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Sozial- und Kulturanthropologisches  
Kompetenzzentrum und Vernetzungsbüro  
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## The European Spring Water Conference, November 2008 in Vienna



The central topic of the European Spring Water Conference is the human being as "Aqua Anthropos" and the connection to water as an elixir from an anthropological, social, medical and natural scientific point of view. The combination of the Latin word for water (Aqua) and the Greek word for human being (Anthropos) as well reflects the cultural background of spring water in Europe which is not only significant for society as natural good but also as cultural good. Various international scientists of the said disciplines will present their most recent research on the topic and thereby reveal the interdisciplinary interfaces.

Water as a very scarce resource has a recurrent potential for conflict from a social, economic and cultural point of view. Potable water on the earth's surface is a precious good which is at risk in many regions of the world because of human and climatic influences, and is becoming therefore a rare resource. Desertification, pollution and the unsustainable management with ground and running water in the industrial agriculture as well as in various industrial complexes, lead at the same time

to a higher capitalization of natural drinking water resources. Due to global warming the greatest drinking water resources on the earth's surface which are saved in the poles and glaciers, will get decimated. In view of this set of problems, the underground drinking water resources become highly important for the future water supply and thus for the future of mankind.

In Europe we are lucky to have an abundance of active underground drinking water resources providing, the Alp regions in particular, fabulous wealth and great cultural heritage. History has shown that cultural events concerning spring water have occurred in Celtic, Greek and Roman times, and were celebrated by the earliest European inhabitants. They are therefore a unifying element of many European countries, myths and religions. The cultural influence of springs and spring water on the European society is complex and still visible today: in the city's architecture (i.e. some of the oldest church buildings in Europe were built next to or directly above springs), in the bathing culture and in the consciousness for hygiene, in religious practices as well as in social ideals and traditions.

Within the EU Austria is one of the richest countries in respect to spring water resources. Vienna, the capital city, world famous for its mountain spring water from urban taps, will be the venue for the European Spring Water Conference, held on the 3rd and 4th of November 2008. In its urban chronicle the city reveals also a direct connection to thermal and spring water sources, as well as social events in case of springs in the suburban area. Beethoven, for example, went to the bath with sulphur springs at Döbling, a district of Vienna, in 1803 for recreation, and at the beginning of the 20th century the so called "Agnesbründl" at Hermannskogel called for thousands of visitors. The increasing interest in Austrian spring water nowadays, is revealing for instance in the so called wellness boom of the thermal springs regions, or in the international economic interest in Austrian mineral water companies and spring water areas. Rightly, Austria is presenting itself at the Expo world exhibition 2008 in Zaragoza as a country, proud of it's abundance of water.

In a two-day symposium, the European Spring Water Conference combines various heterogeneous views and gives an access to the topic of potable and spring water in theory and practice: social and cultural anthropologists, natural scientists, economists and humanists work in the field of drinking and spring water in Europe, combining their experiences from various areas of expertise regarding the global and local water situation, the maintenance of clean drinking and running water, the effect of agriculture on the social culture, while concentrating on the connection between man and water as an elixir. The target audience of the Conference will be interested listeners, stakeholders from the Austrian water sector and the invited audience of the established anthropological Network MASN ([www.movinganthropology.org](http://www.movinganthropology.org)) that counts with more than 1200 members from 60 different countries.

The aim of the European Spring Water Conference is to underline the essential connection between man and the life resource water by an interdisciplinary approach, as well as to raise the issue of the European spring and drinking water resources in terms of drinking water supply in Europe and the State and Union responsibilities. In this context, beside other relevant research focuses, we will deal with the scientific awareness of the particular compound of hydrogen and oxygen and the high social significance of spring water and drinking water resources, as well as the European spring water culture. We will focus on the achievements of international and particularly of Austrian scientists to mediate an advanced knowledge on water as a vital resource. Within the expertise groups we will also discuss possible improvements regarding the global water situation and the water supply, as well as strategies for the maintenance of the cleanliness of our European spring water resorts.



In their papers, the speakers will refer mainly to their own research data from various scientific disciplines which will be collected qualitatively in the course of the conference. Ethnographic field research, chemical and medical analytical methods, visual data collection and historical processing are part of the methodical approaches. An exhibition on the topic "Aqua Anthropos" will at the same time presenting the artistic examination of this topic at the conference.

The European Spring Water Conference enjoys the patronage of the Austrian Commission for UNESCO.



**Österreichische UNESCO-Kommission**  
Austrian Commission for UNESCO  
Commission Autrichienne pour l'UNESCO

**Venue of the symposium:** The Schönbrunn Palace conference centre

The scientific output of the European Spring Water Conference will be collected and published in occasion of the Cultural Festival for Spring Water in June 2009.

Agenda:

3rd and 4th of November 2008:

European Spring Water Conference in Vienna:

Interdisciplinary interface in the drinking water sector

1<sup>st</sup> day: water = life = culture

Cultural heritage and today's use. Cultural and humanistic significance of springs and spring water.

Water protection and the uniqueness of certain water resources.

Gender, participation and water supply

Monitoring springs/wells- Hydrographic Service in Austria

Breaking new grounds in handling water resources

Water and cultural landscapes in Europe

2<sup>nd</sup> day: The elixir of the human body

Social developments and the connection to ecological changes

Vienna Waterworks as best practice example

The future of global drinking water projects and the European contribution

Elements of mediation and international right on water

Effects of the privatization in the water sector

Health and water - Spring water in medical science

The European Spring Water Conference is supported by:

Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Forschung (BMWF), City Council of Vienna- Culture, Magistratsabteilung MA 7, Vienna Waterworks, Generali insurance AG, and others.

Lecturers:

**Claudia von Braunmühl, Prof. PhD.** born in 1944, studied political sciences at the Otto-Suhr-Institute of the Free University of Berlin. In 1973 she celebrated the doctoral conferral at the J.W.G. University of Frankfurt, since 1996 she is an adjunct professor for international politics in the area of politics and social sciences. Main working areas: theory of development, politics of development, feminist theory, Gender Mainstreaming, political theory of dimensions of Global Governance. Papers in the following fields: International Politics/ Globalization, Global Governance, development strategies and development cooperation, civil society, women/gender relations in the development process, Gender Mainstreaming, gender dimensions of violently carried on conflicts.

**Jutta Eybl, MSc** studied civil engineering at the Vienna University of Technology and since 2000 she has been working at the department for the water budget of the Federal Ministry for agriculture and forestry, environment and water management (Ministry of Life). The main task of the department is the investigation on the hydrological cycle in Austria. Since 2003 Mrs. Eybl is responsible for the spring monitoring network of the hydrographical service. In 2005 she was chair of the congress entitled "10 years of spring observation in the hydrographical service" which was organized by the Ministry of Life together with the Austrian Water and Waste Management Association (ÖWAV). She was also the responsible editor of the corresponding paper "Spring observation at the hydrographical service in Austria". At the moment she works on a guideline of the hydrological service for the establishment and the observation of spring control points.

**Willibald Loiskandl, Univ. Prof. PhD. MSc** Head of Institute of Hydraulics and Rural Water Management, BOKU-University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences. In 1984 he graduated in cultural engineering and water management. He later worked at the department for water management in the section for Hydraulics and Soil Physics. In 1988 he celebrated his doctoral conferral at the University for Soil Science in Vienna. Since then he has been working at the department for hydraulics and country oriented water management. Postgraduate studies: International Course in

Hydraulic Engineering, graduated in 1989 with a post-graduate diploma in Hydraulic Engineering, IHE Delft, Netherlands, Short course on Stochastical and Geostatistical Analysis in Groundwater Modelling, IHE Delft, Netherlands, 1992. Research focus: research on soil parameters, simulation of transport of water and substances in unsaturated soil and hydraulic pilot projects.

**Hans Sailer, Msc** is head of the water works in Vienna (MA 31). He graduated in civil engineering and worked in the private sector until 1980. Since then he has been working in the water works. In 1989, Mr. Sailer (MSc) became head of the first Viennese pipes with mountain spring water, and in 1998 he became a representative of the manager board of the Viennese water works. Under the management of Mr. Sailer a completely new concept for the construction of water containers has been developed which is not only saving costs but having also some clear safety advantages. Mr. Sailer is lobbying for the public management of water supply and is very critical concerning the privatization of the water sector. He is President of the Austrian National Committee of IWA (International Water Association) and President of the IAWD (International Association of Water Supply Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area).

**Wolfgang Marktl, Univ. Prof. Dr.** works at the Institute for Medical Physiology in Vienna and at the same time he is the president of GAMED (The Vienna International Academy for Integrated Medicine). He published the book entitled „ Water: Cure - Elixir - Information Carrier, in 2007, Verlagshaus der Ärzte GmbH (editor's house); Vienna.

**Marco Bischof, M.A.** is a freelance scientist, author in sciences and consultant in various areas on the frontiers of humanities and natural sciences. He studied ethnology and theology in Zurich and is a specialist in all borderland sciences connected to humanities and natural sciences which he is examining and documenting for years. Marco Bischof is a member of the board of the Institute of Biophysics in Neuss where he was managing director in 1994 -95. He is also a member of the German Association for Space Energy. Since 2000 he is a member of the board of the German transpersonal society. Furthermore he is a member of the scientific advisory board of the inter-academic course of studies for complementary, psychosocial and integrative health promotion (Graz, Austria), of the Editorial Board of the Russian paper „Consciousness and Physical reality“, St. Petersburg, Russia and the Scientific Advisory Board of the Monterey Institute for the Study of Alternative Healing Arts (Carmel, California, USA).

**Manfred Kremser, Univ. Prof. PhD.** Ethnologist and researcher of the human consciousness. He teaches at the Department of Cultural and Social Anthropology at the University of Vienna. He is President of the Austrian Association of parapsychologists and other borderland sciences. He used to be president of the Austrian ethnomedical society, Chairman of the Association of Intercultural Work, Vice President of the Interdisciplinary Society for Caribbean Studies, theater ethnology, etc. He specializes on ethnological research in theology and human consciousness, therapeutic rituals, shamanic sciences, trance technologies, esthetics of cures with rituals, symbolism of water and water rituals, binary oracle systems & cyber anthropology. Since 1972 he has done ethnographic field research in Africa (Azande, Bambara), India (Bhil), in the Caribbean Region (St. Lucia, Cuba) and in cyberspace. His most recent project deals with traditional and globalized knowledge about cures in the Pannonian spa area. He is the author of more than 77 papers, and publisher of the ethnomedical health guidebook : "Selbtheilungskräfte: Die Quelle zur Stärkung und Heilung im eigenen Ich". (Self healing capacities: The origin for strength and the cure of the Self.)

**Ottmar Grober:** Until 1977 he was construction management assistant and operation instructor for environmental techniques in Western Europe. By entering into the service of the region of Styria as master of craftsmen of waters at the construction management of the district Bruck/Mur he started his research activity in the area of sustainable hydraulic engineering protection in accordance with nature. Since 1989 he has been working on a project for the practical realization of natural energetic maintenance and revitalization measures of waters according to ideas of Viktor Schauberg. Ottmar Grober was awarded the environmental price of Styria in 2001.

**Nikolaus Ludwiczek, M.A.,** studied economic sciences at the University of Economics and Business in Vienna and graduated in 2005. The title of his final thesis was: "Profit without competing markets: The integration of the local water supply in a financially dominated accumulation process as exemplified by Austria". Since then he is working as a scientist on relevant research topics whereas the focus lies on the functionality of commodification in the water sector.

**Andreas Gmeiner, M.A.** studied Social and Cultural Anthropology combined with International Development, African Studies as well as cultural and humanistic history and is a collaborator of the Association MASN-Austria (Moving Anthropology Social Network). For ten years he has been engaged in the research and the use of the power in ocean waves on an international scale. Since 2003 he has devoted his work to the

social value and the cultural influence of spring water in Europe. His thesis entitled: "Land der Berge, Land des Wassers" was published in 2006 containing the following topics: the bathing culture in Europe and the „Wellness-phenomenon“; water and water management in the European mythology and it's relevance in today's social culture; water as religiously conjunctive element; spring water worship in the European cultural history, the value of- and connection to spring water in Austria with the help of individual field research. He is the organizer of the spring water conference.

**Jörg Schaubberger.** M.A. studied mathematics, physics and chemistry, and is the grandson of the famous water researcher Viktor Schaubberger, who is known as precursor and visionary in the area of observation and economic utilization of water dynamics. He is carrying on and documenting his grandfather's heritage in publications and is distributing them via the Schaubberger editor's house, Bad Ischl.

**Yehl Rieder, MD** works as practitioner in Augsburg since 1969. Since various years he is dedicating himself intently to the research on therapy methods using spring water from European springs that have positive effects on the clinical picture of the patient. Together with Enza Maria Ciccolo, MD he tries to advance the so called light water therapy. In his presentation he focuses on the results of the research regarding the quality characteristics of particular springs in Europe and the potential of practical application possibilities of this water.

**Dr. Ing. Alfred Walter Strigl**, born in 1966, Ph.D. in Biochemistry at the University of Technology, Graz. He works at the Austrian Institute for Sustainable Development in Vienna since 1998 and teaches sustainable development as Assistant Professor at the University. Dr. Strigl is founding member of the Sustainable Europe Research Institute (SERI), and President of the European Association for Sustainable Development (ESD).

**Christian Felber M.A.**, publicist and author. , founding member of Attac Austria and used to be in the board of directors till 2003. Since 2004 he is spokesperson for the organization. Current Bestsellers: „50 Vorschläge für eine gerechtere Welt“ (50 approaches of an even-handed world) and „Neue Werte der Wirtschaft“ (New values in economy). From 2008 on he is a reader at the University of Economics, Vienna.

Possibly also:

Laurence Graff is team member of Stavros Dimas, Commissioner for Environment of the European Union. Her areas of expertise are chemicals, health and city areas, water and sea environment, energy and environment, consumer protection and corporate policy.

Hans Schattauer, is principal water and sanitation specialist for the African Development Bank and water expert of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA). He has more than ten years of experience in Water Supply, Ecological Sanitation and Renewable Energies. He works for AWF (African Water Facility) as technical assistant since 2005, seconded by the Austrian Development Agency, and is mainly in charge of projects piloting new ideas and technologies in WS&S.

Further lecturers will still be announced. Subject to modifications.