

"We are the state. Why it is not enough to be the people" (in Brussels Nov.8, 2014)

Daniela Dahn - 29/10/2014

The "Franck Biancheri Network," Friends of Franck Biancheri (AAFB) will meet in a "mid-term meeting" on Saturday, November 8 in Brussels. Daniela Dahn will take part as one of our guest speakers on the public event organised in the afternoon: "Europe 1989-2014 : From One Wall to Another".



Daniela Dahn is working since 1981 as a freelance writer and journalist in Berlin (East). During the "Wendezeit" (transition time of East Germany) she co-founded the citizens' movement "Demokratischer Aufbruch" (Democratic Awakening) and worked actively in other committees and bodies. Later she critically analyzed the methods of German unification with her essay volumes. The most recent publication was last year "Wir sind der Staat. Warum Volk sein nicht genügt." (We are the state. Why it is not enough to be the people.)

There she describes the fact that the actually existing democracy, whether in the nation-states or the EU, is in a crisis as is the financial sector. When philosophers or political scientists speak of post-democracy or of simulated democracy, not even politicians disagree nowadays. We have an order in which the alleged sovereign has hardly anything to say any more.

The small voice of voters is too weak to be heard and to make a difference. Election promises are not met and voters have no influence on critical issues like EU treaty, war and peace or banking supervision. Therefore "Wutbürger" (angry citizens) and "Mutbürger" (courageous citizens) appeared. But the system shakes off everything.

This order with its lobbyist parliamentary democracy is not able to curb the excesses of capitalism. It is structurally incapable of preventing the primacy of the economy. The decisive political conflict in the party system is not between left and right, but between national or European Parliament and the peoples, who have lost their power to their representatives.

This so-called democracy suffers from legal problems, which date back to ancient Rome and from the later monarchy. Like the Roman Law originated from the system of slavery, which sanctifies property and neglected people. It determines the personality by possession, while its wealth of humanity and creativity is neglected. It creates optimal conditions for capital utilization, not for the capital producers. Large private ownership is favored by the state. The current state is created for abuse by the rich.

Therefore the sovereignty of the people has always remained imperfect. "We are the people", "All state authority emanates from the people" - these promises of all western constitutions need to be redeemed through self-empowerment of the competent active citizens. We need to summon the state (also the European Union) into society. General welfare is the goal. It's not about less state, but about a more democratically legitimated state. In this the revolutionary impetus has shifted from the barricades to the constitutions and laws we need to fight for.

Daniela Dahn