

# Editorial

## **The editors, Berlin**

Identity and ethnicity are two of the most sensitive problems facing us today, and for this reason we have chosen to look at various aspects of the situation of minorities within Europe. This theme is not restricted to the Periscope, but also picked up in other articles, in which Europe is discussed as a cultural rather than merely an economic entity. For example, the contribution about the elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina, seen from the standpoint of an OSCE observer, shows the difficulty of dealing rationally with such an emotionally charged subject.

Continuing the series of country features that started in OEM 11, the second focus in this issue is put on Hungary, which was celebrating the 1100th anniversary in 1996. And as usual, we take a look beyond the borders of Europe, this time toward South Africa, the Rainbow Nation, that still has a long way to go regarding Identity and Ethnicity.

**Yours, The editors**

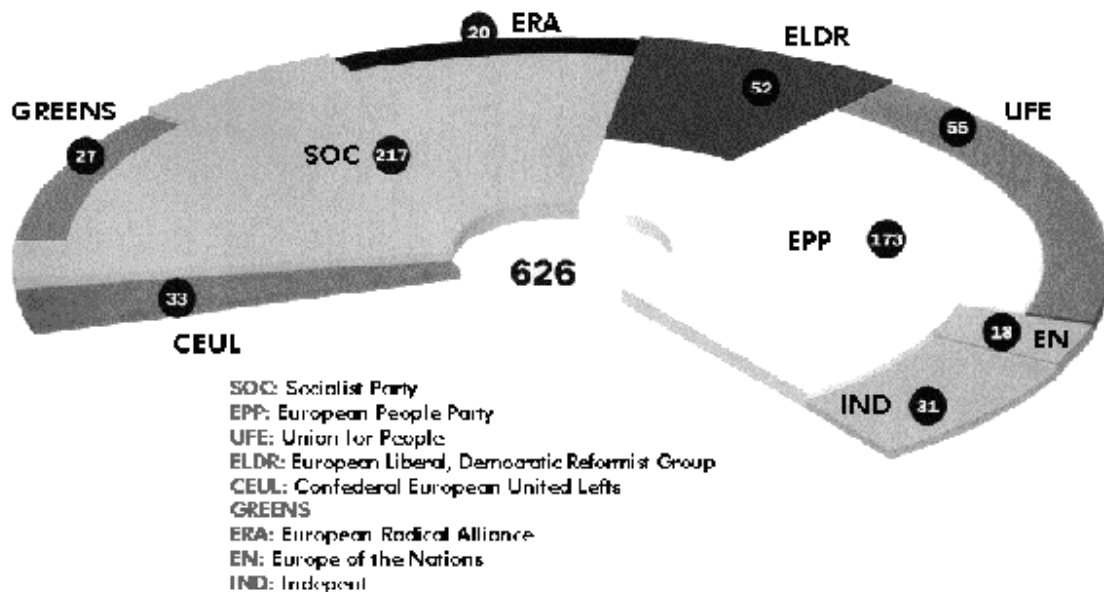
Issue: OEM 11    page: 18    section: Crossroads

## **The European Parliament**

# **From the Force of Ideas To the Force of Numbers**

**At the best of times politics is not always easy to comprehend. This is especially true in the case of the European Parliament, the efficiency of which depends on the degree of organisation within the different political groups. Their aims could be best achieved by a large number of members, but the greater the numbers, the weaker the ideological coherence.**

**Federiga Bindi and Patrick Peters**



**SOC:** Socialist Party  
**EPP:** European People Party  
**UFE:** Union for People  
**ELDR:** European Liberal, Democratic Reformist Group  
**CEUL:** Confederal European United Lefts  
**GREENS**  
**ERA:** European Radical Alliance  
**EN:** Europe of the Nations  
**IND:** Independent

In the European Parliament (EP) the parliamentarians (MEPs) are divided on the basis of political affiliation. There are currently nine political groups in the EP, which are as following: SOC - Socialist Party, EPP - European People's Party, UFE - Union for Europe, ELDR - European Liberal, Democratic & Reformist Group, CEUL - Confederal European United Left, Greens, ERA - European Radical Alliance, EN - Europe of the Nations, IND - Independents (see graphic below). The groups are of central importance in the work of the EP as they select its leaders, set the parliamentary agenda, choose the rapporteurs (MEPs who are the principal spokesmen on a topic) and decide on the allocation of speaking time. Also, the groups have their own staff and receive considerable funds from the EP, these two elements being proportional to the number of MEPs making up the group. Moreover, given the complex EU decision-making processes, a large number of votes is needed to adopt legislation, so that the support of the two major groups is a sine qua non. Thus, it is no surprise that the groups, now that more and more matters are to be discussed by the EP, have begun to try to acquire as many MEPs as possible. This, however, has a considerable side effect, both in terms of internal decision-making of the same groups, as well as of decreasing effectiveness of the EP. Without doubt, the group which is mostly facing this problem is the EPP.

### EPP - most efficient and powerful

Born as the federation of the Christian Democrat Parties of the EC, the EPP has quickly become known for its support for a federal Europe and for its internal federal structure. This has made of it the most efficient and powerful party, since its common ideology and its structure allowed it to reach common positions quickly. Hence, it was no accident that the SOC decided at their Berlin Congress in 1992 to copy the EPP structure in order to become, in turn, also more efficient. Ironically, this happened right in the period in which the EPP was starting to follow an inverse pattern which is now radically transforming it. In the effort to become "bigger" than the SOC, the EPP has started to admit as members new parties who in fact do not share the same common values and ideology. More and more conservative parties have thus become part of the EPP: from the Spanish Partido Popular, to the Scandinavian conservative parties, up to the British Conservatives and - last ones to join - the Portuguese Partido Social Democrata. And the process is still far from finished, since Forza Europa has long been trying to become member, too, while rumors suggest that even the French RPR are considering joining. Now, this has had two effects: firstly, the EPP is no longer able to agree easily on common policies and positions, starting from the very concept of Europe (not) shared by its members. Secondly, the disagreements with the SOC, in the past cooperating rivals, are becoming more and more bitter. If this goes on, it will become even more difficult for the parliament to approve legislation within acceptably short times. Liberals - far from homogeneous. However, not only the Christian Democrats have suffered from this strategic conflict between numbers and ideology. The Liberal Democrats have also been plagued from the same tendency to consider their quantitative impact as much as their qualitative position or ideology. As stated above, the Portuguese, whose membership was problematic from the beginning, have left the liberal group after a number of years. The liberal group is far from homogeneous. From many countries, two or more parties are members or observers, who on a national level can hardly tolerate each other. Fortunately the divisions are different on a European level. A pro-European stance and a pro-market attitude, compared with Christian Democratic and Socialist corporativism, is one of the characteristics of most liberal members. More often, the European deputies of these parties are often linked to the most international or European sections of their respective political parties. A case in point is the Dutch delegation of the liberal group; the social-liberal "Democrats 66" and the more conservative Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) get along well at the European level, whereas at the domestic level profound differences emerge, especially in the social-economic area. This policy area is hardly touched upon at the European level, due to the division of labour between national and European politics. Another example are the Italians, where both the republican LaMalfa and members of the Lega Nord are members of the liberal group. It has to be mentioned that the 5 Lega members are members "à titre personnel", not as a political group.

### Compromise proposals - a question of scale

An important event for the Liberals in the past year was the downgrading of their position following the merger of two other groups: the French Gaulists and Berlusconi's Forza Italia came together to form the Union for Europe with 55 members combined, while the liberals have 52. Both groups come from a particular national setting, have a somewhat sceptical European vision and were for several reasons not welcome or interested in the

larger ideological and political groups. Especially the failed attempts of Forza Italia to get in to the Christian Democrat (EPP) group were made very public by the outright rejection of the EPP of Berlusconi's populist politics. That the remains of the Italian Christian Democrats, defeated in the last European elections and one of the reasons for the present reduced size of the EPP, remained in the EPP was a powerful reason against Berlusconi's entrance into this group. The merger between the Gaulists and Forza Italia, made this group the third in size, beating the liberal democrats with 55 to 52. The third place in size is especially important for compromise proposals between the two large groups and chairpersonships of committees. It is easy for the third group to tip the balance to either the Socialist or the People's Party side when the two large groups need additional support. This occurs especially when they fail to make a compromise between themselves.

### A constant bartering and planning

For the liberals there are two possible alternatives: to accept the current fourth position and hope for better times (if next time the British Liberal-Democrats bring in more people, the FDP from Germany returns, or if in Italy and Spain some serious liberal party emerges from the defeated centre groups in these countries). The second alternative is to absorb a smaller group and gain seats from them. The most attractive group appears to be the French Energie Radicale, headed by Catherine Lalumière, the former president of the Council of Europe. However, if you take these 12 seats, attractive for the balance of power and compatible with the liberal group, what to do with the remaining of the radical group, too small to form their own faction? For ideological reasons, the right wing of the ELDR liberal parties opposes the acceptance of people like Panella (Italy) and members of the Volkunie from Belgium (not to be confused with the Vlaams Blok) and the Scottish National Party, who belong to the radical group. Ideologically they are very distant from the Scandinavian liberals and some other groups. For national reasons they are incompatible with the VLD (Belgium) and the Liberal Democrats (UK). And the Energie Radicale is not leaving the members of these groups behind, because they are closer to them ideologically. Moreover it will be difficult for them to explain their ideological affiliation within several right wing liberal groups like the VLD, the VVD and the Danish Venstre.

This bartering and planning will take an important place in the negotiations over the next liberal democrat group after the next EP election, when they would like to be the third group again. And this makes politics in the European Parliament what it is: a never ending story where nationality, ideology but also relative power matter. The socialist group was lucky this time, thanks to good results in the UK. However, it is still the voter who decides, everywhere, until the concept of nationality or ideology becomes obsolete.

*Patrick Peters is teaching Politics and International Relations at Hamilton College in New York State and is a Researcher at the European University Institute in Florence. He was an unsuccessful candidate for the European parliament for a Dutch Political Party and is member of several liberal groups.*

*Federiga Bindi is teaching Politics at the Fashion Institute of New York University in*

*Florence and works as a researcher at the E.U.I in Florence. She was president and international officer for several international organizations in the Christian Democratic area.*

## Minorities in Hungary

# Together in Sadness, Together in Happiness

**Márton Méhes invites you to join him on a stroll amongst Hungary's minorities. He looks at Hungary as a multi-ethnic state, describing in particular the situation of the German minority with that of the Roma.**

**Márton Méhes, Pécs**

Wanderer, if you are walking on a sunny autumn day between the gently sloping vineyards of Baranya among the hills you will see signs indicating the name of the village in Hungarian, German and not seldom also in Croatian. Wherever houses are yawning in the Sunday afternoon old ladies in kerchief, gentlemen of wrinkled skin and grandchildren who grow up on grandmother's marmelade talk either in Hungarian, in German dialect or even in Croatian to each other.

But Wanderer, if you continue your trip to the vast lowland, to the Great Hungarian Plain, you will also meet Rumanian, Slovakian, Serbian nationalities and as rarity Greek as well. Certainly only the elderly people are to call as members of minorities. Keeping the traditions, making feasts and cultivating customs are more often nowadays than real traditional life. In countries where the government makes a bearable national policy, the minorities melt in sooner, than elsewhere, where their rights are treated under foot. This is a so-called positive assimilation, isn't it?

You will see Wanderer, that difference is not always and ewerywhere regarded as sympathetic and interesting. Deep in the country you will find yourself in poor villages or farms among little dirty kids who are playing in the mud. Gipsies. They do not fit in the society. People do not like them, so they are unable to rise up to acceptance. Even if they get into the city they do not find their place, because they are not educated. Certainly there are also musicians, poets, wood-carvers who are romas. But those well-fed musicians who play the violine for western tourist groups in Budapest's luxury restaurants belong to the idealized exception. Gipsies are in trouble with their identity. Are they Hungarians or a separate folk? Lots of them speak the Roma language, but all of them speak Hungarian as well. They do not know where they are from, they have to carry on the concomitants of nomad life: no past, no property, no job.

Who have the best conditions of all? The situation of the german minority living in the Danube Knee, along the river Danube or between the hills of Baranya is exemplary. In

their double-language schools, at the feasts and at their social programmes they can learn and have a lot of fun, and they may always count on a squarely moral and... well, financial assistance of their motherland, the Federal Republic. They know their origin, they elaborated their history, they keep the relations with relatives, and for their fortune they have got such a second language, that is enviable for the other "Hungarian" citizens on the road to Europe.

Do not forget Wanderer, that only a few percent of the 10 million Hungarians are more or less minorities. Hungary is not a multilingual country such as Switzerland, Hungary does not have such a number of nationalities such as Romania. Except the Romas and forgetting the terrible removal of german families after World War II, it is easy to belong to a minority in Hungary, and it is easy for Hungary to deal with the minorities, at least compared with a couple of well-known bad examples.

And there is just one more thing you have to keep in your mind Wanderer, if you go on your trip through the slowly flourishing, old, grey, Hungarian cities and villages destroyed by 40 years of communism: once everybody can be satisfied here, if.... if we will live to see the moral and economical rising of the country, and we will be able not only to elaborate our history, but also to plan our future. It does not matter which language one speaks, we will be together in love and pain in the following years of resurrection, and we will show the village name signs in 3 languages to everybody with proudness...

*Márton, 22, is studying German and Linguistics in Pècs and is currently spedning a term in Berlin.*

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## Magyarul - One of Europe's Oldest Mysteries

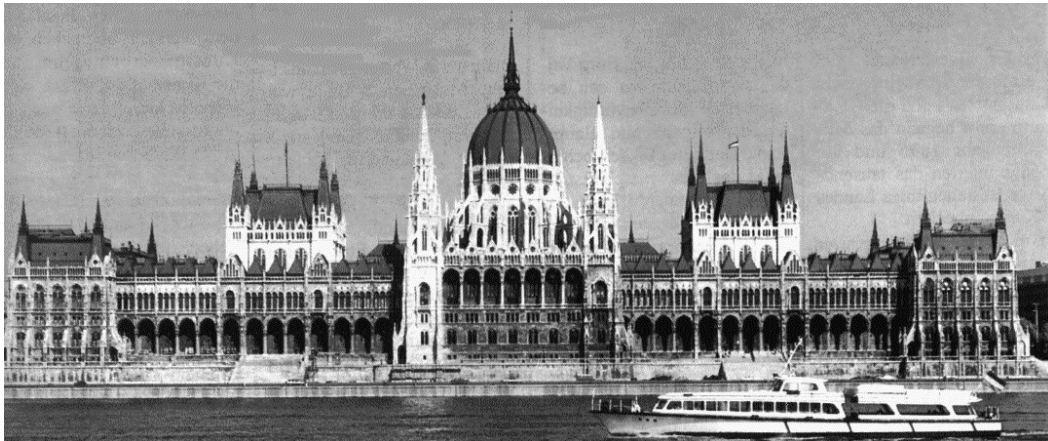
# Mission Impossible - A Chronic of a Failure

**Mission Impossible is in the cinemas, but the task facing the actor with the crooked smile pales in comparison with mine. 2 hours left until I meet my contact person - a `native expert'. There's just one thought on my mind: to unveil one of Europe's oldest mysteries - to crack the HUNGARIAN CODE (also called `magyarul')  
Alexander Lumban Tobing, Berlin**

### Brewed near the Urals

Brewed in ancient times near the Urals the code found its way into the Carpatian Basin in the Middle Ages. Having been spiced with a plethora of ingredients of Turkish, Slavic,

German and Latin origin during following centuries, it underwent a period of refinement in the 18th and 19th centuries. The outcome of this modernized version is one of Europe's most elaborate encryption codes, fundamentally different from any other code on the continent except the Finnish. Given the complex development of the system, it is not surprising that even the 14 million native experts around the globe have no clue about the origin of more than 30% of the items in use. Non-experts, however, are faced with a multitude of additional difficulties, and nowadays postmodern legends surround those who have bravely accepted the challenge of searching for the hidden treasures of this masterpiece.



*The parliament in Budapest*

### **A source of postmodern legends**

It is said that a chess-master managed to crack the code on a train from Amsterdam to Budapest. However, several incidents have been reported of people dying of exhaustion while trying to spell 'agyondolgosik', and the probability of really catching meningitis is greater than that of successfully pronouncing 'agyhártyagyulladás'. Apart from these atrocities, perhaps the most exotic aspect of the Hungarian code is the strange way in which certain places in Europe such as 'Bécs' (Vienna) or 'Olaszország' (Italy) are referred to, not to speak of the fact that the code uses suffixes where languages use prepositions. In the end the contact shows up. Her task is to guide me through the traps of code-grammar. Her name is Päivi and she's from Helsinki. Helsinki? A terrible suspicion rises in my head and after calling headquarters I find my fears confirmed: The mission has to be aborted due to administrative failure. But I will return and learn this wonderful and somewhat bizarre code. Viszontlátásra.

*Alexander, 23, is studying Medicine at the Free University in Berlin. He still speaks neither Hungarian nor Finnish.*





nearly eternal - capable of ageing for centuries in the dank tunnels you can find throughout the region. Without the traditional care with which the cellermaster blends it, the real Tokay couldn't be produced.

The area of the Tokay appellation under vines covers a zone of 4,500-5000 ha. Before privatisation, around 1,100 ha of vineyards were owned by the State Farm Borkombinat, which had a monopoly on buying grapes, winemaking, marketing and sales since 1949. Today, the Ex-Borkombinat owns only 70 ha of all vineyards and has no facilities for making quality products because of the excessive size and the age of its equipment. Its vast and coherent properties were divided into dozens of smaller lots belonging now to the individuals. In their small cellars some private owners continue to wine in very difficult conditions. Most of them cannot improve their facilities because of the rising costs and they are struggling to learn again the old methods of making Tokay, methods which had been missing for over forty years under communist rule.

## **Sophia and Sauerkraut**

After the "iron curtain" had fallen, foreign investment poured into the Tokaj-region. Today, about 500 ha, representing almost 10% of the Aszù-vines appellation area, belongs to foreign investors, mainly the French, well known for their good taste and love for noble wines. Foreign investors appear today to be the only ones to finance the technical investment required for controlling the quality of wines. They have even renovated the chateau-like estates that once ruled the wine trade in the region. This makes the situation of the small, private winemakers quite difficult. But both the foreign investors and the individuals have to revert to the large scale, industrial practice of making Tokay by the traditional methods. Given the slow fermentation time of Tokay, immediate results cannot be expected.

But in spite of this, Tokay is still the most famous eastern European wine. Its popularity has deep roots in era of the Habsburgs. In the 17th and 18th centuries, Tokay was drunk at the very best European tables. Additionally, the system of communist Hungary was by far the most liberal and its laws half-conducive to a market economy when compared to those other communist countries. That's why Hungarian products made and still make their way more easily to Western markets, especially Germany.

Unfortunately, not many other eastern European products made their way westwards. Most western Europeans have never heard of "Miód", "Sophia" or "Egri Bikaver", alcohol labels well known by their eastern neighbours. With the growing number of fast-food restaurants, the wild romanticism of filling an empty stomach in Eastern Europe has subsided. The traditional restaurants become demoralized through the foreign tourists - you will hardly find national dishes there. Especially, since Germans have been pouring into Hungary and the Czech Republic, hyper-fat plates of Sauerkraut, extremely dry Riesling-wine and German beer dominate the menus of upper-class Central European restaurants. What a pity!

## **God and Goulash**

Moreover, the in EC widespread prejudice that “No thickness of sauce can ennoble the tired trio of pork, potatoes and cabbage that dominate the menu from Warsaw to Bratislava” The Economist, Nov. 95 make you believe that you couldn’t find anything eatable inside EC-borders. There is no shortage of blemish (?) on Central Europe. France and Italy would have probably been welcomed into the European Community for their cooking alone but Central Europe’s cuisine is still at the bottom of the European league. Although I’m not a big fan of the above mentioned eternal Central European “trio”, I have to admit, that I am fascinated by the Hungarian Goulash soup (Gulyásleves), for example - a meal, which, if made properly, could restore your faith in the existence of God.

When he recently October, 10th 1996 in the Friedrich Ebert Foundation spoke about the vision of the economically strong “Europe 2000”, the president of the European Parliament Klaus Hänsch warned of an “invasion” of products from not-European economic powers which would destroy the economic policy of the EC. “A future Europe where every TV-set comes from Japan and every washing-machine from the USA doesn’t match my vision of the European Community”, he said. Can you imagine the vision of the future Europe of 18, 20 or more countries with German Riesling-wine on every table?

*Aleksandra Sowa, born in Silensia/ Poland, is currently studying economics and computer science in Bonn.*

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## **Impressions from a Mission as an OSCE-observer of the elections in Bosnia-Hercegovina**

**Sebastian Bred**

### **Arrival**

The first attempt to reach Sarajevo failed. After 10 minutes circling the airport, the pilot announced that we could not land because of bad weather. Back in Zagreb 400 OSCE supervisors filed through the transit in order to sit and wait. Standing in line for a plane to Copenhagen, I saw a couple of Danish IFOR soldiers and engaged them in conversation. They were stationed in the area of Doboj and coming to the end of their duty. Basically they found their job quite boring and I was surprised about the rather simple attitudes which they had to the complex political situation of the area.

First doubts about the mission of the OSCE arose when they spoke about Bosniac-

Serbian relations in Doboj. Several Bosniacs had tried to return home within the last couple of months. The first couple of times apparently nothing happened. Later their bodies were found on the outskirts of Doboj (4 incidents reported). The explanation from the soldiers' side is that the Bosnian Serbs observed the return of the Bosniacs and prepared for their arrival. This was my first impression of the area in which I was going to work in: boring and deadly... Finally we arrived in Sarajevo. TV-pictures of a destroyed capital ran through my brain while the plane rolled to a halt on a runway which was too short. At its end IFOR was waiting for us, surrounded by burnt out and shelled houses. A bus took us to the barely repaired terminal, where we waited to be checked into our mission as OSCE supervisors for the first elections in BiH after the end of the war. I managed to get an ID-card and save my luggage before it was sent off to Banja Luka. After several hours of confusion an Austrian military bus took us to Zenica.

## **Zenica**

Even though I had seen the remnants of the war in Central-Bosnia, I was shocked by the outskirts of Sarajevo and had very little desire to see the rest of this once so lively city. A supervisor took a picture of Snipers Alley as we crossed it and I could not help smiling as the idea would never occur to me. Upon arrival in Zenica, I was surprised at our accommodation. The "dom penzioneiri", which had been closed throughout the war, had opened for the western supervisors to the luxurious price of 60 DM for a night. Our field officer came out and admitted that he was expecting somebody else. We were one day late and the briefing had already begun. The words of his assistant ("Welcome to hell") were not what I had expected considering the end of the war and the comfortable accommodation. The hotel was full of supervisors who were going to work in the area between Vitez, Doboj and Zenica. There were about 140 of us, including translators and drivers.

At first glance Zenica had not really changed. Many people, shops, police and military. But there was a basic difference between the city which I had lived in for several months in '95 and the city I experienced this time: the ambience. Smiles on people's faces, life in shops and cafes, activity and communication are hard to describe but easy to observe in Bosnia after the war. The briefing was finished after two days and finally we were ready to move towards our final destination, Tesanj. I was put in a team with Sabina (in her 30s, Swiss-Bosnian, a doctor), our translator Samir (DP = displaced person from Doboj, living in Tesanj) and our driver Hussein (Bosniac from Tesanj). Moving through the area north of Zenica for the first time in my life, Samir explained the different front lines and blockade lines as we passed them. Maglaj, Zepce, Doboj-South went by and again I saw house after house which had been set afire, shelled, shot at from close range. The area between Zenica and Tesanj is one of the areas where the alliance between the Bosniacs and Croats broke down and where both Serbs and Croats attacked the Bosniacs, and closed the roads for almost a year, leading to a famine in the area nobody will be able to forget. The maps showed the confrontation lines around these cities as heavily mined areas. Passing through Doboj-South I could see parts of Doboj, which today belongs to the Republika Srpska. The next weeks taught me a great deal about this city, its life before the war and the cruelties its Bosniac inhabitants had to go through. At first sight I only saw barbed wire, IFOR soldiers, burned down villages and one long road which led

us to Tesanj.

## Tesanj

As in Zenica the OSCE had organized accommodation for the group of supervisors beforehand in Tesanj. We arrived in the "Pansion Turist" and were received by the landlord with a drink in the meeting room. Upon the arrival in our rooms I realized that this was a rip off. In a 15m room there were 4 beds lined up, leaving no space for anything else. Everybody was supposed to pay 30 DM (one room 120 DM, which is more than an average monthly wage in the area). This included breakfast and showers, as well as a TV-room. As the OSCE had paid a deposit to the landlord in advance I was forced to stay there three nights before I moved to another location, where I slept alone in a room for 10 DM per night. Tesanj had been repaired since the end of the war. Nevertheless there were several buildings which still had holes from shelling and gun-fire. Both the mosque and the catholic church were damaged but in reasonable shape.

## Facts

Between 28th August and 21st September 1996 I worked as an OSCE supervisor in the municipality of Tesanj (Central-Bosnia: Doboj-Zenica Municipality). My assignment was to prepare the local teams (Polling Station Committees) in 9 Polling Stations for election day as well as being present in the Polling stations during 14th September and in the counting procedure after the election. 5 of our 9 Polling Stations were situated in small villages with a majority of Bosnian Croats. The Bosnian Croats have claimed their independence and, calling their area "USORA", see it as a part of Herceg-Bosna. Besides police, schools and a post office, they have established an independent civil administration. Nevertheless "USORA" has not been recognized by the federal authorities so far. Most of our Polling Stations were placed inside the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL). Due to the fact that the area was one of the main front lines during the war, an abundance of minefields restricted our freedom of mobility. According to the UNHCR, the population in the municipality of Tesanj consists of (numbers in brackets are taken from a census in 1991) 58,230 Bosniacs,

## Omanjska

**Polling Station:** a Cultural Center

**Voters:** about 300, all Bosnian Croats

**Problems:**

- Behind a Voting Screen, under a stack of white paper, I found 12 ballot papers each crossed for HDZ. The Chairman explained that 3 voters had probably "forgotten" to cast their ballots, and as he realized that I did not believe him, he explained they had put the paper there to make the tables more level. The incident was recorded in the Polling Book and both the Regional Field Officer and the LEC informed afterwards. The ballots were confiscated.
- An illiterate middle-aged lady requested help in filling in the ballot paper, and agreed upon a man who had already voted. Behind the Voting Screen, the person who was supposed to help intimidated other voters who were sitting behind the adjacent Voting Screens, forcing them to vote for HDZ. Neither the Ballot Controller nor the Chairman intervened even though the words of intimidation were spoken very loudly.

## Miljanovci

**Polling Station:** a Primary School

**Voters:** 700 Bosniacs

**Problems:**

- Deputy Chairman armed inside the Polling Station during Election Day
- Intimidation:** During the Voting Procedure the Deputy Chairman walked behind the Voting Screens several times, watching the voters and thereby violating their right to a secret vote.

including 15,511 displaced persons (34,938); 7,600 Bosnian Croats (8,952), and 210 Bosnian Serbs (3,078).

- Croatian member of Polling Station Committee withdrew one day before the election "of their own free will".

### **Election Day**

Observations and problems Each Polling Station was visited by us between 4 and 5 times during the day and several irregularities were observed. We were present in Miljanovci Novi and Miljanovci Stari during the closing of the Polling Stations. As IFOR could not find our Absentee Polling Stations in Jelah, we established contact with them and waited until IFOR arrived around midnight. In the boxes you find a short introduction to the Polling Stations and the problems during election day:

### **Miljanovci Stari**

**Polling Station:** a Primary School

**Voters:** 867, predominantly Bosniacs

**Problems:**

- Ink Controller did not check voters' fingers upon entrance as he was busy finding their names on the Voters List.

- Old woman who was not on the Voters List was allowed to vote because everybody knew her.

**Secrecy of Voting:** In several cases voters who requested help did not set the cross on the voting ballots themselves. Despite an estimated illiteracy rate of 50% in the area, not all the voters who were aided needed help nor were they aided correctly.

### **Problems concerning the Voting Procedure set up by OSCE**

1.) Members of Polling Station Committees belonged to the ruling party: In all our Polling Stations, the Committees were to 100% made up of members of the respective ruling party, being SDA or HDZ. In two Bosniac Polling Stations, a Bosnian Croat had been recruited by the Local Election Committee (LEC). Both withdrew on the day before election, due to pressure from both sides. The absence of opposition party members in the Polling Station Committee makes it impossible to ensure that the voting procedure is not tampered with. Even party agents from the opposition do not represent real control, as they are intimidated by the overpowering presence of the ruling parties in the Polling Station Committees.

2.) It was too easy to manipulate the voting procedures: The positions of the Ink Controller, ID-Officer and the Ballot Issuer were sources of irregularities in

### **Sivsa**

**Polling Station:** a Secondary School

**Voters:** 600, almost all Bosnian Croats

**Problems:**

- Ink Controller did not control every person who entered the Polling Station.

- Ballot Issuer instructed voters which party they should vote for.

- Ballot Issuer appointed other voters to help voters who apparently only had forgotten their glasses. Even though we informed both the Chairman and the Ballot Issuer about the "secrecy of voting", the cases in which voters helped voters who did not really need help did not stop. Action: Record in Polling Book.

most of our Polling Stations. Some of the Ink Controllers "forgot" to check the people in the queue. ID-Officers accepted documents which were questionable (e.g. ID-cards from "USORA"); refugees from other countries who returned for the day were able to vote twice as nobody was able to check if they had done so already. Ballot Issuers violated voting procedures by instructing the voters which party to vote for, convincing them that they needed help behind the voting screen. In one case the Deputy Chairman even walked behind the voting screen in order to make sure that the voters did not make any mistakes. Most of the above named incidents were not entered into the Poll Books as the present party agents did not dare to do so.

3.) Mistakes in the Final Voters List: All in all, our team had about 100 persons in 7 Polling Stations who could not be found on the Final Voters List. The LEC decided to issue a document for these cases as long as the voters were able to prove their existence in the Provisional Voters List. Due to hundreds of applicants arriving within the morning of the 14th of September, the LEC decided that voters only needed to show an ID-card to the ID-Controller in order to be able to vote.

*Sebastian Bred, 27, studied Political Science, Law and Public Economy in Munich. In 1995, he spent 5 months in refugee camps in Croatia and Bosnia working for an NGO.*

## Telework

# Officing Alternatively in Europe

**Currently 5% of employees in the USA do it, around 3-8% in Sweden, but only 0-4% in Denmark. However, in the future up to one fifth of the European workforce could be doing it: telework, also known as telecommuting, or alternative officing.**

**Loris Bennet, Berlin**



*Illustration by Oliver Weiss*

### **What is telework?**

The idea is that, rather than having to be physically present at a place of work, employees could spend some or all of their time working at home and communicate with the office via telephone or computer. There are thus a large number of forms of telework. A professional permanently employed by a company might spend only one day a week away from the office, whereas a freelancer might work entirely at home. Another possibility is that workers travel to a nearby telework centre or 'telecottage', which provides access to global information networks for communities which would otherwise be off the beaten data path. Because of this diversity of activities, the effects of telework will also vary considerably.

### **Advantages**

The advantages of telework, say its advocates, are manifold. Employers can reduce costs for office space and equipment by having up to four workers share one so called 'hot desk' in the office itself. Projects can be organised more flexibly, since dispersed teams can be assembled and reassembled to meet the immediate needs of the company, regardless of geographical constraints. It has even been suggested that the kind of decentralised structure telework makes an organisation less susceptible to terrorist attacks.

The benefits for the individual are reduced time spent physically commuting and the lack of geographical limitations on job opportunities. The upheavals associated with relocation because of a career move or a new job also no longer exist. Teleworkers are also able to work at times which suit their personal rhythm best, and better balance work and family life. There are also advantages for society as a whole. Less physical commuting leads to less traffic and, hence, to less pollution. Job opportunities could also be created in rural areas, thus reducing the pressure on already overcrowded cities.

### **Disadvantages**

The virtual office may however bring problems with it. Some potential telecommuters are apparently worried about how, if their partner is also at home, they will prevent themselves from continuously having sex rather than getting on with their telework. More serious concerns revolve around how far workers could be made to carry the cost of the new technology need and the degree to which employees could be forced out of the physical office, possibly into a form of pseudo-self-employment. A further consideration is the effect of working in isolation could have on individuals.

To counter these possible problems, trades unions and other organisations have drawn up various codes of practice to protect teleworkers. Despite this, telework will probably make a large contribution to the current drift away from 'jobs for life' towards what the business community calls 'more flexible working practices'. For many employees, this will mean less job security and this may or may not be compensated for by increased job opportunities in a more globalized market.

### **Telework and the EU**

At a press conference held at the beginning of European Telework Week 1996, concerns were voiced that Europe is lagging behind the trend towards on-line work and business. For example, in 1995 companies and individuals in the US invested over twice as much per capita in information technologies as Europe did. A further example of Europe's supposed failure to recognise the way the wind of change in the workplace is blowing was illustrated by the fact that, whereas 100 European white collar workers share 74 personal computers, the same number of their colleagues on the other side of the Atlantic have 104 PCs at their disposal. However, sceptics may well ask who, apart from hardware manufacturers, would benefit from Europe also increasing its average to more than one computer per employee.

Nevertheless, telework will become more important within Europe, and not just because of the influence of the USA on the way business is done in the rest of the world. From 1994 to 1998, the EU will spend 843 billion Ecu, around US \$1 billion, on its 'Telematics' programme, of which one of the two main aims is "to promote the competitiveness of European industry and the efficiency of services of public interest and to stimulate job creation through the development of new telematics systems and services in such areas as telework and teleservices".

### **Telework in Practice**

The EU hopes that by encouraging telework around 5 million jobs will be created over the next decade in rural areas, but quite what sorts of jobs these will be remains unclear. Early studies suggested that telework would mainly consist of routine tasks, and this is today partially the case. For example, large companies in Paris now contract out office work to secretaries living outside the capital. However, research carried out in Scandinavia has shown that, on the whole, teleworkers belong to the more fortunate members of society and are engaged in fields such as technical design and banking.

The cliché of the high-tech professional living and working in an idyllic cottage surrounded by vast spaces of breathtaking landscape and only connected to the grime and grind of the city via a fibre optic cable may not become the norm. But, assuming that the information revolution, like the industrial revolution, generates entirely new job opportunities, and providing there is enough telework to go round, more and more Europeans may be able to prune the roses during the coffee break.

*Loris Bennett, 30, is currently doing his doctorate in physics in Berlin.*



# An Essay on Defining and Redefining Architect of Thought

**Johannes Türk, Berlin**

The concepts of European Identity are mainly based on economic and sociological terms, thus excluding a tradition of thought that once was at the core of cultural and social development. But it seems clear that those concepts are limited by their approach: social and economic sciences fail to provide more than the frame of a picture yet to come. A free market, institutions, infrastructure and student exchange programmes cannot go beyond their task: to serve. Whom? A strange fate and innumerable administrative hurdles have focussed public attention on the functioning and its advantages. Vague terms like *identity*, *multiculturalism* are often nothing but parts of a rhetoric to justify interests and administrative measures. And the light of this rhetoric has not failed to blind. The paradoxical consequence: the logic of degrading cultural identity to a rhetoric of persuasion leads to the present situation, where economic and administrative difficulties lead to the danger that every blow that strikes one process endangers another. One cardhouse effect doesn't seem to be enough. The task for European institutions and Europeans could be to make our common identity firm enough to proceed irrespective of the economic process. It then could be a basis for the whole community.

## **Identity - a sum of narratives**

Identity is basically a story that everyone tells himself and others. Pictures and words, habits and thoughts form a strange narrative that accounts for individual life, teaching us what we identify with and what we reject. Some parts of this narrative are not individual but shared, and some even canon. We grew up somewhere with someone, never alone. We learn in schools, at universities, as apprentices. And what we learn is heritage. This heritage, whether we reject it, or not, is what our ancestors have left for us as the sum of individual narratives, millions of patterns that overlap and are overlain by political, social and other structures.

The point, at which we become aware of our identity is often the point at which it is put to the test by changes, at which it can no longer be taken for granted. The process Europe is engaged in thus becomes a challenge that should be confronted actively. Do I want to let the changes in the overlying structure pass or do I want to take part, to identify and to reject? Success becomes a matter of participation. We all are architects of personal and public identities, until we refuse to work at our drawing-board. We can no longer take our identity for granted unless we are blinkered. Our narrations go no longer without speech. We have to say something - communicate with people, films, books and newspapers. Defining and redefining. And it is exactly this point that philosophy comes in. Sitting at a drawing-board implies thought. But: we are not alone. There is neglected heritage

## **The tradition of Europe**

A brief look at history should be sufficient to realize that "European Identity" is not an abstract term - it is not even a new step evolution has recently led to. Philosophers such as Voltaire, Leibnitz, Cusannes, Hume and many others can be compared to nomads, living and travelling all over Europe, counselling and influencing others. They can be said to be the first self-aware Europeans. Erasmus, who wrote the book "Praise of Polly" in England, visited Thomas Morus, influenced Shakespeare greatly and thus without a man from Rotterdam (Erasmus) we would not know Shakespeare and the sum of our laughter would be smaller. Without Shakespeare and Euripides no psychoanalysis, for who would have told Freud the story about Oedipus that formed the prototype, the model or role for him to describe a child's development? The heritage of thought is immense and it has some splendid bearers, such as Gilles Deleuze, who tries to apply this heritage to our world, who moves back to Spinoza and asks him questions about his rational system of explaining the world. Who asks, whether Freud's Oedipus is rather a product of European culture instead of a universal model. Contemporary French philosophy is the best source of reflections, dealing with our literary and philosophical heritage, because they take our poetic, literary and philosophical heritage seriously. They are all narratives.

### **Gilles Deleuze - the philosopher of the century**

Gilles Deleuze, who was born in 1925, was a professor in Paris until he committed suicide half a year ago. And he can be called a real man of the 20th century. Not only did he rediscover unnoticed aspects of ancient philosophy, he also wrote books about cinema. Philosophy in his opinion could not neglect that the perception of the world is changed by films. But this fact should not be left to teachers and moralists. It is a new chance for thoughts and identity. The visual approach of his thoughts is obvious - his books are vast buildings, whose architect signed himself: Gilles Deleuze.

Although he was not a public person, his quiet thought is recognized by Michel Foucault as "the thought that could become the thought of our century." What would this thought of our century be like? It would certainly be theatrical. "The world is a stage, where everyone must play his part", wrote Shakespeare some 400 years ago. Deleuze's books can be compared to buildings or to a stage, where every philosopher appears and has his say. An enacted heritage.

*Johannes Türk, 24, studies comparative literature and philosophy at the Free University of Berlin*

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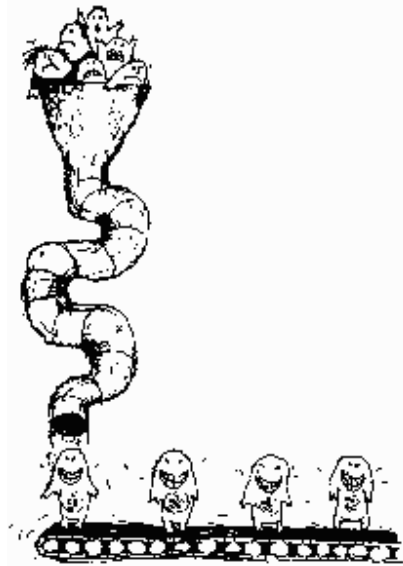
## **Aldous Huxley: Vision and Revision**

**Johannes Türk**

"Les utopies apparaissent  
comme bien plus réalisable

qu'on ne le croyait autrefois"

*Nicolas Berdiaeff*



*Illustration by Anja Bieback*

November 22nd, 1963, 5.20 p.m.: Two men are dead, and the world-wide significance of John F. Kennedy eclipses the death of one of the most outstanding personalities the 20th century has seen - Aldous Huxley. Dallas and Los Angeles epitomise the end of a period of hope in the turmoil of this century. It's glory and its tragedy. From 1949, Huxley lived in Los Angeles, California. The writer, whose breathtaking 'negative utopia' *Brave New World* opened our eyes and made us realise how endangered man is by the development of technical civilisation. The dangers have increased and his book can be said to be more relevant than ever. A society that is made stable by totalitarian control devised to make everyone satisfied by allowing drugs, pseudo-religious ceremonies addressing Henry Ford, the 'God' of this century, sex and consumer goods - genetic manipulation to engineer people for a predestined position in society: the danger still seems real. When Huxley wrote the book in 1932, many of its prophetic topics must have seemed far-fetched. But today?

He left an unfinished and rather essayistic novel that was only published after he had died of tongue cancer: *Island*. It contains the quintessence of the extremely intelligent and educated author: a positive utopia of a society in which technology is used in a responsible way; a society whose aim is to ensure maximum individual happiness and insight into every possible aspect of life for everyone. Huxley's heritage is one of the most important statements on the 20th century.

### **Volunteer and pacifist**

Aldous Huxley was born in 1894. He came from one of the most important families in Victorian England: the Huxleys and the Arnolds. His father was the teacher and writer Leonard Huxley, son of Thomas Henry Huxley, the famous biologist. His great-uncle, Matthew Arnold, was the most important critic and humanist in Victorian England. In 1908, his mother died of cancer and only two years later, in 1911, Huxley contracted a serious eye-illness, 'keratitis punctata', that left him almost completely blind. He learned braille and began to read again. One year later, his eye-sight returned. In spite of the condition of near blindness, he continued his studies at Eton as one of its best students. During the first world war he tried to join the army as a volunteer, but failed. Health proved a privilege. Instead of joining the army he did a civil service at Garsington, the estate of the Morrells, where he had the fortune to meet D. H. Lawrence and Maria Nys,

who later became his wife. In the twenties he worked as a teacher at Eton, later on as a journalist. His aim to acquire as much knowledge as possible never left him. He moved to France, where he hoped the climate would help to improve his eye-sight. There he wrote *Brave New World* in 1932. In 1935 he joined an anti-fascist congress of European writers in Paris and was working at an anti-fascist magazine together with the exiled Klaus Mann. But he remained a pacifist. It was this that made him the target of public contempt during the second World War.

### **In search of the "condition humaine"**

His intellectual career, as it is reflected in his books, shows us the cynic aesthete of the twenties, the pacifist of the thirties, and the mysticist of the forties and fifties. The typical stages of intellectual development. But his outstanding books go far beyond every cliché and show a deep search to understand and improve the 'condition humaine' of this century. He wrote a *Philosophia Perennis*, books on his self-experiments with mescaline, novels and a brilliant anthology of poems he comments on. In the introduction to this anthology *Texts and Pretexts* he writes: "An anthology compiled in mid-slump? Fiddling, you protest indignantly, while Rome burns. But perhaps Rome would not now be burning, if the Romans had taken a more intelligent interest in their fiddlers." This belief in the power of art as a mould to form life never left him. This could be seen as his the most important contribution to European culture.

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Social experiences and political actions teach how to  
juggle the stars

## **A Two-Fold Approach: AEGEE**



**AEGEE** is the student organisation    The European institutions are natural

that promotes the idea of a unified Europe, assisted by an unmatched personal network of European friends. As non-governmental, politically independent and non-profit organisation it is open for students of all faculties.

AEGEE was founded in 1985 in Paris as the "Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe" and today has about 15.000 members in nearly 200 cities all over Europe.

AEGEE's activities push for "European integration" and at the same time put the term into practice: Each year "Summer Universities" are held by most of the local groups to teach fellow students the language and culture of their home country. It is a general policy that the participating students are hosted for free

by the fellow AEGEE members, making travelling in Europe affordable, and getting to know people easy. In a similar fashion larger scale conferences are organised on topics as diverse as "European Security", "Tourism" or "Modern European Literature".

Nevertheless, there is always a fun aspect to AEGEE activities, including cooking, parties or pub crawls, and also sports like a skiing weekend or a border crossing bike trip are on the list. Being truly European, AEGEE does not make use of national administrative structures and instead relies solely on the local groups and the European board; support is provided by the European working groups which take on the topics Higher Education, East-West relations, Human Rights and the North-South conflict.

partners for AEGEE in the never ending quest to speed up integration. While the Education WG takes a stand for a more mobile and European minded educational system at the European Commission, the Council of Europe or the UNESCO, the Comité Directeur coordinates the yearly campaigns of AEGEE. In 1996 a series of events concentrated on the ongoing IGC negotiations (Maastricht II) and, as EU contractor of the PHARE TACIS democracy programme, the "Open Society" was intensively advocated in Central and Eastern European countries. For 1997 promotion and thorough understanding of the approaching monetary union are on the agenda.

The local level, finally, provides the base for all activities offering a regular social meeting. Often the ERASMUS students are taken care of, and usually speakers are invited to lecture on European and other topics of interest, including foreign language conversation groups. Thus the AEGEE members are given plenty of opportunity to train their organisational and social skills, challenged by groups composed of different - and sometimes conflicting - mentalities.

In short, the European minded finds in AEGEE an almost perfect environment to learn and act for the European ideal. Do contact us if this is what you are interested in!

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**"See what we can do for you... and think what you can do for Europe!"**

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## **Call for articles**

**Aleksandra Sowa, OEM Bonn**

**Text Deadline: 25, January 1997**

The next OEM Periscope will focus on the theme  
**"Media and Democracy"**

How is the Europe represented in your dailies? Is all the news true about Euro Sceptics in Britain? A whole realm of media developed out of the EU, including the founding of several European Journalism Schools...

Despite constitutional guarantees stipulating the freedom and independence of the media, and even the freedom of information and the people's right to it, the relationship between government and press has generally always a love-hate affair.

But in spite of the "change of winds", in every political system, media practitioners enjoy a certain privileged position.

The reason: the power of media in shaping public opinion rose phenomenally in the last years! In the industrialized countries, centralized communication systems and media giants have emerged to replace the role and influence that the churches, political parties and trade unions once wielded in shaping and representing public opinion. To speak of the "independence of the media" in the 20th century seems increasingly outdated!

But where do the modern ideals of an independent media now come from? Are they a result of new forms of state censorship, huge broadcasting conglomerates and the development of the electronic forms of broad- and narrowcasting? Do the new

