

## **Kaspar Hauser, the Child of Europe**

A synopsis (with an exoteric emphasis)

By Eckart Böhmer

On May 26, 1828, the day of Whit Monday, appeared – as though out of nowhere – an approximately 16-year-old young man in the square in Nuremberg known as Unschlittplatz [‘Tallow Square’]. That moment is the beginning of a story that has not broken off to this day. To the contrary, it continues to grow and is becoming one of the few true myths of modern times!

Two townspeople encounter him and offer their assistance. But the foundling, as he will later be called, answers each question with an odd sentence, the content of which he seems not to quite understand. Again and again he says that he would like to be a horseman like his father was. And in his hand he is carrying a letter. The letter is, in fact, addressed to a cavalry captain, so things seem to make some sense. The two townspeople convey him to the home of the addressee, who says, however, that he doesn’t know the boy. So the foundling is brought to the town jail, and is there put into the ‘Luginsland’ tower. He is interrogated by the police, but they are not able to gather any information. Only later on, when one of the clerks puts pencil and paper into the boy’s hand, does he write – against all expectation – a name: Kaspar Hauser.

This was the birth hour of perhaps one of the most mysterious names that a human being has ever had. It reminds one of the puppet show, as well as of one of the Magi, the three Wise Men from the East. In Persian, Kaspar means the ‘guardian of the treasure’. Hauser, too, sounds odd. Is he a ‘homebody’ who never came out of his house? Does he belong to a ‘house’ in the sense of a noble house? A further facet is that in one of the regions of Bavaria, this name is the short form for Balthazar. And there we already have another of the Three Kings. To this day, research on Kaspar Hauser is searching for his real name, as though this name, Kaspar Hauser, were merely a placeholder for an unknown that needs to be found, as in mathematics, in order to be able to solve the equation! But what is this equation about?

So the letter is studied, in the hope that it may offer some clarification. In summary, its content specifies the following: A day laborer writes that he found the young person as a newborn on his doorstep, with the request to educate this child, as the mother was not in a position to do so. And then, when the child turns 16, the laborer was to bring him to a cavalry division in Nuremberg. All of this is backed by the so-called ‘young maiden note’, a short note by the alleged mother. Therein is stated that she has to give up the child because she is unable to feed it. It says the child’s name is Kaspar, and that the father has already died.

At that point, all of this makes sense. And yet, step by step, the police and criminalists, as well as graphologists, are to recognize that there is already a complex lie at hand. For it is seen that the handwriting on the two missives is that of one and the same person. And the ink of the two does not evidence a difference of 16 years. Indeed, the paper of the presumed older writing sample has a watermark of a paper mill that did not

yet exist in 1812. And the cavalry school in Nuremberg to which the laborer was to bring the 16-year-old was not yet stationed there in 1812. Thus the “mother” could not have written about it.

But we are dealing here with far more than just a lie. For at the end of the letter the laborer writes that if the cavalry captain cannot keep the boy, he should “drive him away or hang him in the chimney”. Here, at the latest, it can be seen that a strange, criminal-like energy is at hand.

The appearance of the “half wild person” in Nuremberg spreads like wildfire. Within just a few days, one can read about it not only in Bavaria but throughout Germany and Europe. Even in New York newspapers there is an article about ‘The Lost Boy from Nuremberg’.

The concept of the ‘feral child’ quickly began to circulate. This was a current subject at the time, with one of the most famous ‘feral child’ of recent history, Victor of Aveyron, having died just that year, in 1828. To this day, Kaspar Hauser is considered the patron of virtually all ‘feral children’, i.e. those children who, for whatever reasons, are secretly locked away.

Mayor Binder of Nuremberg issues an extensive notification in which he refers to Kaspar Hauser as the “pledge of love” for the town of Nuremberg. Other prominent gentlemen of the town call him a “paradisal ur-person”. And the great lawyer, Anselm Ritter von Feuerbach, president of the Ansbach Court of Appeals, even sees in him “the only creature of its kind”, and “an image of the eternal in the soul of an angel”. These are significant words from significant people who directly experienced Kaspar Hauser!

The next important step that takes place is the diagnosis of the Nuremberg Municipal Court physician, Dr. Preu. He examines the foundling and comes to this result: “This individual is neither crazy nor feeble-minded, but has evidently been forcibly removed in the most dreadful way from all human and societal culture and education.” Thus the suspicion gels that there has been a serious misdeed, and that this young man’s appearance in the world is due to his having been abandoned rather than freed. And abandonment is punishable by law!

We know that every crime needs a motive, or even several motives. But what motive can there be to hold back a child in this way and then set him out into the world. From this point onward, this question leads to Feuerbach’s untiring research. He had previously reformed the Bavarian penal code of 1813, abolishing torture as a legitimate interrogation method, and posited the important phrase “nulla poena sine lege”, “no penalty without a law”. To this day, this is a decisive cornerstone of every state or nation of law.

Since extending Kaspar Hauser’s sojourn in Nuremberg’s jail can no longer be justified, he is given over to the care of a teacher. His name is Georg Friedrich Daumer. At this time he is 28 years old, but already suspended from service as a secondary school

teacher due to an eye ailment. He himself was a pupil of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. In addition, Daumer is what one may call a poet-philosopher. He will be revered by Friedrich Nietzsche, and Johannes Brahms will set some of his poems to music.

What now takes place is that Kaspar Hauser begins to learn very rapidly: speaking, reading, writing, arithmetic, chess, piano, drawing, and watercolor painting. This fact leads to difficult questions: Can a person who has been robbed of all socialization for a long period of time learn all of this at such a tempo? If yes, is one dealing with a highly gifted individual? Or is something like this not possible, so that, consequently, there must be something fraudulent or deceptive at hand? This polarization is a significant component of the way Kaspar Hauser was received at the beginning. But wherein would the deception lie?

Kaspar Hauser begins to remember the time before he was pushed out into the world. He describes his dungeon's size and condition. And that's all! He doesn't pretend to be someone or other; he doesn't try to attain some unfair gain due to his situation! The teacher, Daumer, proves to be an exact observer and scrupulous witness of this initial period of Kaspar Hauser out in the world. He will write three works that are accessible to this day and that are an important foundation for any research on Kaspar Hauser.

Besides the foundling's extraordinary radiance, Daumer studies additional unusual phenomena, such as Kaspar Hauser's sense perceptions. In the case of all of his senses, his perception is heightened to such a degree that he is soon seen as a miracle child. He is able to read in the dark, and can even distinguish colors in the dark. From a distance of a hundred steps, he can distinguish a raspberry from a blackberry, whereas one's usual sight would just be able to see the bush. His olfactory perception is also so sensitive that he can barely walk through a cemetery because of the odor of the corpses! In addition, he can 'feel' metals and, without seeing them, can distinguish gold, brass, copper, silver and lead, based on what they 'emit'. He also was once even able to 'feel' – from a few steps away – a diamond that was wrapped in paper.

Daumer also has an affinity for what were then the beginnings of homeopathy. He himself is a patient of Dr. Preu, Nuremberg's first homeopath, and Kaspar Hauser responds unusually strongly to treatments – often already just by taking in a whiff of the remedy or by touching the bottle! Daumer informs Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy, about this. Hahnemann sees this as a confirmation of the effectiveness of the remedies he has developed.

By October 1829, Kaspar Hauser's development has already progressed to such a degree that he begins to write his autobiography; that is, to encompass in language his recollections of his imprisonment and his abandonment. At this point at the latest, the wrongdoers need to consider themselves to be in trouble. Thus on October 17 the first assassination attempt on Kaspar Hauser occurs in the home of his teacher, Daumer. This instance hits staid, bourgeois Nuremberg with a mighty impact, because up until then the misdeeds against the foundling have only been surmised. Now it takes on tangible dimensions. A man strikes at Kaspar with the horizontal swing of an axe, hitting

him on his forehead. Kaspar Hauser survives, and from then on has a wound that is seen on the well-known paintings of Karl Kreul. The would-be assassin calls out: "You must die before you get away from Nuremberg!" Kaspar Hauser believes he recognizes his jail warden, whom he "used to always be with", as the perpetrator. But no one is caught. From this moment onward, life in the Daumer home is not always safe. Even his teacher receives death threats. For this reason, Kaspar Hauser is brought to the home of the Biberbach family, which also turns out not to be a beneficial place. So in July 1830 he moves to Baron von Tucher, his legal guardian.

Besides Kaspar's memories of the dungeon, which he is now able to express through language, his dreams are also unsettling to his opponents. For he dreams of castles and coats of arms with such concreteness that there is the danger that important sources of the misdeeds could be identified.

Now the opposition grows stronger and stronger. A publication comes out in Berlin by police counsel Johann Friedrich Merker, titled *Kaspar Hauser, Not Unlikely a Fraud*. But this police counsel never saw Kaspar Hauser – never stood before him.

And the other hand, Kaspar Hauser receives such attentiveness and compassion during this time that he is called 'the child of Europe'. This name will never leave him!

In May 1831, an 'attack' on Kaspar's life of an entirely different kind takes place, but which was not seen as such for a long time. A lord from England, well-versed in the German language, speaks with Mayor Binder and asks to meet the child of Europe. The town is overjoyed to have possibly found in him a deep-pocketed benefactor for Hauser. The meeting of Stanhope and Kaspar takes place right away. Stanhope knows how to win the child over with gifts of silk, money, and a clock, as well as many promises. He has his portrait painted and plants in Kaspar the expectation of being of noble birth. In the attempts to get Kaspar Hauser to speak in order to find out his origin, he manifests a certain familiarity with Hungarian. Consequently, Stanhope commissions a trip to Hungary to find out where he is from. The nobleman is quite certain that Hauser is a Hungarian magnate. But the trip that Kaspar Hauser, under the pseudonym Karl Heinlein, takes with Baron von Tucher remains totally inconclusive!

Lord Stanhope manages to drive more and more of a wedge between Kaspar Hauser and his important Nuremberg benefactors, especially von Tucher, Mayor Binder and the teacher, Daumer. In November 1831, von Tucher dares to confront Stanhope. He demands that the lord either cease his influence or take over total responsibility for the foundling. The lord purports to do the latter, and is officially designated as Kaspar's foster-father. He immediately takes him away from Nuremberg to Ansbach. In Ansbach lives the other important mentor, President Feuerbach. Yet Stanhope seeks proximity to him right away in order to be – still incognito – in direct contact with Feuerbach's research on Hauser's origins. In addition, he finds in the teacher Meyer, where Kaspar lives and receives instruction, a compliant helper for his machinations. For this, Meyer is compensated with money from the hand of Stanhope.

This Kaspar, now living in Ansbach, is by far no longer the 'wolf child' that he was once taken for. Many of his extraordinary capacities have diminished over time. Step by step he is being assimilated into society. Yet there is a question that is becoming louder within him. It is the question: Who am I? From where do I come? Where am I going? During the daytime, he works for the appellate court as a copier of records and documents. In the evenings, he is often a guest of the District President von Stichaner, who invites him to go dancing. And Kaspar Hauser likes to dance!

Beginning in October 1832, "the child of Europe" receives religious instruction from Pastor Heinrich Fuhrmann. For up to eight hours a week, the clergyman prepares Hauser for his individual confirmation in May 1833 in the Chapel of the Knights of the Black Swan in Ansbach. This encounter leaves an enormous imprint on Kaspar. Fuhrmann reports how, when hearing about the Christ's Passion, his pupil breaks down in tears that cannot be stilled. Kaspar's gift of compassion, of empathy, is quite distinctive. Not only can he not kill a worm or a fly, but he experiences everything as alive and thereby exposed to suffering. Even in reference to the Crucified Christ chiseled in wood, he says that one should take Him down from the Cross because it is hurting him. And for years he can think only reluctantly of his jail warden because, if he thinks of him, he has to imagine the suffering that the warden must have felt at committing this misdeed! Hauser's confirmation, presumably at the age of 21, is then the most light-filled event of his short life.

But shortly thereafter, danger moves in again. The great jurist Feuerbach suddenly dies in agonizing pain on an excursion to Frankfurt. With his last forces he notes on a scrap of paper that someone had given him something; he is certain of having been poisoned. What was happening?

In the year 1832 Feuerbach published his important book on the foundling, *Kaspar Hauser or the Example of a Crime Against the Soul Life of the Human Being*. To this day, this book is a most important foundation for any research on Kaspar Hauser. But in the book, Feuerbach holds back almost entirely in regard to the political dimension of the wrongdoing concerning Kaspar Hauser. He knows that this theme is too precarious. He keeps this part of his research hidden, and only sends it in a "secret memoire" to the Queen Dowager Caroline of Munich. Here he dares for the first time to cautiously put to paper his thesis that had become known as the "Hereditary Prince Theory". Yet this writing is not secret enough. Stanhope, by means of his clever, tactical maneuvering, had won the jurist's confidence and is thereby aware of his tracks. The jurist has simply become too dangerous politically. Everything points to being poisoned, even though this is not scientifically proven. His grave in Frankfurt was to be exhumed in order to investigate the possible use of arsenic. At the last moment, this was prevented.

Now Kaspar Hauser becomes lonely in Ansbach. His mentor Feuerbach has died, his foster father Stanhope only writes letters from afar but never again meets with his pupil who was entrusted to him. So Pastor Fuhrmann again takes on Kasper, thereby becoming the most important fatherly friend and witness of the last part of his life. In summer 1833, Hauser encounters the Bavarian king at the national celebration in

Nuremberg, and has a long discussion with him. He implores the sovereign to make know that those involved in the crimes against him should not be punished. The king promises his help. But already in December, the shady characters attack again.

Knowing Kaspar's inmost wish to find out who his mother is, the wrongdoers lure him to the court garden. On the morning of December 14<sup>th</sup>, Hauser is again at Pastor Fuhrmann's place, and has presented to him the Parable of the Wedding Feast. Then he crafts little boxes from gold paper because he would like to have something to give at Christmas. Afterwards he goes to the snow-covered court garden and is awaited there by a man. After the man verifies that this is indeed Kaspar Hauser, he gives him a pouch, so Hauser assumes it contains the answer to the question of his identity. When he is about to open it, he is stabbed so with a dagger so violently that, as the doctors later see, the stab goes through the pericardium, through the lung, through the diaphragm, and into the liver. And yet he pulls himself together and runs to his legal guardian, the teacher Meyer. The way there consists of about 600 steps. But the teacher won't believe him, and goes with the victim back to the place of the attack. And there the pouch is actually found. The murderer is of course gone.

Now another conspiracy begins. Meyer will do his utmost to allege that this was suicide. For in the pouch is a piece of paper, and the first lines written on it say "Hauser will be able to tell you exactly what I look like and where I come from. To spare Hauser the trouble, I will tell you myself where I come from..." The malice of these lines remind one of the letter with which Kaspar first appeared in 1828. But there is more. The lines are written in mirrored writing, and would not have been easy at all for Kaspar Hauser to read. Is this a distraction to give the wrongdoer more space for his actions? Meyer insists that Kaspar has written this himself, and demonstrates this on hand of Kaspar's homework notebook, in which there are in fact mirrored writing exercises. Again it will be graphologists who will later prove that the letter from the pouch was of course not Kaspar's writing. But once a lie is vehemently put out into the world, it lasts a long time. To this day, one casually postulates that Hauser was suicidal. Yet on December 14, clear witness statements are made in regard to a possible assassin, but the police will not take anyone into custody!

Kasper Hauser has to endure hours of interrogation. On December 17<sup>th</sup> his situation gets worse. In response to the question as to whether he still has anyone to forgive for anything, he replies: "Why? No one has done anything to me!" Meyer sees this as proof of a suicide attempt, others see this as a transfigured soul that is already no longer entirely of this world. "The monster was stronger" is another striking sentence that he uttered on his death bed. He asks his pastor to say a prayer for the murderer. On December 17<sup>th</sup>, three days after the attack, Hauser dies. On December 20<sup>th</sup>, amid an outpouring of participation of the townspeople, he is buried in Ansbach's town cemetery. His gravestone will say:

Hic jacet  
Casparus Hauser  
Aenigma sui temporis

Ignota nativitas  
Occulta mors

It is the District President von Stichaner who placed these artistically condensed words there. He recognizes Kaspar Hauser, who rests here, as a riddle of his time, of unknown origin in regard to his birth and mysterious death. Yet he is more than this. For on the commemorative stone in the court garden he will choose the word "occult", even twice.

Hic  
Occultus  
Occulto  
Occisus  
Est

The conventional translation is: Here a mysterious person was mysteriously killed. - But the District President seems to sense what chasms are involved in this murder!

At night dubious characters are seen in the cemetery. Grave robbers? As a result, the cemetery will be guarded for a time.

That is a summary of the short life of Kaspar Hauser "in the world". But what was happening before he was abandoned, as well as from when he was laid to rest onward, until now? Out of this overview, a picture that is unequalled is discernable and does not fade with time. Kaspar Hauser's being, his appearance in the world, his violent end – all of this raises many questions! But the weightiest of these is surely that of his origin. Thus from 1828 to this day, countless theories and speculations have developed – some reasonable, some not. The one that is historically the most probable if also the most complex hypothesis leads back to the important jurist Anselm Ritter von Feuerbach (1774-1833), and is called the 'hereditary prince theorie'. There is a lot that speaks for this, and in fact nothing that speaks against it. And the aspects that appear to speak against it **want** to speak against it, and thereby actually speak not **against** it but **for** it. This is worth understanding!

In summary, the following picture emerges:

Due to Napoleon I, Baden becomes a grand duchy in 1806, governed by Carl Friedrich (1728-1811). There are three sons from his first marriage, and, from his second marriage also three sons and a daughter. But the succession to the throne pertains only to the sons from his first marriage. However, the Treaty of Baden will later contain the passage saying that if the male line of the House of Zähringen (the first line) dies out, then the succession to the throne would pass to the second line (Hochberg). Since Carl Friedrich's oldest son dies young, the succession to the throne goes directly to his grandson Karl (1786-1818) in 1811. The French emperor speaks with Karl's mother, Amalia, and asks that she have her only son marry Napoleon's great niece, Stephanie de Beauharnais. Such are Napoleon's marriage politics, which, in quite a simple way, grant him an enormous increase in territory. Incensed, Karl's mother must have said: "If

it were at least your daughter”, whereupon Napoleon adopts Stephanie. Thus the wedding was consented to in 1806. It is now a very charged situation that every son from this marriage is not only heir to the throne of Baden, but is at the same time a Napoleonite. Politically, this is highly precarious. When, on September 29, 1812, a healthy boy is born to the couple, a political issue of the most complex kind develops on four levels.

First level: In the Zähringen line itself, there is an effort at work against this child, since Ludwig (1763-1830), Carl Friedrich's third son, and thereby Karl's uncle, wants the throne himself. In addition, Amalia pressures her son Karl to divorce his French spouse, whom she does not like.

Second level: Carl Friedrich's second wife, Countess Hochberg (1768-1820) had the unconditional goal of getting her own sons on the throne, who are not rightful ascendants. This would only be possible if all of the male heirs of the Zähringen line would die. And all of them do in fact die in quite rapid succession, which is not to say that they were all removed!

The hereditary prince who was born in 1812 also “dies” suddenly, although he is known to be completely healthy. However, it is known that his mother, Stephanie, and the wet nurse were no longer allowed to see him. For they would recognize that the dying child is a different child. Research on Kaspar Hauser later discovers that a child of approximately the same age is removed from the Blochmann family, employed by Countess Hochberg, and is laid - to die - in the cradle in place of the hereditary prince. But the real ascendant to the throne is kept in hiding in the Blochmann family as a living reprisal to give power to Countess Hochberg. By 1830 the goal of her desire is reached, and her oldest son ascends to the throne. But by this time she herself has already been dead for 10 years.

Third level: Under Napoleon, Bavaria loses the Electoral Palatinate to Baden. Subsequently, Bavaria is contemplating military action to win back this important territory. But this course of action is not necessary, since it says in the Treaty of Baden that the Electoral Palatinate is to go back to Bavaria in the event that the male Zähringen line dies out! Here, too, is a paramount motive for taking possession of the hereditary prince.

Fourth level: Far beyond the issue of dynasty, there is the European motif due to the legal relationship between the hereditary prince and Napoleon. This also clarifies the important role of the Englishman Stanhope, who works not only for the Hochberg family but is also in contact with Prince Metternich, who is to be regarded as a significant political opponent of Napoleon.

So the issue regarding the “hereditary prince theory” is: Is Kaspar Hauser, who turned up in 1828 in Nuremberg the same as the hereditary prince who was said to have died in 1828 but who in truth was restrained for years for political reasons?



This being so, we can understand Feuerbach who calls the case of Kaspar Hauser “the strangest of all strange criminal cases, with perhaps nothing of its kind having occurred even once in thousands of years.” And he writes this already three years before Kaspar Hauser was murdered!

In 1835, two years after Hauser’s violent death, Stanhope first begins to show his true colors, and writes invective pieces defaming Kaspar’s integrity. Later on, research on Kaspar Hauser will recognize him as a political agent, whose doings are so complex because he is commissioned by various people. From this point on, a curious periodicity sets in, which continues uninterrupted for centuries: Measures against “the child of Europe” are set straight by witnesses, or rectifications regarding Kaspar are counteracted with defamations. The year 1873 is an example of this: Dr. Julius Meyer, son of the teacher Meyer who accused Kaspar of suicide, writes a piece called *Authentic Disclosures Concerning Kaspar Hauser*, in which, in order to rehabilitate his father, he again profoundly discredits Kaspar Hauser. He has the courage to do this from hearing of the death of Daumer, Kaspar’s first teacher. But it was Daumer’s brother who had died. So the 73-year-old, nearly blind teacher brings himself to once again take a stand in his writing for Hauser’s truthfulness.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Kaspar Hauser moves still further into the collective consciousness. After Schopenhauer designated himself as the Kaspar Hauser of philosophers, it is the poets who turn to the child of Europe. Georg Trakl also sees himself as Kaspar Hauser. Kurt Tucholsky chooses the name as his pseudonym. In 1908, the successful author Jakob Wasserman authors his famous novel, *Kaspar Hauser – Inertia of the Heart*. He is an important source of inspiration for many, many people. The foundling becomes the pseudonym for “the soul lost in the world” (Sophie Hoehstetter). The mood of the approaching World Wars that, in their own way, bring the issue of the identity and the ‘whence-and-whither’ of the human being, are mirrored in Kaspar Hauser’s world-forsakenness and his abandonment. In 1950, the psychologist Alexander Mitscherlich will coin the concept of the Kaspar-Hauser-complex, to which he accords a culture-defining dimension, such as the Oedipus-complex possessed earlier. He speaks of the increasing isolation of the individual, of being cut off, of deprivation. Already in our time, there are rapidly growing new pathologies that correlate with this complex or syndrome.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century is also the time of the great researchers on Kaspar Hauser, with Dr. Hermann Pies leading the way, and including Fritz Klee, Adolf Bartning and Edmond Bapst, to name just a few. Countless records and documents form an increasingly coherent picture that underscores the research of Feuerbach. For example, Kaspar Hauser’s dungeon in Pilsach in Upper Palatinate [Bavaria] has been found, and the occurrence of the swapping of the two infants in Karlsruhe in 1812 has been discovered.

Kaspar Hauser has also found his way into the world of film. Already in the 1950s in the U.S., there is a short feature film about him, and in the ‘60s a three-part television film by R.A. Stemmler in Germany. Then in 1973 there is the very successful film by Werner

Herzog, *The Enigma of Caspar Hauser* [German title: *Every Man for Himself and God Against All*] that won three awards at the Cannes Film Festival. The film's emphasis is entirely on the individuality of Caspar Hauser, which, in all of its tragedy and its beauty, is at variance with society. Then Peter Sehr's 1993 film, *Kaspar Hauser – the Person, the Myth, the Crime*. The producer emphasizes, as had never been done before, the question of his origin and thus the theory of the 'hereditary prince theory'. And since the film is very successful, his Baden-ancestry is widely talked about.

Now the time has come when the science of genetics enters into clarification of identity. In 1996 there is a leading study that is masterfully launched by the news magazine *Der Spiegel*.

The blood found on the trousers that Caspar Hauser wore on the day of the assassination is genetically analyzed and compared with female descendants of the presumed mother, Stephanie de Beauharnais. Were they to be related, i.e. if Caspar Hauser is the hereditary prince, there result would have to be positive, in the sense that it would have to demonstrate the congruency of both samples examined. Such was the science of the time! Yet there are clear deviations in the so-called base-pairs, so that a blood relationship can be excluded. So the result is loudly proclaimed that Caspar Hauser is not the hereditary prince. But this statement is not scientifically tenable. The statement should have been: The material examined exhibits no blood relationship to the House of Baden. But it cannot be proved that the blood specimen that was examined actually comes from Caspar Hauser, and is therefore pure speculation. And not only that! The solution to the "riddle of the century" is supplied just as casually: Caspar Hauser is a bastard from Tirol [a state in western Austria] who suffered from a verifiable form of epilepsy that existed in that region at the time. Has the "law of periodicity" struck again, according to which, following the film of 1993, it was necessary to again publicly weaken Caspar Hauser?

Already in 2001 there is a further genetic analysis that examines six samples – of hair and perspiration, for example – from two different sources associated with Caspar Hauser (the Caspar Hauser Museum in Ansbach and the estate of the Feuerbach family). The genetic code of the six samples is completely consistent. So it can be said with 100% certainty that this is Caspar Hauser's genetic code. Yet this code clearly does not correspond to the blood presumed to be that of Caspar Hauser, which was used in 1996. Consequently, this means that the analysis of 1996 is invalid. Thirdly, it is seen – again by a comparison with descendants of Stephanie de Beauharnais – that there is a high level of congruency of both samples, although it is not a total match. This is an interesting result that leads the chief scientist, Prof. Dr. Brinkmann, to the statement that one cannot say that Caspar Hauser is the hereditary prince, nor can one say that he is not!

Thus the being of the foundling appears to be more in the question than in the answer! And it is there that is found his archetypal significance for our time:

In Caspar Hauser is revealed the question of the identity of the human being

In Kaspar Hauser is revealed the questioned identity of the human being

He himself replies in his own, innocently-childlike way. He once wrote the following simple poem:

Contentment is the greatest miracle worker.  
It transforms water into wine, grains of sand into pearls,  
rain drops into balsam, poverty into wealth,  
the smallest into the greatest, the meanest into the most noble,  
the earth into a paradise.  
It is a beautiful heart that, in all its stirrings,  
remains in purest harmony with itself;  
a beautiful life it is whose deeds  
are in full accord with one other.

- Kaspar Hauser

Eckart Böhmer, director of the Kaspar Hauser Festival

Translation: Helen Lubin