bank credit created for productive purposes. This has sadly been very small in the UK in recent decades, thus much greater economic growth is possible as soon as steps are taken to boost bank credit for productive purposes – irrespective of whether the UK stays in the EU or not (although Brexit will make it much easier to take such policy steps). We should also remember that a much smaller economy like Norway – thought more depend-

ent on international trade – fared extremely well after its people rejected EU membership in a referendum in 1995 (which happened against the dire warnings and threats from its cross-party elites, most of its media and the united chorus of the heads of international organisations). Besides, Japan, Korea, Taiwan and China never needed EU membership to move from developing economy status to top industrialised nations within about half a century. The argument of dire economic consequences of Brexit is bogus.

#### The “Five Presidents” Report

As for the first question, namely what it means to stay inside the EU, we should consult the EU itself. Happily, the EU released a major official report about its key policies and what it plans to achieve in the near future in October 2015. This report was issued in the names of the “Five Presidents” of the EU. In case you had not been aware that there was even a single, let alone five presidents of the EU, these are: The unelected president of the European Central Bank, *Goldman Sachs* alumnus *Mario Draghi*;

the unelected president of the European Commission, *Jean-Claude Juncker*, the unelected Brussels Commissar and “president of the Eurogroup“, *Jeroen Dijsselbloem*; the “president of the Euro Summit“, *Donald Tusk*; and the president of the European Parliament; *Martin Schulz*. What is the message of this not negligible number of EU presidents concerning the question of where the EU is going? The title of their joint report is a give-away: “The Five President’s (sic) Report: Completing Europe’s Economic and Monetary Union“. ([https://ec.europa.eu/priorities/publications/five-presidents-report-completing-europeseconomic-and-monetary-union\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/priorities/publications/five-presidents-report-completing-europeseconomic-and-monetary-union_en))

The report starts with the frank admission that “with 18 million unemployed in the euro area, a lot more needs to be done to improve economic policies” in the EU.

Well said. But what exactly needs to be done?

“*Europe’s Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) today is like a house that*

continued on page 2



Richard A. Werner  
(picture University  
of Southampton)

*Richard A. Werner* is German economist and Professor for international banking. He obtained his first degree in economics from the London School of Economics with first class honours. His doctoral thesis at the University of Ox-

ford was on monetary economics and economic policy. In 1990, he joined the Graduate School at the University of Tokyo first Shimomura Fellow at the Research Institute for Capital Formation at the Japan Development Bank (now Development Bank of Japan); he was Visiting Researcher at the Institute for Monetary and Economic Studies at the Bank of Japan, and Visiting Scholar at the Institute for Monetary and Fiscal Studies at the Ministry of Finance, Tokyo. Other

working experience in Japan and with the Asian Development Bank. He published his studies on the backgrounds of the Japanese crisis in his book “Princes of the Yen”, which became a no. 1 bestseller in Japan. 2004 he accepted a chair at the university of Southampton, England. There he is currently teaching international banking and he is Director of International Development and founding Director of the Centre for Banking, Finance and Sustainable Development. He is also a member of the Southampton Management School’s Executive Board, as well as its Advisory Board. From 2009 to 2012 Richard Werner was Visiting Professor at House of Finance, Goethe University Frankfurt. Furthermore Richard Werner is the founding chairman of Local First Community Interest Company CIC, which introduces not-for-profit community banks in the UK, following the example set by German savings banks and cooperative banks.

# Europe after the British Referendum

by Karl Müller

First it is time to congratulate and to rejoice: On 23 June 2016, over 17 million British citizens did not allow themselves be intimidated: neither by their Prime Minister *Cameron*, nor by their Chancellor of the Exchequer *Osborne*; nor by *Angela Merkel* and *Sigmar Gabriel*, nor by *François Hollande*; not by *Martin Schulz* and *Jean Claude Juncker*, nor by *Donald Tusk*. Also US President *Obama*, the directors of the IWF and the World Bank have not been able to dissuade them from voting with a majority of almost 52% of the voters and a turnout of over 70% for the exit of their country from the European Union. This is remarkable!

All subsequent attempts to make direct democracy and the people's decision distasteful, are just the expression of a political bankruptcy. Symbol of this bankruptcy is the German Federal President *Gauck* who stated after the British vote, that the current problem was no longer the elites but the populations. Obviously he wanted to avoid speaking of the "peoples".

*Gauck* portrays only one of very many cacophonous public reactions to the British decision which have one thing in common: pretending that the Brits had problematically voted for their doom and the downfall of Europe – instead of doing what would be appropriate: to express them our deep respect for the fact that they are writing history – this time completely peacefully.

It should be considered completely normal, that political questions are discussed controversially and that nothing in politics is without alternative. Deciding between alternatives, which all have their pros and cons, is precisely the gist of politics. This is the essence of democracy. And this is where the citizens need to have the final

say. Otherwise, there would not be a need for elections and ballots, in our modern times only for a supercomputer (over 200 years ago the Greek philosopher *Platon* dreamt of a rule by philosophers) which, fed with all information, would calculate the optimal decision – an absurd, inhuman idea.

It would have been advisable for those responsible in the EU and in Great Britain to be prepared for both possible outcomes of the British referendum, in order to negotiate the consequences after the decision with the necessary calm, prudence and fairness. Instead, what we are now watching reminds more of an absurdist theatre with various roles – and nobody really knows what is being played.

It is safe to assume that EU representatives are making a lot of noise because they want other peoples to be deterred from imitating the British. There are numerous statements along this line.

Unfortunately, it is also safe to assume that not all who have been participating prominently in favour of the Brexiteers, and who are coming to expression again, have only honest motives.

But why is hardly anyone listening to the 17 million anonymous British citizens, who voted for an exit from the EU for their individual reasons?

Here we would strongly recommend not to heed too much what is currently being said or written by prominent people. What we need instead, is the commitment that the British citizens' decision is taken seriously. All responsible politicians should remember their duty: to serve their peoples, their citizens!

This, however, implies to stop all threats, all power games, to pause and to ask the question: What is necessary to

make political decisions in Great Britain and in all other EU states reflect the will of the people again?

For those responsible in the EU and in the United Kingdom this also means that the modalities of the exit are negotiated in a manner doing justice both to the British and all other peoples in the EU. The public service obligation of politics forbids fostering one's own interests at the expense of other people or peoples. The goal should be to find solutions to the benefit of all sides.

If the exit conditions for the British are too favourable, the politicians fear, that other EU countries will follow suit. Therefore, they are treating the Brexit as if it were a crime. If the EU was as attractive as they claim, it would be easy to convince other peoples of membership benefits – and to accept the British decision as well as ensuring that Britain will thrive in the future – also outside the EU. Be honest, EU officials: are you really convinced that the EU is the best for your states and peoples? Or are you hesitating yourself, when confronted openly? Can it be that you know too much – that the EU is serving other interests than those of its peoples?

The current political course against unwanted reactions from citizens towards a wrong politics is the claim that these reactions were the result of populist propaganda. The claim is: the responsible politicians are doing their best and their peoples would be willing to follow them – if it wasn't for these populists. We say: Wouldn't it be better for the politicians to understand their peoples' votes as an assignment, and not, as currently practiced against the British, aggrieved and with threats, but with the highest respect for their peoples' will? •

## "EU Basics"

continued from page 1

*was built over decades but only partially finished. When the storm hit, its walls and roof had to be stabilised quickly. It is now high time to reinforce its foundations and turn it into what EMU was meant to be [...]"*  
*"we will need to take further steps to complete EMU."*

The central planners in Brussels and at the ECB in Frankfurt are not unaware that under their command, a historically unprecedented economic dislocation has taken place in the EU during the past ten years, including massive asset and property bubbles, banking crises and large-

scale unemployment in all the periphery countries – with over 50% youth unemployment in Greece, Spain and Portugal, as well as the lack of any serious controls of the EU external borders to prevent an influx of unparalleled numbers of illegal immigrants and economic migrants.

### Further concentration of power in the EU

However, the EU central planners are in denial about the fact that these problems have been caused entirely by their own misguided and disastrous policies. As a result, they argue that the solution to such problems can only be further concentration of powers into their hands: "We need more Europe", as Mrs *Merkel*

put it (Please read these *Merkel* claims about the EU: <http://www.euractiv.com/section/eu-priorities-2020/news/merkel-calls-for-politicalunion-to-save-the-euro/>). This is what they propose to implement in the coming years, by turning all EU members into one single country.

So the Five Presidents' Report makes clear that the EU is not simply a free trade area. That project had been left behind with the 1992 *Maastricht Treaty* and a very different kind of Europe has become enshrined with the 2007 European Constitution (called "*Lisbon Treaty*", since the people of Europe in several referenda rejected it. (Please read what the au-

continued on page 3

**"EU Basics"**

continued from page 2

thor of the rejected European Constitution says: <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/valeacutery-giscard-destaingthe-eu-treaty-is-the-same-as-the-constitution-398286.html>). Instead, the EU is the project to abandon all national sovereignty and borders within and melt away all European nations that don't succeed in exiting in time, into a merged, joint new single country, with one central European government, centralised European monetary policy, centralised European fiscal policy, centralised European foreign policy, and centralised European regulation, including of financial markets and banking. This United States of Europe, an undemocratic leviathan that the European peoples never wanted, is the culmination of the much repeated mantra of "ever closer union".

**"Implemented steadily and stealthily over several decades"**

This project has been implemented steadily and stealthily over several decades, despite major and consistent policy blunders and scandals involving the central planners (e.g. in 1999 the entire European Commission – the unelected government and cabinet of the European superstate – resigned in disgrace, as it was found to have taken bribes and engaged in fraud, while the EU's own Court of Auditors has repeatedly refused to sign off the EU's official books).

The economics is clear: there is no need to be a member of the EU to thrive economically, and exiting does not have to impact UK economic growth at all. The UK can remain in the European Economic Area, as Norway has done, or simply agree on a trade deal, as Switzerland did, and enjoy free trade – the main intention of European agreements in the eyes of the public. The politics is also clear: the European superstate that has already been formed is not democratic. The so-called "European Parliament", unique among parliaments, cannot propose any legislation at all – laws are all formulated and proposed by the unelected European Commission! As a Russian observer has commented, the European Parliament is a rubberstamping sham, just like the Soviet parliament during the days of the Soviet Union, while the unelected government is the European Commission – the Politbureau replete with its Commissars.

**Financial elite in the background**

Big business and big banks, as well as central bankers and the IMF, constitute the financial elite that is behind this purposeful concentration of power – giving ever more power into the hands of ever

fewer people. The undemocratic nature of EU institutions has reached such an extent that I have heard a recently retired member of the ECB governing council in private confessing that his biggest worry is the undemocratic nature and extent of the ECB's powers, which have increasingly been abused for political ends. These facts have been drowned out by the constant drip of propaganda emanating from the powerful elites behind the creation of the United States of Europe.

**"Strong US support for all this"**

During these years and decades of steady transfers of powers and sovereignty from nation states and their democratically elected assemblies to the unelected Brussels bureaucracy, I had always been puzzled by the apparent strong US support for all this. Whenever the "process" of "ever closer union" seemed to have hit an obstacle, a US president – no matter the post holder's name or party affiliation – would intervene and in no uncertain terms tell the troublesome Europeans to get their act together and speed up unification of Europe into one state. In the naivety of my youth this had struck me as surprising. Likewise, the British public has recently been told by US president *Obama* that dropping out of the EU was not a good idea and they had better vote to stay in.

While it is not surprising that the global elite that has benefitted from the trend towards concentration of power is getting increasingly hysterical in their attempts to cajole the British public into voting to stay inside the EU, it is less clear why the US president and his government should be so keen on the EU project. We had been told in the past by the European media that the concentration of economic and political decision-making in Europe was being engineered in order to create a counterweight against the US dominance. This seemed to motivate some pro-EU voices. Surely the US president must have heard about that?

There is another mystery. Only yesterday, an impressive-looking leaflet was dropped into the letterbox of my Winchester home, entitled "EU Basics – Your Guide to the Referendum". It was issued by an organisation called the "European Movement". The 16-page colour and high gloss booklet argues for Britain to stay in the EU. Who is this "European Movement", and who is funding it? This little-known organisation seems financially powerful enough to drop a high-quality print booklet into every household in the entire UK.

**Covert US-operations since 1945**

The declassification of formerly secret records has solved both mysteries. For as it turns out, they are connected. In the

words of Nottingham University academic *Richard Aldrich*:

*"The use of covert operations for the specific promotion of European unity has attracted little scholarly attention and remains poorly understood. [...] the discreet injection of over three million dollars between 1949 and 1960, mostly from US government sources, was central to efforts to drum up mass support for the Schuman Plan, the European Defence Community and a European Assembly with sovereign powers. This covert contribution never formed less than half the European Movement's budget and, after 1952, probably two-thirds.*

*Simultaneously they sought to undermine the staunch resistance of the British Labour government to federalist ideas... It is also particularly striking that the same small band of senior officials, many of them from the Western [note: this means US] intelligence community, were central in supporting the three most important transnational elite groups emerging in the 1950s: the European Movement, the Bilderberg Group and Jean Monnet's Action Committee for a United States of Europe [ACUE]. Finally, at a time when some British antifederalists saw a continued 'special relationship' with the United States as an alternative to (perhaps even a refuge from) European federalism, it is ironic that some European federalist initiatives should have been sustained with American support."*

There is much more to read in this explosive piece of scholarly research (*Richard J. Aldrich* (1997), "OSS, CIA and European unity: The American committee on United Europe, 1948-60", *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 8(1), pp. 184–227, online at <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09592299708406035#.V2exrU36voo>.)

**Important results of scientific research**

UK journalist and former Brussels correspondent *Ambrose Evans-Pritchard* was the only journalist to report on such academic research findings, in two articles in 2000 and 2007:

*"Declassified American government documents show that the US intelligence community ran a campaign in the Fifties and Sixties to build momentum for a united Europe. [...] US intelligence secretly funded the European Movement, paying over half its budget. Some of Europe's founding fathers were on the US payroll [...]."*

*The documents confirm suspicions voiced at the time that America was working aggressively behind the scenes to push Britain into a European state. Lest we forget, the French had to be dragged*

continued on page 4

**"EU Basics"**

continued from page 3

kicking and screaming to the federalist signing table in the early 1950s. Eisenhower threatened to cut off Marshall aid unless Paris agreed to kiss and make up with Berlin. France's Jean Monnet, the EU's mastermind, was viewed as an American agent – as indeed, he was. Monnet served as Roosevelt's fixer in Europe during the war and orchestrated the failed US effort to stop de Gaulle taking power.

One memorandum, dated July 26, 1950, gives instructions for a campaign to promote a fully fledged European parliament. It is signed by Gen William J. Donovan, head of the American wartime Office of Strategic Services, precursor of the CIA. [...] Washington's main tool for shaping the European agenda was the American Committee for a United Europe, created in 1948. The chairman was Donovan, ostensibly a private lawyer by then. The vice-chairman was Allen Dulles, the CIA director in the Fifties. The board included Walter Bedell Smith, the CIA's first director, and a roster of ex-OSS figures and officials who moved in and out of the CIA. The documents show that ACUE financed the European Movement, the most important federalist organisation in the post-war years. In 1958, for example, it provided 53.5 per cent of the movement's funds. The European Youth Campaign, an arm of the European Movement, was wholly funded and controlled by Washington.

**"Hired hands of the US"**

The leaders of the European Movement – Retinger, the visionary Robert Schuman and the former Belgian prime minister Paul-Henri Spaak – were all treated as hired hands by their American sponsors. The US role was handled as a covert operation. ACUE's funding came from the Ford and Rockefeller foundations as well as business groups with close ties to the US government.

The head of the Ford Foundation, ex-OSS officer Paul Hoffman, doubled as

head of ACUE in the late Fifties. The State Department also played a role. A memo from the European section, dated June 11, 1965, advises the vicepresident of the European Economic Community, Robert Marjolin, to pursue monetary union by stealth.

It recommends suppressing debate until the point at which 'adoption of such proposals would become virtually inescapable'.

Fifty years after the Treaty of Rome, the architects of post-war US policy would be quite pleased, I think, if they were alive today. [...] (excerpted from: Ambrose Evans-Pritchard (2000), "Euro-federalists financed by US spy chiefs", "The Daily Telegraph", 19 September 2000; <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/world-news/europe/1356047/Euro-federalists-financed-by-US-spy-chiefs.html> and Am-

cc. Relating to the EU the term "federal" has a special meaning and implies primarily the delegation of sovereign rights of the nation state to the centre in Bruxelles.

brose Evans-Pritchard (2007), "The scare of a superstate has passed, but do we want to lose the EU altogether?", "The Daily Telegraph", 7 April 2007).

No wonder Mr Evans-Pritchard has now concluded that he will vote for Brexit: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2016/06/12/brexit-vote-is-about-the-supremacy-of-parliament-and-nothing-els/>

**EU – the result of a major US secret service operation**

The revelation that the EU is the result of a major US secret service operation – effectively just yet another secret creature of deception launched by the CIA (taking seat of honour in the hall of infamy that includes false flag operations, invasions, coup-d'etats, and the establishment of organisations such as Al Qaida and ISIS) solves the third mystery, namely how on earth the allegedly democratic European nations could design such an undemocratic, virtually dictatorial struc-

ture. With the EU/United States of Europe the US not only achieves its geo-strategic goals in Europe, but it has also eliminated the role of pesky national parliaments that could on occasion get in the way of US or CIA foreign policy. And another puzzle is solved, namely why the EU had so readily agreed to a US request a few years back that US spy agencies get access to all European emails and telephone calls....

**Abolition of sovereignty and subordination to US-interests**

A vote to stay in the EU thus is a vote to abolish the United Kingdom as a sovereign state and merge it into the undemocratic United States of Europe which the European elites are building under US tutelage. That the European public – and, it seems, even European politicians – have little or no input in key European decisions can be seen from the increasingly aggressive NATO stance against Russia (Brussels-based NATO being the military arm of the EU, which is overtly under direct US control), and the one-sided sanctions against Russia that the US could simply order the Europeans to implement (causing significant losses in incomes and jobs in Europe, while boosting US business interests). Immigration policies are another case in point. If the US had in the past considered the largely homogeneous European populations a source of potential European resistance against its plans for Europe, then the policy to replace them with balkanised failed "melting pots" also makes sense.

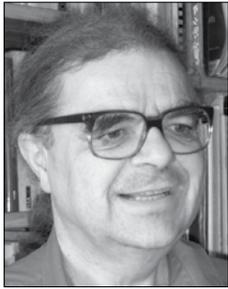
Norway voted in 1995 on EU membership. Leading parties were all in favour. Big business and central banks, major media outlets and the talking heads on TV were frantically bullying and cajoling the Norwegian public to vote "in". The people remained steadfast and voted "out". Norway did splendidly. And so much more will the UK.

• Source: <https://professorwerner.wordpress.com/2016/06/21/eu-basics-your-guide-to-the-uk-referendum-on-eu-membership/>; you can follow Professor Richard Werner on Twitter: @ProfessorWerner

## Enemy Image Russia

**“Current situations can be better understood if the history of the respective developments is explained”**

*Interview with Hannes Hofbauer, Vienna\**



Hannes Hofbauer  
(picture ma)

*cc. In March 2016, the historian and publicist Hannes Hofbauer from Vienna published his new book “Enemy Image Russia. A History of Demonisation” with Promedia Press. The following interview was held on the occasion of his presentation of his book with Current Concerns. A detailed book review will follow in a future issue of Current Concerns.*

*Current Concerns: What prompted you to write your book “Enemy Image Russia”?*  
*Hannes Hofbauer:* I have been concerned with Eastern Europe for some time, especially with the situation in the Eastern Ukraine since the establishment of independent Ukraine in 1991. To my mind, the decisive turning point was in November 2013, when the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement should have been signed at the European Union summit in Vilnius. Rather unexpectedly, Kiev did not sign, probably for reasons of economic rationality, and Brussels ignored this attitude. I thought at the time: this is now no longer just about Ukraine, but the aggressive Western policy is aimed at Russia. Brussels did not accept Yanukovich’s “Nyet”. That was the point at which I thought to myself: Now is the time to look beyond Ukraine, now it is time to reflect about relations between the West – particularly the EU, and later also the United States – and Russia.

*How did you work it out that this reaction was directed against Russia?*

The association agreements were aimed at the Customs union between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine as an associated member. This Western instrument of enlargement, of certain countries’ ac-

cession to the economic and military structures of the EU was diametrically opposed to the project of integration under Russian leadership. This regarded not only Ukraine, but also five other former Soviet republics. Yanukovich himself said he wanted to consider Ukraine as a bridge between East and West and not only lean towards one direction. Brussels did not appreciate this.

*What is your book “Enemy Image Russia” about?*

I looked at the last 20 years in particular, so as to explain why in 2000 and then again later there was this enemy-perception, although during the nineties an entirely different, positive perception of Russia had been prevalent. It is of special interest here that Yeltsin’s policy for the Russian Federation had a destructive function, which meant that privatizations were carried out in a wild fashion. Russia was also fragmented territorially; republics and autonomous regions fought each other. The state was in dissolution. Almost everyone in Russia would share this opinion today, and by now very many people in the West also see things that way. Between 1991 and 1999 Russia was shown in a favourable light in Western Europe and the USA precisely because of this disastrous policy of Yeltsin’s. That changed with Putin’s accession to power, in my opinion, because Putin made it clear at the very beginning of his term of office that he wanted to consolidate the country, both administratively and in regard to the economy. He brought the state back on the scene and tried to tackle the totally wild privatization. So far, however, he has not met with adequate success in this. In the West, Putin’s consolidation was from the outset met with skepticism and later on with resistance up to what we have today – an enemy image history.

*What made you decide to set out the whole history of this enemy image? After all, you begin your book in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the time of the Russian Empire, and continue to the present time.*

This is due to my training as a historian. I am convinced that current situations can be better understood if the history of the respective developments is explained. Insofar it is quite logical to go to the roots of this enemy image Russia to where this has its origins. So in the course of my research I came to the period of the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, the years 1470 to 1480, when Ivan III established the Russian tsardom and cast off



ISBN 978-3-85371-401-0

Tatar domination. On his way to the Baltic Sea, the Czar met with the Teutonic Order and the Polish-Livonian Union. And to accompany this quite geopolitically confrontational situation, Polish and German philosophers were immediately ready to attribute an enemy image to Russia. The Krakow philosopher *Johann von Glogau* then coined the term of the half-Asian, barbaric, dirty Russians, which has kept up as a stereotype over the centuries.

*You said that the privatization of the Yeltsin era in Russia has only been poorly controlled. Does that mean that it has not yet been completed or that the circles that expedite privatization still have a strong impact?*

There is really only one major sector of great importance for Russia, namely the energy sector, in which this wild privatization has been contained, amongst other things, by the arrest of *Mikhail Khodorkovsky* in October 2003, when the Kremlin made it clear that no American capital was to penetrate into this industry. For it was Khodorkovsky’s intention to sell his Yukos concern to Exxon Mobil. This was prevented by his arrest, and today the entire industry is more under state control again. Otherwise Russia is still in much of an oligarchic economy, and you can by no means say that privatization is being driven back. In some areas there are government efforts, for example in infrastructure, but on the whole, the oligarchs continue to have free scope for their activities.

\* Hannes Hofbauer was born in 1955 in Vienna. He is an economic and social historian and works as a journalist and publisher. Numerous publications of his were edited by the Promedia publishing house, among others: “Verordnete Wahrheit, Bestrafte Gesinnung. Rechtsprechung als politisches Instrument” (decreed truth, punished basic convictions, administration of justice as a political instrument) (2011) Slovakia. “Der mühsame Weg nach Westen” (the burdensome way west) together with *David Noack*, 2012. “Die Diktatur des Kapitals. Souveränitätsverlust im postdemokratischen Zeitalter” (The dictatorship of capital. Loss of sovereignty in the post-democratic era) (2014)

**"Enemy Image Russia ..."**

continued from page 5

*Khodorkovsky's arrest was indeed followed by a clearly perceptible change in sentiment towards Russia in the West.*

Yes, quite so. This was unacceptable for America, as it was about the American Exxon Mobil group. The US Vice President at the time, *Dick Cheney*, was himself involved in the negotiations, and Putin personally flew to Washington to signal that a deal of that kind could not be completed without consent on a high political level. The Americans responded in an extremely aggressive way to Khodorkovsky's arrest, and they said that there was no more relying on Russia, as private capital was not protected. Although of course it must be said that foreign capital in strategic sectors is met with suspicion and hostility in any and every country.

*One chapter of your book is about the policy of sanctions against Russia.*

The sanctions were imposed in March 2014 – parallel to the collapse of Ukraine and the ouster of Yanukovich as president, the anti-constitutional takeover of power in Kiev and the inclusion of Crimea in the Russian Federation. The European Union and the US were marching in step. On 6 March 2014, sanctions were adopted against leading personalities who were said to undermine the democratic process in Ukraine – a very arbitrary way of describing what was happening there at the beginning of the Civil War. Shortly after this, in April, the sanctions were extended. Now they no longer affected only people on whom entry bans, account lockouts, and other restrictions were imposed. Now companies and entire indus-

**Italy****Protests against extension of the sanctions against Russia**

Around 10,000 representatives of the agricultural industry protested in the Italian city of Verona yesterday against the controversial extension of the EU sanctions against Russia. Agriculture and Forestry Minister *Maurizio Martina*, the president of the Veneto region, *Luca Zaia*, and *Roberto Moncalvo*, President of Coldiretti association of farmers, were also present.

Source: RT-Deutsch from 1 July 2016

tries were affected. Three industries in particular are faced with Western sanctions: Military goods, products that have a connection with oil and gas production – but not the gas supply itself – and the banking sector. In August of the same year, 2014, Russia responded with counter-sanctions in the agricultural sector. This affects almost exclusively the countries of EU Europe because the Americans have hardly relevant business contacts with Russia.

*Another question concerning the basic principles of your book, about enemy images: In your book you always depict the events as taking place in the geostrategic context of relations between EU and Russia. Must enemy images always be seen as pursuing political goals, as political instruments for geopolitical, strategic objectives?*

Enmities precede enemy images, accompany them in their historical context and prepare the home front for a possible larger confrontation, to express it in a somewhat exaggerated way. That is precisely what is so dangerous in all this, notably

also because the dividing line cuts across Europe. The one force which particularly pursues all this, which has become violent, at least since the Kiev Maidan in February/March 2014, is the United States. The following must be made clear: However economically expansionary these EU Association Agreements were, it is the US policy which is currently playing a game that is very dangerous geopolitically, dangerous also because Washington has little to lose from the sanctions. In the time before the embargo, the volume of trade between Russia and the EU was in the range of 30–40 percent of total exports and imports, while with the USA it is in the range of 2–3 percent. This means that the US-Americans are hardly affected by anything that happens on this level of economic war, and that is why they can be much more aggressive. From this I also conclude that on the US-American side all this is not only directed against Russia, but also against the EU.

*How to counteract this enemy image?*

By means of information and enlightenment, and that will not be in vain, because the media, which carry the enemy image into the households, have been suffering an extreme loss of credibility in recent years. I am speaking of the opinion-forming media here. People are keeping informed in other ways using alternative media. So we see, for example, that the sanctions policy has no positive mass reception in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Anyway not in Switzerland, because it does not participate in the sanctions, and for a start, that is a good sign. The stereotyped enemy image of Russia is less anchored in the populace than in the elites. And even the elites are divided. For example, in Germany there are business circles which see exactly how they are shooting themselves in the foot with the sanctions and therefore reject them.

*How is this stereotype of Russia perceived by the people in Russia itself? Is it known there, do they know what and in which way the Western media write about Russia?*

Absolutely, that is very widely reflected on. In the beginning, that is immediately after the Crimea's joining the Russian Federation, this process was received with a certain amount of incomprehension, because people could not imagine that this could develop into such a crisis. We must not forget that Russia-bashing had started long before, namely in 1999 with the NATO war against Yugoslavia. At that time the relationship between the West and Russia was already aggravated. But at the same time the majority of people in Russia also witnessed how Kosovo was separated from Yugoslavia, and they were against this. Many states have recog-

**New book – Willy Wimmer: The Moscow File**

cc. Since 1 July, the new book by *Willy Wimmer* is available. The back cover states: "A quarter of a century after the end of the Cold War, peace in Europe has begun to crumble again. The NATO – and with it the concurring media – never misses an opportunity to impute an aggressive expansion policy to *Vladimir Putin* and in the same breath to set up its own forces and to perform delicate manoeuvres on the borders with the Russian Federation. In the latest version of its White Paper, the German government classifies Russia even as 'rival' and in terms of threat puts it on the same level as IS.

Willy Wimmer calls for another, namely a partner-like relationship with our Eastern neighbours, and this for many good reasons. Between 1988 and 1992 – at a time in



which the events came thick and fast and government action was almost suspended – in a top position of the Defence Ministry he experienced a form of cooperation with the disintegrating Soviet Union, which can hardly be surpassed in sincerity and constructive character shaping a common 'house of Europe'.

This book bears witness to many voyages and conversations on the eve of the German Reunification, especially regarding the integration of the National People's Army into the German armed forces and also in recent times. However, it also reports the way they tried to ignore or even thwart hopeful developments. 'The Moscow file' also reveals how then stage directions for today's tensions have been commanded." (ISBN 978-3-943007-12-1)

continued on page 7

EU/trade agreements CETA

## UN rights expert warns against bypassing national parliaments



Alfred de Zayas  
(picture ma)

Geneva (24 June 2016) – United Nations human rights expert *Alfred de Zayas* today warned that any plan by the European Union to bypass national parliaments to push through controversial trade deals would vio-

late international human rights norms and standards.

“Trade deals prepared and negotiated in secret, excluding key stakeholders such as labour unions, consumer associ-

ations, health professionals and environmental experts and now parliaments, have zero democratic legitimacy,” said the UN Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order.

Mr de Zayas’s call comes as the European Commission is reportedly preparing to treat the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) deal with Canada as an “EU only” matter which, if adopted, will exclude ratification by every national Parliaments in the EU, according to leaked documents and recent media reports that the Independent Expert discussed with various EU stakeholders.

“In view of the increasing vocal opposition by civil society organizations, a thorough open discussion should be carried out by national parliaments and referenda should be organized in all countries concerned,” Mr de Zayas said. “Disfranchising the public from participating in this important debate is undemocratic and manifests a profound disregard to peoples’ voice”.

An earlier consultation conducted by the European Commission in 2014 resulted in 97% of respondents from across Europe expressing opposition to the inclusion of asymmetrical investment protection in Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the USA. “The same would apply to CETA, but no consultation was ever held,” he noted.

In the light of the European Council on 28–29 June 2016, the expert called on States to respect their human rights obligations. “The human rights treaty regime entails binding obligations that States must observe,” the expert said recalling the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, the *European Convention*

*on Human Rights*, the *European Social Charter*, and the *American Convention on Human Rights*.

“In case of conflict between trade agreements and human rights treaties, it is the latter that prevail,” he stressed. “States must not enter into agreements that delay, circumvent, hinder or make impossible the fulfillment of human rights treaty obligations.”

The Independent Expert noted that it is not for the State to guarantee profits to investors or transnational enterprises, but to legislate and regulate in the public interest. “The State cannot divest itself of this responsibility to act to protect populations under its jurisdiction by adopting precautionary health and environmental measures, by regulating labour standards and by ensuring food security,” he said.

“Trade agreements should only be ratified after human rights, health and environmental impact assessments have been conducted, which has not been the case with regard to CETA and TTIP,” Mr de Zayas said. “Ratification of CETA and TTIP would start a ‘race to the bottom’ in human rights terms and would seriously compromise the regulatory space of states. This is contrary to the Purposes and Principles of the UN Charter and would constitute a serious obstacle to achieving a democratic and equitable international order,” the UN Independent Expert concluded. •

Source: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

### “Enemy Image Russia ...”

continued from page 6

nized Kosovo as an independent country, but others have not; even in the EU there are five countries that do not recognize the statehood of Kosovo. Today the situation is reversed. Russia has incorporated some of the Ukraine, the Crimea – the history of the Crimea would still have to be treated separately – into its own territory, and suddenly we are faced with a major military confrontation. That was almost impossible to understand for the people of Russia why there was such huge international excitement because of this. Interestingly enough, the think tanks in Moscow are very well prepared for this scenario and are openly discussing the consequences of the sanctions. There are some who are more of the opinion that Russia should approach a Eurasian project, and change the idea of an economic area that goes from Lisbon to Vladivostok to an integration area that ranges from Brest Litovsk up to Shanghai. Then there are other institutions which say that Russia could not survive economically without the EU. However, they are – not without justification – afraid the EU may possibly neglect to fulfil their promise of integration, regardless of the sanctions, because the EU has itself reached a crossroads, and it is not clear whether it will exist in its present form any longer.

Thank you, Mr Hofbauer, for this interview. We hope that your book will be widely read.

I thank you. •

(Interview *Eva-Maria Föllmer-Müller*,  
*Erika Vögeli*)

French Prime Minister *Manuel Valls* firmly rejects TTIP. At an event on 26 June he said: “I can tell you frankly, there cannot be a transatlantic treaty agreement.” “This agreement is not on track,” and Valls continued: “If France wants to, it can stop TAFTA [Transatlantic Free Trade Agreement].” The agreement would also quite simply be “bad for our economy,” the French Prime Minister said.

Source: German business news, from 29.6.2016, [www.thelocal.fr](http://www.thelocal.fr), 26.6.2016

\* Prof Dr iur et phil. *Alfred de Zayas* (United States of America) was appointed as the first Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order by the Human Rights Council, effective May 2012. He is currently professor of international law at the Geneva School of Diplomacy. Learn more, log on to: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IntOrder/Pages/IEInternationalorderIndex.aspx>. The Independent Experts are part of what is known as the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. Special Procedures, the largest body of independent experts in the UN Human Rights system, is the general name of the Council’s independent fact-finding and monitoring mechanisms that address either specific country situations or thematic issues in all parts of the world. Special Procedures’ experts work on a voluntary basis; they are not UN staff and do not receive a salary for their work. They are independent from any government or organization and serve in their individual capacity.

**A letter from Ireland****Dear British Friends,**

All Hail to those UK democrats who have made "Project Hope" prevail over "Project Fear" and decided that they want to win back Britain's political independence and national democracy in face of the undemocratic monster that is the European Union.

Let us rejoice at the discomfiture of the Brussels Eurocrats and their acolytes in every EU country [...]

Democrats in the Republic of Ireland should now seek to win back Ireland's independence by following Britain out of the EU and the Eurozone. Leaving the EU is the only legal way in which Ireland can disentangle itself from the disastrous Eurozone, joining which was the biggest mistake ever made by the Irish State.

Ireland does two-thirds of its foreign trade outside the nineteen-member Eurozone: two-thirds of its exports and three quarters of its imports. It is essential that Ireland has a special deal gov-

erning its UK trade, but while it stays in the EU it is Brussels Commission, not an independent Irish Government, that decides the Republic's trade arrangements. In any case those running the present and all foreseeable Irish Governments share the anti-national and undemocratic mind-set of the Eurocrats.

British Labour paid the penalty in yesterday's referendum for failing to stand for British national independence and democracy. If the political Left does not stand for national independence, it is inevitable that the political Right will. This is a lesson that is universally applicable. It is what Ireland's *James Connolly* taught in his writings and by example – the Labour leader who was one of the signatories of Ireland's 1916 Easter Rising proclamation. [Document from 1916 in which the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic proclaimed Ireland's independence from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland]

Ireland's democrats who understand the EU issue will look today with contempt on those politicians [...] who shamefully

lent themselves to the campaign of bullying, lies and fear-mongering against ordinary UK citizens that characterized the "Remain" side in the Brexit referendum.

This world-historical act of rejection of the EU by the British people will encourage democrats in every EU country, whether on the political Right, Left or Centre, to push ahead with their struggle against the anti-democratic and reactionary EU/Eurozone and to seek to replace it with a Europe of independent, democratic and cooperating Nation States. The EU is an out-of-date construct left over from the Cold War. It is inevitable that it will disappear in time, and the sooner the better.

Best wishes from Ireland as you seek to implement yesterday's admirable decision in the period ahead.

*Anthony Coughlan,  
Director of The National Platform  
EU Research and Information Centre,  
24 June 2016*

This Letter was sent on 24 June 2016 to organisations and individuals of the "UK-LEAVE"-side.

## Current Concerns

The international journal for independent thought, ethical standards, moral responsibility, and for the promotion and respect of public international law, human rights and humanitarian law

### Subscribe to Current Concerns – The journal of an independent cooperative

The cooperative *Zeit-Fragen* is a politically and financially independent organisation. All of its members work on a voluntary and honorary basis. The journal does not accept commercial advertisements of any kind and receives no financial support from business organisations. The journal *Current Concerns* is financed exclusively by its subscribers. We warmly recommend our model of free and independent press coverage to other journals.

Annual subscription rate of  
CHF 40,-; Euro 30,-; USD 40,-; GBP 25,-  
for the following countries:

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hongkong, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Qatar, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, USA

Annual subscription rate of  
CHF 20,-; Euro 15,-; USD 20,-; GBP 12,50  
for all other countries.

Please choose one of the following ways of payment:

- send a cheque to *Current Concerns*, P.O. Box, CH-8044 Zurich, or
- send us your credit card details (only *Visa*), or
- pay into one of the following accounts:

CH:	Postscheck-Konto (CHF):	87-644472-4	IBAN CH91 0900 0000 8764 4472 4	BIC POFICHBEXXX
CH:	Postscheck-Konto (Euro):	91-738798-6	IBAN CH83 0900 0000 9173 8798 6	BIC POFICHBEXXX
D:	Volksbank Tübingen, Kto. 67 517 005, BLZ 64190110		IBAN DE12 6419 0110 0067 5170 05	BIC GENODES1TUE
A:	Raiffeisen Landesbank, Kto. 1-05.713.599, BLZ 37000		IBAN AT55 3700 0001 0571 3599	BIC RVVGAT2B

# What has the British referendum to do with the Swiss Regulation of Immigration?

## Current issues of the implementation of Article 121a of the Federal Constitution: Immigration Control

by Dr iur. Marianne Wüthrich

The British sovereign has done a democratic decision. Now interested Europeans expect a factual reporting in the media. Instead, more than 90 per cent of the media – also in Switzerland – are badmouthing with displeasure and bleakest forecasts the 17,410,742 British voters in favour of the withdrawal from the European Union. In Berne President *Johann Schneider-Ammann* appears stony-faced in front of the media and declares that the withdrawal of Britain from the EU could have negative consequences for Switzerland, for example for the economic cycle and the Swiss Franc exchange rate – although he keeps saying at the same time: “It is but pointless to speculate on the specific effects of the British decision.”<sup>1</sup> – He’s really right! Do you remember the No of the Swiss people voting on joining the EEA on 6 December 1992? At that time the worst consequences were forecasted up to a collapse of the Swiss economy, but nothing alike happened. On the contrary: in the ten years before the Bilateral Agreements I with the EU (1.6.2002) came into force, it went very well for Switzerland and the Swiss, even without access to the EU internal market.

Now and again we should remind those Swiss who too eagerly strive for unconditional consensus with the EU headquarters. And it is to wish that the British will not be too much impressed by the cries of naysayers, but begin to find a way on their own. The doors of the EFTA – the United Kingdom was among its founding members in 1960 and left it in 1973 under the pressure of the Big Brother on the other side of the pond, to join the EC – are open in any case.

Back to the media conference in Berne. In reality, Mr Schneider-Ammann wants, with his troubled hints, something completely different. It’s a fact that there is no progress in managing the regulation of immigration the way it’s decided by the Swiss people. So the British referendum is as if on cue for the Federal Council. He uses it as an excuse, as this summer an amicable solution with Brussels will probably not come. Indeed he “continues to be very interested to continue the ongoing talks with the European Union on the implementation of Article 121a of the Federal Constitution.” [...] But it would be clear “that the search for solutions is not getting any easier with the withdrawal of the United Kingdom.”

The attentive citizen remains, however, in the dark, not knowing what these two things have to do with each other. A few people within the tens of thousands of administrative employees and diplomats in Brussels may still have some time to deal with the Swiss matter. Schneider Ammann’s colleague *Didier Burkhalter* does not share his view, by the way, but wants now to “act quickly” in the process to solve the question of the Personal Freedom of Movement. He leaves open, whether it may be possible to find an agreement, but he recalls that Switzerland “is an important export country for the European Union.” (“*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*” from 25.6.2016)

### The wood creaks in the Swiss House

In accordance with the referendum of 9 February 2014 the law which should regulate the Management of Immigration with maximum numbers and quotas as well as the primacy of the Switzerland-based workers when applying for a job, would have to come into force within three years (i.e. up to the 9 February 2017); the *freedom of movement agreement* (FZA) would then to be renegotiated with the EU, if the EU does not agree with the legal regulation of Switzerland.<sup>2</sup>

*Well, the Federal Council’s message to the Parliament with a draft of the necessary amendments to the Aliens Act – based closely on the wording of the Constitution article – is available since 4*

*March 2016. But if Brussels will agree on a safeguard clause setting thresholds and quota for immigration decided by Switzerland (Plan A of the Federal Council) is written in the stars. And plan B, the unilateral decision of the safeguard clause by Switzerland, as well. Because the majority within the Parliament blocks: The parliamentary groups of FDP, CVP and SP don’t want a solution, which is contrary to the freedom of movement agreement with the EU. That is to say bluntly rejecting the literal implementation of Article 121 a BV (Source: “*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*” from 25 June 2016) Thus, they put the bilateral agreements before the Federal Constitution, or the voice of Brussels before the ballot box decisions of their own people.*

It’s a forward pass for Brussels. In addition, since 9 February 2014 single federal councillors and their negotiators commute a lot between Berne and Brussels, to get the verdict by the Commission verified: “Free movement is non-negotiable.”

Not true! As in the agreement is the following Article:

### Article 18 revision

*“If a signatory party wishes a revision of this convention, it submits a proposal to the Joint Committee. The change of this Agreement comes*

continued on page 10

### Immigration from the EU into Switzerland, at the highest level of all Europe

“Currently almost 1.4 million EU citizens are living in Switzerland, while looking at the whole Union 15.3 million EU citizens lived in another member state in 2015. This is all the more remarkable as with its 8 million inhabitants the population of Switzerland is around 60 times smaller than that of the European Union.”

*Federal Councillor Didier Burkhalter at the Assembly of Delegates of the FDP on 25 June 2016, quoted in “Ostschweiz am Sonntag” on 6 June 2016*

### Federal Minister Sigmar Gabriel: Plain text instead of phrases

Chancellor *Angela Merkel* repeated on 24 June 2016 once again the impor-

tance of the EU as a ‘unique community of values. It is our guarantor of peace, prosperity and stability.’

*Source: “*Wiler Zeitung*” of 6 June 2016*

Considerably more realistic and materialistic was the Social Democrat *Sigmar Gabriel* a few months ago: “Where the economic base is becoming fragile, so also the ideological superstructure cannot give support any longer. It was the promise of prosperity that made Europe attractive for everybody and that stimulated the deepening and widening of European integration again and again.”

*Sigmar Gabriel: “Zerfällt Europa? Die Zukunft einer grossen Idee” (Will Europe fall apart? The future of a great idea) in: “*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*” of 15 February 2016*

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

# Switzerland – thoughts about Brexit – Britain’s decision

by Dieter Sprock

*You may think about the Brexit what you want, but once again the EU-wide reactions on the democratic decision of the British people are making clear one thing, (namely) the undemocratic nature of the EU.*

Reminder: After the Second World War, Europe was looking for a postwar order, to choose between a liberal merger of National States with a free trade agreement as defined then by the EFTA, and the United States of Europe favoured by the US, which were already the objective when the *European Economic Community*, the EEC, was founded.

The USA vetoed a European Free Trade Area, which would have left political autonomy to the countries. The way towards the EU was the way to centralization of power in Brussels.

## EU in the service of the financial industry

The “shock waves” having shaken the financial and stock markets the day after the vote and having triggered the “historical decline” of the British pound, are not a natural phenomenon. They are an expression

“What has the British referendum to do ...”  
continued from page 10

*into force upon completion of the respective internal procedures; [...]*”

Rather than to claim this contractual right for Switzerland, our “servants of the people” put themselves on the side of the great power in Brussels. More than clear, that the EU negotiators are not responsive. Why should they, if the contractors submit themselves every cough from Brussels in anticipation? A Swiss negotiator like *Walter Stucki* (who succeeded against heavy caliber like Nazi Germany in the 1930s or the Western allies after the Second World War, because for him the interests and needs of Switzerland stand in the first place) for sure would get more out in Brussels – especially because Switzerland as Federal Councillor Burkhalter has correctly noted, is a by no means negligible trade partner for the EU. •

<sup>1</sup> Point de Presse – Brexit, speech by Swiss President *Johann Schneider-Ammann* from 24.6.2016

<sup>2</sup> Federal Constitution Article 121 a; 9 transitional provision Article 197.92 (new), Article 121a (immigration control) *Tem que omnos dent, sunt ipsa idendi nessesit mo explatum ant, omnimpedis sinvenis maiosap ienderf erferum reptatecae vid maxim iurum quaesque quiduci entiossi ut quassed qui ut eost, aborum faccaes ressinvendae est et, nisquam, si dipietureres quos con pos am, quaspedi occu*

## Europe needs more direct democracy

“The Brexit-chaos did not break out because there was too much direct democracy involved, but because there had been too little previously. The Brexit was a democratic rebellion, perhaps even a kind of democratic self-defense of the forgotten.” [...]

“‘More public accessibility’, is another frequently heard slogan these days, and in Brussels everybody wants to improve information anyway. No objections can be made with regard to this. But more democracy would be even better, and from time to time a referendum – at all levels – would be

best. Direct democracy does not create miracles or wealth automatically, but is instead a very slow machine for creating sustainable compromise. Linked with a strong federalism, it forms a political early warning system that can prevent dam failures like a Brexit. And it ensures a solid grounding of the elites.”

Source: *Martin Beglinger*, “Nach dem Brexit: Mehr Demokratie, jetzt!”, (*After Brexit: More democracy, now!*), “*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*”, *Meinung und Debatte (Opinion and debate)*, 30 June 2016

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

of power struggles among powerful global players – with winners and losers – whose outcome probably no one can predict.

Over all the noise, we should not forget the nature of the EU. The question is not whether you can eat French or Italian cuisine in London, or that English students can study in the rest of Europe and vice versa.

The core of the political union is the so-called single market of 500 million consumers, a financial market created by the financial industry and for the financial industry, where the big capital can circulate freely and may determine politics. Countries wishing to participate in the internal market have to give up their political self-determination to a large extent and to assume the laws of the Brussels Headquarter: EU law takes precedence over national law!

After the NO to the EEA in 2012, Switzerland has secured its participation in the EU internal market by bilateral agreements, and it, too, is increasingly exposed to pressure by the EU. For some time the EU tried to impose an “institutional framework agreement” on Switzerland, forcing Switzerland to automatically take over EU law. The EU is trying to make other agreements with Switzerland depending on this framework agreement.

Already speculations on the accession of England to EFTA are emerging – and be aware – to an EFTA associated with the EEA. Switzerland is the only EFTA member not having joined the EEA. And with good reason!

One can only welcome that – according to the “*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*” of 28 June – the President of the Federal Council, *Schneider Ammann*, assured: “Because of the Brexit decision, Switzerland has no intention to question its opposition to an

EEA accession”. We will take him at his word.

It is also gratifying to observe that the voices are multiplying for encouraging the Federal Council to an unilateral implementation of the referendum against the mass immigration and for asking the Federal Council to not further accept the blackmailing by the EU. •

## Current Concerns

The international journal for independent thought, ethical standards, moral responsibility, and for the promotion and respect of public international law, human rights and humanitarian law

Publisher: Zeit-Fragen Cooperative

Editor: Erika Vögeli

Address: Current Concerns,

P.O. Box, CH-8044 Zurich

Phone: +41 (0)44 350 65 50

Fax: +41 (0)44 350 65 51

E-Mail: [CurrentConcerns@zeit-fragen.ch](mailto:CurrentConcerns@zeit-fragen.ch)

Subscription details:

published regularly electronically as PDF file

Annual subscription rate of

SFr. 40,-, € 30,-, £ 25,-, \$ 40,-

for the following countries:

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hongkong, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Qatar, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, USA

Annual subscription rate of

SFr. 20,-, € 15,-, £ 12,50, \$ 20,-

for all other countries.

Account: Postscheck-Konto: PC 87-644472-4

The editors reserve the right to shorten letters to the editor. Letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of *Current Concerns*.

© 2011. All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.

# SRG does not fulfil its obligations

## The abuse of its monopoly status for political interference as exemplified by Brexit

*There is only one thing that was made abundantly clear by SRF's broadcasts about Brexit: The enormous propaganda campaign that has long deviated from a fair, democratic news coverage.*

RI. Viewed objectively, by Britain's exit from the EU, the Federal Council has gained new and bigger room for negotiations with Brussels about the mass immigration initiative MEI, that now, it should use offensively. Maintaining an independent course of action against the EU, in many respects has become much easier for our country than it was before the British voters' decision. The United Kingdom once again is able to take part in EFTA and thus, economic opportunities for Switzerland could expand. One shouldn't forget that Britain is connected to the Commonwealth.

The British voters' decision to leave an undemocratically run EU, is more than understandable, not least due to:

- “uncontrolled” mass immigration, brought upon by German Chancellor *Angela Merkel's* sole decision-making,
- “uncontrolled” increase of monetary assets by ECB's president and former banker for *Goldman Sachs, Mario Draghi*, with its unforeseeable consequences for the whole of Europe,
- “uncontrolled” negotiations between the EU and the US about TTIP that are predicted to sustainably damage the European economy, should TTIP be put in effect,
- “uncontrolled” EU foreign policy against Russia with unforeseeable con-

sequences for both world peace as well as the economic growth of many countries.

But how did our fee-financed media report on this democratic vote cast by the majority of British voters?

After the publication of the voting results regarding Britain's exit from the EU on 27 June, one maybe could have expected Swiss media to express restrained delight, but at least a sigh of relief. Instead, we were treated with a news reporter from Great Britain, himself on the verge of tears, his report saturated by emotions such as sadness, anger and melancholy in what can hardly be called an informative, much less an objective display (SRF, 27 June). More SRF news coverage from Brussels, London or Berlin all shared the thrust that British voters would have to face the apparently expected negative consequences that, of course, had to have resulted directly from their “misbehaviour”, all on their own. Therein, one could hear the thinly veiled threat not to entertain any similar ideas of an exit from the EU. Supposedly, this was the intention behind a high number of programmes produced by fee-financed Swiss Radio Broadcasting Service that were dumped on the contributors within the days that followed. As a fee-paying consumer of Swiss state media, one could not escape the feeling that the programmes broadcast had been commissioned directly from Brussels or Berlin. Shame on you!

It has become apparent that under euro-philie *Roger de Weck's* leadership, SRG no

longer openly advocates for a EU membership like it used to only a couple of years ago, but that those responsible for the programme have entered a new phase in the process of psychologically manipulating opinions.

This is done by constantly linking factual issues to emotions, certain terms are charged either negatively or positively and subconscious lines of argumentation are being created. A true object lesson on the manipulation of opinions. A good example of this was provided when the British right to self-determination, to decide on immigration into their own country, was linked to the negative term “xenophobia” (*10 vor 10*, 28 June). There are many more examples like this.

It would, however, be the State Media Authority's responsibility to present arguments and opinions openly in order to enable the citizens of a democracy – and even moreso those of a direct democracy – to make objective decisions or to be able to understand political occurrences.

The actual purpose is being neglected in favour of “titty-tainment culture” with the subcutaneous creation of “clusters of a specific opinion” in order to prepare for possible decisions of both domestic and foreign “elites”.

This is not the SRG's job! Not even if other so-called “leading media” decided to dance to the transatlantic drum. On the contrary – now more than ever, this would call for a publicly fee-financed broadcasting company to function as an objective opposite pole. •

Letter to  the Editor

### “If Brexit becomes an instrument”

In order to fully understand the current development regarding the Brexit, one should remember a statement by Professor *A. Stahel* from 2012 (*Current Concerns* No. 30, 16 July 2012). It highlights the long-term geo- and military strategy of the US for the coming decades, subject of the report “Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Defense” on 3 January 2012. According to this report, the USA focused their military efforts on the conflict with China, which seemed to be imminent. Commitment and US troops would be withdrawn from Europe. Nevertheless, the United States wanted to maintain their hegemony for the next hundred years. The strategic pillars in Europe was to prevent the

alliance of Germany and Russia. The UK and France had a central task in here.

By opening a front line in the Ukraine we were able to learn that the United States are deadly serious about this. Regardless of the outcome of the presidential election, it remains strategically essential for the United States to maintain and enhance a threatening position to Russia in Europe. Fragmentation and crises are a possible option in this. Currently the Intermarium forms itself as a belt between Germany and Russia with a separate military structure. The territory of the Intermarium had previously been more or less German economic area.

If Brexit becomes an instrument to inflame European countries against each

other, the US empire could record a victory. Divide and rule is a proven means of domination. If European countries are aware of the overall situation and want to oppose it, they have to maintain neighborly relations more than previously, allow no discord, develop functional forms of cooperation, settle disputes and so on. Small regional crises can escalate, they are suitable as tinder for large disasters. This is to be avoided.

*Dr. N. P. Ammitzboell, Tobel*

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

Pressrelease of the Constitutional Court Austria

## Runoff voting of the Federal President must be repeated completely and all over Austria

The Constitutional Court has ruled that the runoff election of the Federal President must be repeated in its entirety in all of Austria.

The date is to be set by the Federal Government in consultation with the Main Committee of the National Council.

The fourteen judges of the Constitutional Court were intensively engaged in these proceedings during the past few weeks, working almost without interruption both internally and publicly. Within the framework of the proceedings, witnesses were examined in public hearings, which exclusively served the purpose of establishing if the claims made in the challenge of the election corresponded to the facts, since the electoral records presented a different picture.

The fundamental rulings of the Constitutional Court are as follows:

- The possibility of postal voting is not unconstitutional and can therefore remain in effect.
- However, infringements of the law occurred in numerous districts in the implementation of the system of postal voting.

Activities directly related to the counting of votes must be performed by the electoral authority as a collegiate body (i.e. by the chief electoral officer and the assistant electoral officer together). This is required in order to ensure transparency in the establishment of the electoral result.

The mere reference to the possibility of assistant electoral officers being present is not sufficient, nor is it permitted to delegate these tasks in advance to the chief electoral officer.

Auxiliaries who are not members of the electoral authority may support the latter in its tasks, provided they do so in the presence of the collegiate body. By no means must they be allowed to count votes without being supervised.

Opening the postal ballots is a task reserved for the district electoral authority as a collegiate body. This also includes the "slitting open" of postal ballots, since the definitive verification of the postal ballot is no longer possible if the envelope has already been opened by unauthorized persons.

In the absence of assistant electoral officers, auxiliaries are allowed to perform upstream activities, such as pre-sorting of the postal ballots into those to be included in the counting and those to be discarded as invalid for obvious reasons of nullity (e.g. missing signature).

- For the Constitutional Court it is absolutely clear that laws governing an election must be strictly applied. This is to exclude any abuse and manipulation.
- If infringements of the law are of an extent that they may have had an influence on the election result, it is of no relevance if manipulations have actually occurred or not.

In the districts of Innsbruck-Land, Südoststeiermark, Stadt Villach, Villach-Land, Schwaz, Wien-Umgebung, Hermagor, Wolfsberg, Freistadt, Bregenz, Kufstein, Graz-Umgebung, Leibnitz and Reutte the rules governing the implementation of the postal voting system were not complied with. The infringements concern a total of 77,926 postal votes.

The difference in the numbers of votes cast for *Alexander Van der Bellen* and *Norbert Hofer* amounts to 30,863 votes. As the number of votes concerned by the infringements by far exceeds 50% of that difference (15,432 votes), the infringements may have had an influence on the election result.

In the districts of Kitzbühel, Landeck, Hollabrunn, Liezen, Gänserndorf and Vöcklabruck the system of postal voting was implemented in accordance with the rules.

- The infringements of the law in the implementation of the postal voting system necessitate a complete repetition of the runoff election of the Federal President.

The repetition is necessary for the following reasons:

Citizens who have applied for a postal vote can exercise their voting right in various ways: by post, but also personally at their own local polling station, at another polling station in their own district, or at a polling station in a district other than their own.

As a result, the votes counted in the individual districts are mixed.

For example: If someone has applied for a postal vote in Linz, but casts his/her vote personally in Salzburg, this vote counts as a valid vote cast in Salzburg. If the Constitutional Court were to rule that the election has to be repeated in Linz only, the voter can again apply for a postal vote, but may this time use it to cast his/her vote personally at his/her local polling station in Linz. In that case, the voter would have cast two valid votes: the first vote counted in Salzburg (because in this district the election is not repeated and the result remains valid) and the second valid vote counted at the repeat election in Linz.

However, one and the same voter cannot have two votes.

Therefore, a repeat election only for postal voters, or only in individual districts, has to be ruled out.

- The principle of free elections is violated if government bodies (the Ministry of the Interior) transmit information received on the results of the count of votes to the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation (ORF), the Austrian Press Agency (APA), other media or research bodies before the closing of the election, regardless of the conditions required (information "not to be disclosed" before a certain point in time).

The fact that this has been common practice for decades is of no relevance. To date, the Constitutional Court has had no possibility of pronouncing on this issue, as this is the first time that the issue has been raised in an electoral challenge.

In cases relating to elections, as in others, the Constitutional Court is bound by the rule that it is not allowed to act on its own initiative, but can only do so if presented with a specific occasion. This infringement may lead to a situation in which the results of the count and reports thereon are "leaked" and rapidly disseminated, especially via social media. In the case in question, the Austrian Press Agency (APA) sent out a report, hours before the closing of the election, implying that Norbert Hofer was likely to win the election and that a "turnaround" of the result was no longer considered probable.

In view of the close result of the election, reports on the alleged outcome of the election, based on counting results transmitted by official bodies, may have had an influence on the election result.

For this reason as well, the runoff election of the Federal President must be repeated in its entirety in all of Austria.

The Ministry of the Interior has to ensure that such infringements do not occur in the repeat runoff election. Therefore, the practice of transmitting results of the count prior to the closing of the election is to be discontinued.

*Press Release on the proclamation of the decision W16/2016 from 1.7.2016*

*Constitutional Court of Austria ,  
Mag. Christian Neuwirth,  
spokesman of the Constitutional  
Court, 1010 Wien, Freyung 8, Tel  
+43 1 531 22-1006.*

*Twitter: @VfGHSprecher  
christian.neuwirth@vfgh.gv.at  
www.verfassungsgerichtshof.at*

# The significance of the Hippocratic Oath in our time\*

by Josias Mattli<sup>a</sup>, Ursula Knirsch<sup>b</sup>, Raimund Klesse<sup>c</sup>, Sabine Vuilleumier-Koch<sup>d</sup>,  
board members of the Hippocratic Society Switzerland

<sup>a</sup>Dr med, general internist, member of FMH, Val Müstair <sup>b</sup>Dr med, specialist in neurology, member of FMH, Zurich; <sup>c</sup>Dr med, specialist in psychiatry and psychotherapy, member of FMH, Chur; <sup>d</sup>Dr med, specialist in psychiatry and psychotherapy, member of FMH, Greifensee

*The alleged necessity to introduce a new, binding oath has been suggested and a discourse started.<sup>1</sup> It is argued that current problems of medical practice, mainly the phenomenon of economization, call for such a new oath. At the same time attempts have been made to downplay the significance of the Hippocratic oath and to characterize it as irrelevant for our time. The Hippocratic Society Switzerland confirms the unaltered relevance of the Hippocratic oath and explains in this article why that should be the case.*

## The Hippocratic Oath as a “bastion of calm”<sup>2</sup>

For almost 2500 years the Hippocratic oath has been regarded as one of the most important foundations of medical practice. The values which it represents are independent of time and have endured various historical eras of most different kinds. Therefore the oath constitutes an enormous normative power. It is neutral to religion and embodies the central values of medicine. Every practitioner of medicine should know these foundations, take them to heart and act accordingly. That is why we would like to remind our readers of text and meaning of this highly relevant document. (see box).

## The Hippocratic Oath – reliable moral compass for 2500 years

The Hippocratic Oath is a moral self-commitment of the physician. The invocation of the gods underscores seriousness and unconditional validity of the code of conduct. The commitment rests firmly on the principle of “nihil nocere”: to improve the condition of the patient and never cause harm. At the centre lies the prohibition to kill, the unconditional protection of life as the cornerstone of any medical practice. The physician has to be absolutely certain about the question of Reverence for Life, otherwise no relationship of mutual trust can be built with the patient. Another indispensable foundation of this relationship is the clear obligation to keep the medical secret.

The oath obliges the physician to always act with absolute care. He needs

to know his limits and must not act haz- ardously. This is reflected by the promise, never to operate on patients suffering from bladder stones, since this was not part of the medical education in those days. The oath also demands of the physician that he be a role model in his behavior and personal conduct. This included, even then, the prohibition of sexual abuse of the patient. For Hippocrates, the personal relationship between the medical student and his teacher is of utmost importance. The respect and loyalty to the experienced doctor who teaches him the art of medicine and its ethics is compared by Hippocrates to the relationship with one's own parents. The oath views the medical profession as a mission in the sense of a life-long commitment, which should be approached with utmost respect and responsibility.

After this brief summary of the crucial contents of the Hippocratic oath we continue with a broader characterization of the Hippocratic medical conduct, as it is defined by further texts from the Corpus Hippocraticum:<sup>3</sup>

According to Hippocratic teaching the medical practitioner meets his patient as a fellow human being, who interacts with him on equal footing and forms a mutual relationship of trust. Therefore he is more than just a knowledgeable expert, who fulfils his duties by applying the information he has been given, teaches and performs acts and techniques, always doing the right thing in the right time as an expert would. The human being is regarded as more than the sum of highly specialized organs working together. The philosophy which defines him as the un- destructable unity of body, mind and soul goes far beyond that. This is the reason why every illness attacks and concerns the human being not only as physical or mental suffering of some partial entity, but always in the completeness of his existence.

From this insight follows necessarily: Who wants to really help suffering fellow human beings has to approach them in their entirety: embrace their personality in all its dimensions, engaging fully in an I -You relationship. The good doctor throws his own existence in for his profession. He does not just function. His character, his honesty, his good will and his life conduct all turn into healing factors in the process of the patient getting better.



(picture wikimedia)

From this viewpoint of wholeness some fundamental aspects of medical conduct become understandable and explainable:

The medical practitioner serves Life. In the core part of the Hippocratic oath Reverence for Life is rooted as the most important value. In the Greek original phrasing we find a four-fold negation of any kind of killing in this context:

«... οὐ δώσω δὲ οὐδὲ φάρμακον  
οὐδενὶ αἰτηθεὶς θανάσιμον,  
οὐδὲ ὑφηγήσομαι ξυμβουλίην  
τουήνδε ...»<sup>4</sup>

This builds the foundation of the trust in the doctor, which takes for granted that he will under no circumstances harm the patient knowingly – the principle of “nihil nocere”.

All these requirements - that the doctor should lead his life in a trustworthy manner, never put up with injustice, only advance the good without exception, cut the sphere of sexual desire out of his professional life, and finally the absolutely essential necessity never to talk about what had been subject of the conversations at the patient's bed – all these point towards this one aim: the human environment of the therapeutic dialogue should build on the foundational value of trust.

Trust has something to do with dedication, with good-will, empathy and helpfulness, all things the patient is entitled to expect. With Hippocrates he may know for sure: My doctor understands me in a deep

\* This article is a translation of the German original from the “Schweizerische Ärztezeitung”. Their editorial staff did not review the english translation and therefore doesn't take on responsibility for a correct translation of the content.

### "The significance of ..."

continued from page 13

sense, with my whole environment, and all I will encounter with him is good-will. Even if he might inflict pain and not fulfill my wishes – still I will never have to have feelings such as fear in this relationship.

We should never forget one thing with Hippokrates: The relationship of mutual trust is indispensable for the whole endeavor of healing. His aims are not merely practical norms or social time-dependent standards – ethics of medical practice according to Hippokrates aims at the very basic values of human existence. In the historical context the holiness of Life is guaranteed by the powerful relation to the gods beyond time. *Albert Schweitzer* refers to that later in his term "Reverence for Life".<sup>5</sup>

The frightening aspects of the history of medicine in the 20<sup>th</sup> century point to the opposite direction: As soon as human life – understood both in its entirety and as the singular human fate – stops being inviolable for the medical practitioner, as an axiom beyond any discussion, but sub-

jected to the changeable norms of morals – there he enters into the realm of guilt.

What happens in such a case, when the doctor ceases to be dedicated to the Reverence for Life entirely, is that he is burdened with a responsibility and expectations of competence which he can never bear: as a custodian of "worth to live" or "not worth to live", of human resilience, human fate, as a judge over life or death, who on top of that has to enforce his own judgment himself. And whenever physicians, lacking the unconditional reverence for the mystery of life, succumbed to the demands of some political or social ideology they sooner or later crossed the line to being criminal. The following list may exemplify this: race doctrine, eugenics, euthanasia, the judgment of someone being "not worth to live",<sup>6</sup> genocide by means of sterilisation, vivisection, "human guinea pigs" against their will for the sake of scientific progress.<sup>7</sup>

The physician who, on the other hand, takes the basic values of his mission seriously and respects the inviolability of human life beyond any juridical laws and scientific regulations will with Hip-

pokrates not only save his own life from the pressure of guilt, but will become a true trusted guardian for his patients.

### Reconsidering Hippocratic ethics

History is full of circumstances when human foundational values as they are outlined in Natural law and constitute the basis of our democratic states were disrespected. During the world wars it became apparent to a gruesome extent where inhuman medicine might lead to.<sup>7</sup>

Today we have to face utilitarianistic constructions which were developed in an Anglo-American context under the label of bioethics. Again, the inviolability of human life is questioned, again disputable reflections serve as pretext to violate the dignity of individuals for the alleged sake of the many, again economic and ideological aspects are mingled with ethics.

We cannot support the notion of a new, according to professional rules even legally binding oath,<sup>1,8</sup> which would no longer contain the prohibition to kill but through the back-door promote the rules of economics in medicine to the ranks of ethical requirements.

Why should today's generation of medical doctors not reconsider Hippocratic ethics which has served as the ethical foundation of medicine for more than two millennia and fulfill their duties of care and dedication to their patients yet again according to its teachings? •

First published in: Schweizerische Ärztezeitung – Bulletin des Médecins Suisses – Bollettino dei Medici Svizzeri 2016; 97(23): 854–856; Tribune Standpunkt 856

Correspondence to: Hippokratische Gesellschaft Schweiz, c/o Dr med. Raimund Klesse, Wingertweg 3, CH-7215 Fanas, hgs.ch@gmx.ch, [www.hippokrates.ch](http://www.hippokrates.ch)

#### Literature

<sup>1</sup> Giger, M. Ein Eid für heutige Ärztinnen und Ärzte. *Schweizerische Ärztezeitung* 2015; 96(25): 930–4

<sup>2</sup> see also Höffe, O. Philosophische Ethik: Fahne im Wind oder Fels in der Brandung. In: *Schweizerische Ärztezeitung* 2010; 91(32): 1199–202

<sup>3</sup> This text is based on the lecture "Will Hippokrates survive?" by Jakob Gehring and Josias Mattli, presented at the 1. Symposium Medizin und Ethik. Davos 1998

<sup>4</sup> Im Griechischen wird die besondere Bedeutung durch eine vierfache Verneinung hervorgehoben: "Ich werde aber nicht und ganz und gar nicht (und niemandem als (dazu) Gebetener ein todbringendes Mittel geben, und ich werde auch nicht einen solchen Ratschlag vorzeigen". Translation Gehring und Mattli

<sup>5</sup> Schweitzer, A. *Die Ehrfurcht vor dem Leben*. Verlag C. H. Beck 2003.

<sup>6</sup> Binding, K., Hoche, A. *Die Freigabe der Vernichtung lebensunwerten Lebens. Ihr Mass und ihre Form*. Leipzig 1922

<sup>7</sup> see also: Müller-Hill, B. *Tödliche Wissenschaft. Die Aussonderung von Juden, Zigeunern und Geisteskranken 1933–1945*. Reinbek: Rowohlt 1984

<sup>8</sup> Wils, JP. et al. Wir müssen über einen neuen Ärzteeid diskutieren. *Schweizerische Ärztezeitung* 2016; 97(10): 381–3

### Hippokrat Oath

1. I swear by Apollo the physician, and Asclepius, and Hygieia and Panacea and all the gods and goddesses as my witnesses, that, according to my ability and judgement, I will keep this Oath and this contract:
2. To hold him who taught me this art equally dear to me as my parents, to be a partner in life with him, and to fulfill his needs when required; to look upon his offspring as equals to my own siblings, and to teach them this art, if they shall wish to learn it, without fee or contract; and that by the set rules, lectures, and every other mode of instruction, I will impart a knowledge of the art to my own sons, and those of my teachers, and to students bound by this contract and having sworn this Oath to the law of medicine, but to no others.
3. I will use those dietary regimens which will benefit my patients according to my greatest ability and judgement, and I will do no harm or injustice to them.
4. I will not give a lethal drug to anyone if I am asked, nor will I advise such a plan; and similarly I will not give a woman a pessary to cause an abortion.
5. In purity and according to divine law will I carry out my life and my art.
6. I will not use the knife, even upon those suffering from stones, but I will leave this to those who are trained in this craft.
7. Into whatever homes I go, I will enter them for the benefit of the sick, avoiding any voluntary act of impropriety or corruption, including the seduction of women or men, whether they are free men or slaves.
8. Whatever I see or hear in the lives of my patients, whether in connection with my professional practice or not, which ought not to be spoken of outside, I will keep secret, as considering all such things to be private.
9. So long as I maintain this Oath faithfully and without corruption, may it be granted to me to partake of life fully and the practice of my art, gaining the respect of all men for all time. However, should I transgress this Oath and violate it, may the opposite be my fate.

(Translation by Michael North)

(Translation Current Concerns)

# The tapping of the St. Moritz fountain – the oldest wooden building in Europe

## The old lady's unfinished odyssey

by Heini Hofmann

In spring of the year 1411 BC, which is more than 200 years prior to Moses and his people abandoning Egypt, respectively 700 years prior to the foundation of Rome, original inhabitants of the Engadine built a fountain tapping which is of special interest again today.

Not only is it the oldest wooden building in Europe, but it is one of the most important alpine prehistoric finds, as it contained the earliest known, highest situated mineral spring in Europe, which would later catapult the small farming settlement of San Murezzan right up so as to become the prestigious global village of St. Moritz.

### In the beginning was the water

So the Upper Engadine skiing eldorado and summer tourism paradise of today became famous thanks to the healing spring water. Hotels and sports were after-effects.

But as later on the sole focus was placed upon sports, the once world-renowned spa tradition has fallen into oblivion. Today, one is hardly any longer aware of this former pacemaker. This is clearly shown in an official village talk given on "St. Moritz – then and now". Water as the primary promoter was not even mentioned.

And it is hardly comprehensible that St. Moritz has years ago surrendered nothing less than its central element to a Russian investor, whose name is not laid open. This concerns the entire spa area together with the famous *St. Mauritius Fountain*, which former crowned heads



The "Versailles of the Alps" heyday: from left Paracelsus-pump room (in the background French church), baths buildings, old kurhaus with Mauritius spring, new kurhaus and Grand Hôtel des Bains, in the foreground the spa park with fountain and Villa Inn.

used to pilgrim to. For now, precisely when tourism is stagnating and additional economic mainstays are urgently needed, a modern revival of the medical water spa would be indicated so as to reactivate that tourism sector which once ensured the leading role for the place in all of Europe, not for 150 years like with winter sports, but for almost three and a half thousand years! There is no other health resort in the world with a tradition reaching even roughly as far as that.

### Crests and troughs of water waves

But the chronicle of this source has always been a continual roller-coaster of light and shadow. It experienced heydays of healing water use as well as total neglect, but fortunately also repeated rescue at the last minute by farsighted persons. It became world famous in the Middle Ages, first when Medici Pope *Leo X* organized processions to the well, and then when *Paracelsus*, the greatest physician of his century, praised this acidulous spring as the best in Europe. As early as in the 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> century a massive flow of spa patients set in. Finally, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, St. Moritz soared to become an internationally famous health resort with a Belle Epoque hotel boom and a sophisticated spa clientele.

Deep economic wave troughs were caused by the two world wars and in the end by the fact that the spa tradition was neglected and facilities became obsolete because of a partial preference for sports. The world famous Mauritius source, which is the only one still active today, is lead-

ing a sad, locked up, and incarcerated existence. Ten years ago experts already pointed out its technically precarious condition. The Paracelsus fountain is buried, the Surpunt source is closed and currently the health spa, the last active witness of the once glorious spa tradition, is at risk.

### History as an obligation

The odyssey of the tapping of the Mauritius source is truly a symbol for the overall development of the concept of the spa. In 1853, on the occasion of a reconstruction of the St. Mauritius fountain, one came across the wooden original version of the tapping of this highest mineral source created by original inhabitants of the Engadine. It consisted of two hollowed larch trunks, surrounded by two wooden boxes, which consisted of a plank construction inside and a log construction outside. First this was just cleaned up. Only when the spring was newly rimmed in 1907 the entire construction was lifted. At that time Professor *J. Heierli* estimated it correctly as stemming from the Bronze Age. But from then on this spring rim led a down-trodden existence in the basement of the Engadine Museum.

In 1995, the Archaeological Service Grisons started a first and in 1998 a successful second attempt at dating it (using dendrochronology and the C14 method). The result was amazing, 1466 BC! Therefore this almost 3,500 years old tapping of a spring is a very special histor-

continued on page 16

### Water – the mistaken Engadine natural resource

Water is increasingly becoming a global issue and is now even decisive for the preservation of world peace. While others have to fight for the "right to water", nature has blessed the Engadin abundantly with it.

The high Alpine valley owes its beauty last not least to the liquid gold in all its different states of aggregation, as water, snow, firn and ice. And, it has become famous thanks to its spas; they are the ones who laid the foundations for the touristic high.

That is an obligation! The Engadine as "Europe's water castle" and springwaterblessed "Terra sana" has to get conscious of this asset again. On the one hand, to benefit itself, but also, richly endowed, to take responsibility for this precious natural resource.

### "The tapping of the ..."

continued from page 15

ic building, namely the oldest and best preserved prehistoric building made of wood in the whole of Europe! This creates an obligation, and so it was decided to put this treasure on exhibition in the restored *Forum Paracelsus*. For at the Mauritius source, where it actually belongs, it would have ended up imprisoned underground again ...

### Putting the cart before the horse

But first one wanted to provide it with a facelift. For this purpose the old lady went on a long journey from St. Moritz to the Swiss National Museum collection centre in Affoltern am Albis in 2013, accompanied by a young lady, the archeologist *Monika Oberhänkli*. As part of her master's thesis she carefully examined the 117 wooden pieces from a variety of angles, including the creation of a 3D model and a renewed exact age determination. And behold, the old lady, now dated at 1411 BC, became 55 years younger .... In June 2014, it returned to St. Moritz and found its temporary abode in the renovated *Forum Paracelsus*.

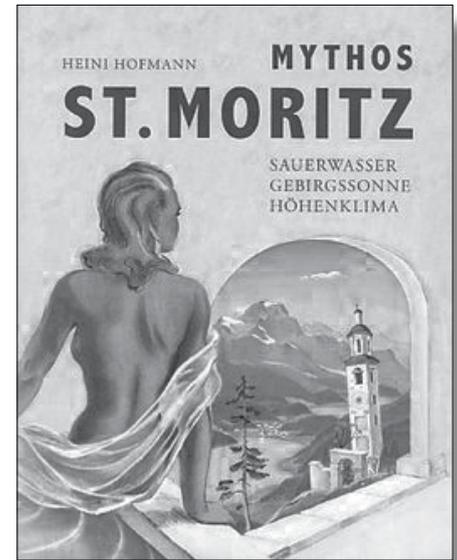
This is gratifying, but it is not enough for revitalisation. While two historic witnesses, the former Paracelsus drinking hall and the Bronze Age tapping of the Mauritius spring, already shine in new glamour, the two still active main protagonists of the St. Moritz spa tradition, the Mauritius Source and the spa, are still waiting for their revival. So the carriage is put before the parade horse of the St. Moritz spa tourism, and this is not enough to move

on with the success story. This opportunity has yet to be seized. The fact is that, parallel to the demographic trend (increasing average age), health and wellness tourism are growing and are also more crisis-proof than holiday and sports tourism.

### Lack of a master plan

The current problem throughout the spa theme is self-explanatory. A functioning spa system is based on a necessarily connected of source, medical wellness and spa hotel, because guests want to board on the spot. But this is exactly what does not work anymore, as the original *Grandhôtel des Bains* (today's *Hotel Kempinski*) has – fortunately for St. Moritz - developed into a five-star luxury hotel, but because of this, however, does not fit together with the spa any longer, notwithstanding that they formerly used to be Siamese twins. It seems to be somewhat tragicomical that underground, source engineers are striving to achieve a clean separation of groundwater and spring water and above ground, champagne and mineral water come too close to each other ...

What ought to be done? The locked up Mauritius source ought to be fairy kissed from its sleeping beauty existence and turned back into a main sightseeing attraction for tourists and locals alike. This would entail that the restored spring enclosure would be allowed to end its odyssey at its original place. Indeed the source mainly became famous because of the stunning aha-moment you have while you enjoy drinking directly from the source. Because it is supersaturated carbonic acid water, it sparkles even more extremely than champagne when you drink it di-



ISBN 978-3-907067-44-4

rectly from the source. However, this effect falls flat when drinking fountains with long water feed lines are used.

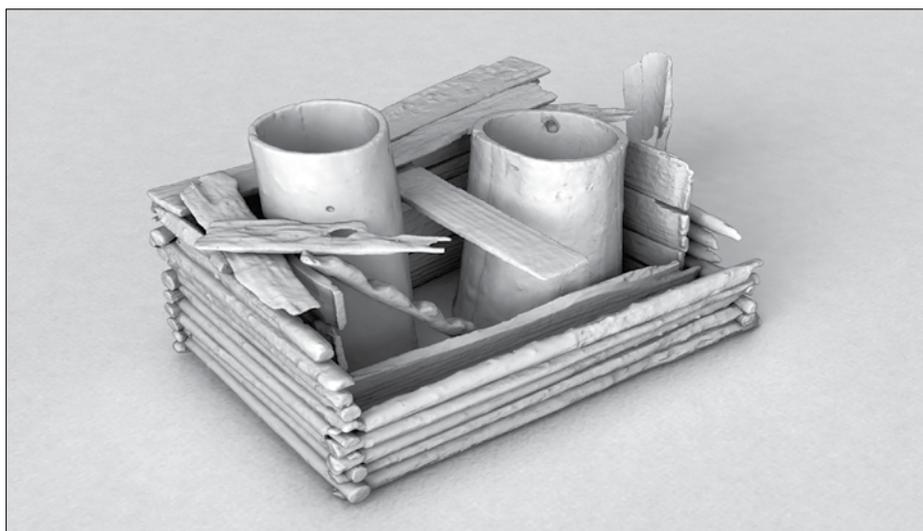
### Hope is the last to die

Also the health spa directly above or at the source which is fed by this would necessarily have to be modernized and expanded into a medical competence center with broad support (exploitation of synergy effects that are already threatened with being frittered away). Should the Grand Hôtel des Bains not decide to go along, a spa hotel would have to make up the necessary trilogy. Moreover, a clever grouping of the buildings in accordance with the original concept might allow the park belonging to the baths to gain in size again.

Although concrete ideas do exist and the inhabitants signaled great interest at an event, all efforts in this direction have failed up to now, however, due to a lack of overall concept stemming from the fact that the community no longer has the final word on the baths area. Therefore, many locals and newcomers are wondering whether the Russian investor who so obviously has a great flair for St. Moritz, does understand about the historical context and is informed of today's opportunity for a modern revival of the former «Versailles of the Alps». Who's to say? The Russian soul is well known for its great flair for history and culture. •

Images from the book: Hofmann, Heini. *Mythos St. Moritz. Sauerwasser – Gebirgssonne – Höhenklima*. (The Myth of St. Moritz. Acid Water - Mountain Sun - Mountain Climate) by Heini Hoffmann. Montabella-Verlag, St. Moritz, 2014.

(Translation *Current Concerns*)



The 3D-model of the Mauritius tapping of 1411 BC: two hollow larch trunks and two wooden boxes, inside planks construction and outside log construction. The wooden staircase served for descent while cleaning, the boards for covering and going across.