

1 Budapest

Honour and privilege for me; many points that I have heard already today; hope to make my contribution to your debate; on the basis of my 'European' experiences.

2 Example: this weekend in Bergen op Zoom

2.1 Folk spectacle in the cold open air

This week we had in my town an open air spectacle with 300 amateur theatre players and volunteers for staging, services etc., for an audience of 1200 per night (sold out in two days for seven nights), among whom Beatrix, the queen of the Netherlands – two hours of late & great theatre on important historical European themes, such as the Reformation and religious wars between Catholics and Protestants in the 16-17th Century, the insurrection of the Low Countries against the Habsburg King of Spain, Felipe Segundo, the Black Death that went around over the continent, refugees from captured places and cities, finding asylum in other places of the new free counties along the North Sea, etc.

2.2 International co-operation and Europe

The spectacle is organised as an international co-operation project between volunteers and governors of two cities, one in the Netherlands and one in the Flemish part of Belgium – Bergen op Zoom and Bruges. This week it runs in the one city, being my Bergen op Zoom, and at the end of the summer it will run in Bruges. That means: cities that belong to the same language community and that once belonged to the same country and region (more or less) until the 16th Century. These are now cities of two countries, and their cultural co-operation is not only something between neighbours and friends, but now it is acknowledged cultural co-operation at the international and European level.

The authorities have acknowledged the co-operation as being sincere European co-operation, which means, among others, that the organisers have received considerable European subsidies, both for cross-border co-operation in the region and for cultural co-operation. And the authorities assume that they can encourage Europeanism in this way, i.e. a positive attitude and open mind towards the European project that also included the accession of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Hungary two years ago.

2.3 Are we therefore 'European'?

Does it? No, not in Bergen op Zoom and the Netherlands, or only lightly and indirectly, I daresay (without further research). Why?

1. The climate in the Netherlands is very obviously 'eurosceptic' – the majority has no clear positive idea about Europe. Two third voted against the European Constitution, against the will of almost the whole political elite of socio-democrats, Christian democrats and liberals.
2. Cross-border co-operation with a city such as Bruges may reinforce the old feelings in the South of the Netherlands that the Flemish places and culture are very nearby – maybe as nearby as Poszony or Temisvar from here. It does not awaken European feelings.
3. Even for subsidies Europe is an uneasy partner, who keeps to many, many rules, e.g. with regard to 'open competition' for service contracts, stage building, lightning, catering, etc. For organisations that rely on local volunteers and local sponsoring these rules are extra difficult, as much is done on behalf of blue eyes, I know you and a quid-pro-quo basis.
4. However, the subsidies as such and the logos that have to be portrayed together with those of other sponsors and subsidisers (province, cultural foundations, municipality, sub-contractors, etc.) remind the people of Europe and Brussels (very nearby too, by the way), and do not reinforce their general negative feelings. It does not hurt, and maybe works a little bit.

3 Me; exceptional position for someone from 'Vienna'

(Der Tod das soll ein Wiener sein)

1. European record. I am a convinced 'Europeanist' since the mid-eighties, in the aftermath of the Cold War. I was then a research director on future telecom policies in the European Community, i.e. in Western Europe with its state telecom monopolies and upcoming TNCs in the field. My favourite question: whatte Europe do we mena? (with Ricardo Petrella, the former Director of the Vienna Centre, then my speaking point in Brussels). As a convinced 'Europeanist' I moved in 1988 to the Vienna Centre, where I had the privilege of being in the font line when the Iron Curtain was opened, and its aftermath: unsolved promises, rising ethnic conflict, very simple models of economic reconstruction led

by western cowboys-capitalists, lack of basic knowledge in the West on the region and countries that opened up (I am sure that Van den Broek did not know that Ljubljana was the capital of Slovenia, when the first post-Yugoslav war was to be ‘managed’ by him as an EU Commissioner, in co-operation with other European delegates who hardly knew more – apart from some ‘ewig Gestrigen’ from Bécs that was then ascending to the EU, etc.)

2. I have also been involved in encouraging initiatives for a new Europe, directly or indirectly, such as the Open Society Foundations and the European University initiatives of Söros György; research projects such as multilingualism and ethnicity in Europe, mixed communities in specific border regions (Prekmurje, Trans Carpatia, Eastern Estonia); the evaluation of civic initiatives of the EU; fellowships young, promising academics from East; most is, however, marginal in its consequences as far as European and national policies are concerned, or as far as public opinion in my country is concerned. One could say: this intellectual has more influence here and now in Hungary than back home.
3. However, and as my summarising statement: I am and I remain an advocate of sincere Europeanism, notwithstanding the anti-European climate.

4 Sincere Europeanism: what is it?

1. What happened in and since 1989? Never stop to tell and to repeat the great story about 1989 and the hope and expectations of that very momentum in European history – the great story of e.g. Konrad, Havel, Gernerek, Gordon Ash.
2. Encourage cultural co-operation across borders from below, as well as that of international youth organisation, women’s organisations, etc. In that sense: the folk spectacle of Bergen op Zoom and Bruges should get many and steady follow-ups.
3. In general terms: we need *highest freedom*, but we need *less market*. The association and connection between freedom and market as being two sides of the coin is obviously false, but we appear to be forced, more or less to keep to that belief/ideology on behalf of the neo-cons and post-communist political economy. However, unavoidably market freedom is (also) the freedom of

cowboy capitalists and the self-enrichment of ENRON-like managers, who have seen their heaven since public services have been liberalised. It is the freedom of refusing medical care to the people in highest need, but without insurance. Since Kant freedom is a moral and political category, and the highest level of freedom is to be established in the moral and political domains of civil society. Clear new European guideline to be proposed: the Member States are not forced to liberalise all sectors of the national and the European economy or all public and professional services, even not if competition and public services are offered by a mix of commercial parties, public service providers and/or professionals. There is no decisive reason that their rules should dominate the others.

4. In general: *more personality and commitment, less power*. Of course, there is no society, even no civil society, without power, inclusive (a minimum of) power exertion and powerful persons and institutions. But for me the balance is and will be on the persons who have taken commitment and who will take commitment for and in civil society, as a volunteer, or as a dedicated professional, or as a responsive political leader. Do I know them? Yes, but not many in the higher echelons of society. There are not so many of them there. Most are found in the local hands-on environment.
5. To conclude on what sincere Europeanism is for me: more Europe means then: less Europe. What does that paradox mean? The first priority with regard to the EU should be: less institutionalisation, and more co-operation and debate. Those who feel committed to the European idea should spend as little energy and time on institutions and other internal affairs. They should be focussed at an open Europe and at the in-depth embedding of Europe in the hearts, feelings and the knowledge base of the people as well as at the extension of Europe towards the many who still aspire to join the family – from restored multi-ethnic BiH via moderate Turkey towards the liberated Ukraine. In that frame I will keep to my commitment in general and in particular to the researcher's distanced assessment of what is and what could be, to the writer's idiom of understandable debate, to the amateur's practice of co-operation, and to responsive political leadership.

Thank you.