



# **CIVIS EUROPAEUS SUM**

ADDRESS BY

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## **CIVIS EUROPAEUS SUM**

**Here we are mostly European citizens, but what kind of people are we?**

**Europe's crest is the learning person.**

**This attributive verb (learner) is the foundation of the value system and the secret of development, and if you like of identity itself.**

**A person learns from the mysteries of human nature from without and within.**

**Research: learning which means the preservation, correction and further development of all.**

**The learner is capable of regret and can learn from his or her mistakes.**

**Learns to respect the person and oneself as a subject possessing self-control.**

**He or she gets to know one's environment, field, gets a feel for opportunities, learns from slips, wants to achieve more results with less effort, refines and chisels one's tools and methods.**

**The antithesis of the learning person is the arguing person, who believes that he or she is right, never others – or by any chance certain other groups. One is incapable of self-judgement, blames others for problems, moans, threatens, puffs up thereby confirming one's strengths.**

**There was a long period in Europe's history when the escalation of argument, mercenary struggle was more productive than law-abiding employment.**

**The thief could gain a lot during a short time, and this thesis also applies to the wars of the past twentieth century.**

**The European Union brought an end to this period.**

**Robbing or learning?**

**The synonyms for robbing are: forced work and corruption; for learning research, art and play.**

**For the person who would rather argue than learn, his conviction is battle.**

**Sanctified war in the name of religion, nation, or world revolution: the goal is evangelised.**





**There are lazy brained cultures which avoid intellectual competition, viewing criticism as malicious antagonism, where this type of person is normal.**

**Where the uniform and waving of a weapon is in fashion, learning is not fashionable.**

**Flag waving is practised instead of school.**

**The European Union's nations are becoming civilized, but are not without weapons.**

**They are protecting their security but not parading with their weapons, they are not lifting their legs to amazing heights at the parade.**

**As friendly advice we would recommend to the dictators: less flux and anger, but more learning!**

**People, me included, have various self-definitions, if you like: we have identities which are either compatible or combative with each other.**

**Identity: Self-identity, introduction.**

**That which I take on from among the adjectives given to me by others, and unequivocally feel to be my own.**

**I have several possible self-definitions.**

**Based on what I'm doing it appears as though: I'm a writer.**

**Every occupation and identity is divided into a hierarchy based on which-to what extent is it important to their bearer.**

**From among these some are higher, others are lower.**

**The king has more rank than the woodcutter.**

**However it is possible that the Queen doesn't love the King, but the woodcutter is loved by his wife.**

**Then in the hierarchy of love is the woodcutter higher or lower than the king?**

**The same can be possible in relation to cleverness and stupidity, or beauty and ugliness.**

**There is self-respecting and modest self-awareness.**

**If I skated back seventy years in time, I could be what I was, a student at the Budapest Madach High School with satisfactory results.**



**What's more, if I was to do the type of violation which an old-time fellow student dared to do, if I was kissing with the director's wife in a neighbouring street, maybe the sweet moments would have a bitter consequence, and I would be expelled for this or that.**

**I could still remain a Budapest resident, Hungarian citizen, what's more European civilian as many mortals are.**

**Is it usual to rank our affiliations, what importance do we give to each one?**

**I to one, you to the other.**

**People can change their appearances, their address, their citizenship, their religion, their occupation, their family status, their interests, their attractions, aversions, what's more even their gender.**

**A person can change most of his or her characteristics, in a favourable or even more unfavourable direction.**

**I can be the owner of a nice house, and I can be homeless.**

**I can respect my neighbour, or hit him or her in the nose.**

**An increasingly complicated web of identities makes a person, especially a European.**

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**When in 1988 in the USA, in *Colorado College* I was teaching the European novel to literature students, I repeatedly used the concept pair of *time culture* and *space culture* .**

**How many years are behind you and how many open miles are around you?**

**Our European culture, somewhat unlike American culture, is about two-three thousand years old, squashed in a relatively small space, in continuous flux about its people which will not come to an end while we humans are here.**

**Therefore it is justified that we should talk of European culture as some type of coherent living being and therefore make it easier for both Europeans and those outside of Europe to access European cultural resources.**

**Selection and coexistence are in the interest of Europe in partnership, so that it knows what it owns.**

**That is: what do you have and since when?**

**For three hundred years? For three thousand years?**

**This longer and deeper time dimension is a European asset.**





**In the world's better libraries European literature can be held in our hands, ancient and modern authors are also alphabetically lined on our bookshelves.**

**Various readers and travellers have their own imaginary, visualised and seen Europe, by hearing geographical place names: the reader can see something in front of one's self.**

**It is not especially fruitful to agonise over whether Europe should or should not exist.**

**This argument doesn't exclude comedy in view of the road network of airlines.**

**Let's accept: Europe exists.**

**And we are in it too, we resemble it.**

**In other words: we are Europe.**

**I would have to doubt the sanity of my mind if I didn't appreciate what we have received with the Union.**

**We have become half a milliard, splendid but somewhat scary.**

**Let's aim to walk across this largish land, we should often have to say *nice to meet you*, that is *how do you do*.**

**In my childhood, I even had to fear for my life from other Europeans, and not from primitive tribes.**

**Mass murder and high culture fit together.**

**Today's Europeans probably wouldn't say that it is appropriate and necessary to kill fellow humans in the name of some sublime idea.**

**We couldn't teach children calmly that they should be proud if their fathers, grandfathers received medals for murdering.**

**The thought that intimidating the citizen is a necessary condition for the security of the nation would also not receive much sympathy in today's Europe.**

**This means that in our continent we don't know a higher value than the citizen's freedom, even though in the larger half of my life that's not what they taught me, rather the opposite.**

**Let's revel in our memories.**

**If the well of time is profoundly deep, to borrow a metaphor from Thomas Mann, looking into the not so deep well of my memory, I see not only the beautiful, good and intelligent Europe, but also the disgusting, evil and distraught one.**





Therefore tread cautiously with Europe's identity.

However the real antithesis of ostentation is not self-hatred but clear vision.

Would it be possible to refer to beauty as Europe's peculiarity?

The beautiful continent?

We wouldn't be far from the truth with this flattering attribute.

But the rest is also the same: in its own way.

At any rate the most human monument and historical memory fits into one square kilometre in Europe, while our history is accompanied by the need for created beauty.

It is a verbal continent living with plentiful words, we compose words, we keep a diary, we confirm and judge ourselves, a written trace is kept of what has happened.

Here somewhat more words, quotes, analysis surrounds love and eating, politics and literature than elsewhere.

Using the European text and image heritage, we contemplate ourselves. We live in the mythology which was left to us by authors, artists. We ask ourselves the old questions in newer and newer forms.

The beauty in them is that *they have no final solutions*.

Multi-lingual Europe was able to become a cultural web due to translators, that's why European cultural politics' favourites could be literary translators.

Due to general curiosity, European culture is an inclusive culture. Europe can thank its strength-power to its inquiring culture for the fact that though in reducing numbers, there are still passionate readers among them.

Europe's essence is curiosity (which is perhaps mostly a sin that can be forgiven and it's the nicest virtue), the hunger for learning-research which has become a paradigm, the desire to understand, the hedonism of the brain.

The peculiarity of Europe is the lively conversation between renewal and respect for tradition, in the tradition of the Gutenberg-revolution, the exit of books from monasteries, and the appearance of intellectual islands.

European culture has no limits, it is everywhere in the world: at University, in the library, in the music room and more widely on the Internet, so that its emanation is more universal and respected than European politics.





**Europe's uniqueness is in the great variety of independent, unique stories, original thinkers and accomplishments.**

**European cultural politics should confirm this aspect, what is best within: the respect for creative individuals.**

**One of the characteristics of a mature individual: is deliberate memory.**

**We could rejoice if we could consider a common individual affecting ourselves, as we could keep our memories alive and could think of them persistently.**

**The European person is more of a moderator than teacher, he or she questions, confronts different experiences and includes students gathering from around the world into a wider exchange of views.**

**Each place's case has become more the world's own.**

***European culture is one of the avant-garde workshops of world culture.***

***The question is: Is Europe able to surpass international limitations intellectually?***

***The USA, though a global power, reconciles the designated world view with its own point of view.***

***Whether we like it or not, world integration and Europe's within is realised.***

***There are intellectual pursuits the developers of which have been working together over and above limits for a long time and who can see at details from the whole.***

***Institutions and cities exist which can be seen as world furnaces.***

***While people are curious about themselves and each other there's a need for authors' talks and there will be recipients for thorough therefore entertaining tales as well.***

***We can also visit interesting cities and people through reading therefore we don't have any reason to fear our profession the novel from other pleasures, mediums, genres, not even from its own inflation.***

***There's never too much from the real, of course there is more of the almost real.***

***The thick, the dense, that which cannot be misjudged finds its appropriate consumer. If writing tools can be bought cheaply, temptation doesn't sleep: to play with it, to say something in writing.***

***The professional can sense from a few pages whether the other author has a richer world than he or she does, or poorer, if there's any private good in his or her head, and if there are any treasures underneath the apparent poverty.***





*Love and rivalry tie colleagues together.*

*According to my knowledge the world's printed or electronic book circulation increases and so does the number of people who can read.*

*Around the world new book markets appear and these connect with each other through more than one thread.*

*The book industry receives relatively little support in the market economies, it mostly has to stand on its own feet.*

*As a result, it has a degree of strength: it's not dependent for its whole existence on the mercy of the government or other benefactors, however relies on permanent consumer trends, the different needs of private purchasing power.*

*World literature and European literature within strongly realised European citizens' self-portrayal in the past two hundred years and exceeded in the second half of the twentieth as world's literature's ideology is given life by the world book market.*

*Following Eastern Europe's change of government, undemanding literature occupies a large percentage of time and money allocated to reading, however a portion remains to so-called high literature as well, to enduring works of art and to the all-time almost classic repertoire for which there are buyers all the same as for any other quality product, from a coat to wine.*

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*Everyone has an interest in one of the dimensions or identity type's priority, primacy.*

*I for example value literary culture more than football culture.*

*What's more I find authors more interesting than politicians.*

*I'm bored of the winners of various political matches, I'm not bored of my distinguished author colleagues.*

*That's why the title of one of my books became Anti-politics.*

*I'm wary of politicians, they can cause me trouble and I could not, and would not like to cause them similar unpleasantness.*

*But their self-importance is noisier and more irritating than ours, authors and artists.*

*So, ladies and gentlemen, dear contemporaries in Europe and other continents, wanting something better I wish the quiet of reflection to all of us.*

*If I was a politician, then I would be foremost interested in government affairs.*





Amongst a person's attributes, I consider the location of a person to be exceedingly important, that is *he or she* exists somewhere.

As we all live in states, I don't like rewarding one of my pathetic characteristics from among others, actually the state's, in which territory I live.

What's more, if that person who is the state or even stands on the edge of a block state, in my eyes has the extraordinary danger that with his or her decisions problems can be caused for me and for all those for whom I fear.

I would not like to depend for life or death on geniuses, saints either.

Perhaps they could even cause my death however even if I wanted to I couldn't cause great misfortunes to others, that's why I prefer equal citizen relationships, rather than adoration or hatred, which is directed towards the leaders of the state and whose exaltation is indicated by the leader state's metaphor, Hitler's compliment towards himself, but in order to avoid their names we apologise to other dictators.

If everything depends on the leader, then he or she affects the whole, then it will be as the leader wants, he or she can look around above the masses, and can say within that you are all my bunnies.

I will tell you what you are.

I will also tell you what you are not, that is what you shouldn't be if you mean well for yourselves.

The question therefore is how do I value one or another dimension based on how dangerous I deem each one to be.

I'm not particularly wary of the mayor, we can say hello on the street, he or she can hardly shut me down.

Maintaining the atmosphere of equality is the *sine qua non* of mutual respect maybe sympathy.

Therefore the question is whether I'm a civic or citizen, that is the type of person who can be respected.

As a citizen what am I interested in?

Which person above me do I have to fear?

As an author perhaps from the classics of the trade, if I feel uncertain, they are my superiors – on the bookshelf.





**Our relationship can be a mirror to my changing personality in time.**

**I can change my identities, there are artists and con artists who transform, writers are seldom these.**

**The citizen is relatively stable, changing of cloaks is not his or her decoration.**

**In his or her eyes permanency deserves respect, the chameleon is not a citizen's ideology, cannot be counted on, will probably trick you, is nice today and will not be so tomorrow.**

**Approval of the leader state (Führerstaat) is incompatible with citizen democracy.**

**The victorious leader and the self-aware citizen cannot stand one another, as the leader views others as tools, however a free person does not want to be a tool, therefore the citizen feels the leader to be trouble, a threat.**

**It is tasteless cowardice to serve a haughty leader.**

**The citizen's participation in Europeans' relations, particularly the Danube region's inter-connection is a sound development.**

**The European citizen is interested in who and to what extent is participating in the creation of Europe and also: who wants to dissuade others from doing so.**

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**Nations, cities and regions have numerous bureaucracies, luckily these check each other, they are in contest.**

**Who wins? The local? The regional? The European? The international-global?**

**Who values which, bureaucracies have various importance in the eyes of citizens.**

**In our minds we are the conductors of competing sounds, and we can call this autonomy as well, the local government of our personalities.**

**It is enough for us to close our eyes, and we can see the movie of our lives, our own direction, we are self-directors.**

**We describe ourselves, direct, play, we are responsible for ourselves and our creations, in the present case for Europe, and so gradually: for our room.**

**We are playing for fellow citizens, it would be good to find common interests, and maybe they would understand.**

**The foundation of European corporation is the citizens' autonomy.**

**Corporation of citizens or governments?**





**Citizen public opinion is the highest body.**

**European discussion is more interesting than the prime minister's club.**

**At least in our minds we have to separate intellectual authority and power which can also coerce, dictating to policemen and women.**

**Force should not dictate to the intellect.**

**To adapt to it is moral disgrace.**

**A normal European citizen does not accept any title for violating personal human dignity.**

**We can greatly respect all countries, regions in our continent, not only the beautiful but also the strange.**

**Each city has its own aesthetic, it just needs to be discovered.**

**The Central and South-East Europeans, within which the Balkans especially possess [the above] and I'm receptive to it through sensual attraction.**

**It would be pointless for a finicky person, let's say a lady to say on my page, *perhaps let's not go into this pub because perhaps dear they will hit me in the head.***

**I'm pulled there by my heart, and the more jumbled this experience becomes, the narrower the choice, the more rudimentary the shaded chair, the more morose the innkeeper, the more forgiving I will be.**

**I'm reminded of variety, the melting of layers into one another by the strange word, fanciful abundance and austere poverty, excessiveness, *the rejection of correct quantity*, morose wildness and flirtatiousness which make you laugh, strong tastes, hard sensuality, traditional manhood and traditional womanhood, fear from backwardness, excessive refinement and surprising versatility.**

**Europe does not end at the Carpathians.**

**For example in April 1945 I was enchanted by Bucharest (at the age of twelve).**

**I came from hungry and ruined Budapest, loud sellers offered meatloaf sticks on Lipsan, Eastern sweets and that which was the undisputed measure of well-being in my eyes: an attractive plump baker's shop was full of bread.**

**I cannot say that I came without preconceptions, earlier I imagined that Romanians don't have enough for wheat bread, that's why they eat corn drip.**

**And I see that in the midst of all the bread she's merrily eating mush. I also started to like mush.**





**Calea Victoriei elegance was striking, and Boulevardul Bratianu eight-ten storey high-rises are pleasing Bauhaus style buildings – at least in height – exceeded Budapest equivalents at least twice over in Újlipótváros.**

**I appreciated the beauty of the chausses, lakes, parks, and in the later especially the Italian ice-cream seller, with his saddle shaped, colourful *cassate* named composition.**

**I also liked the house where we lived: the old-fashioned boyar villa, where the owner lived, behind the modern apartment, my cousin's family on the second floor, the staff on the highest floor.**

**The maid also had a separate apartment and her partner, a carpet polisher was a flashy citizen in his Sunday suit.**

**He invited me to the First of May protest where I myself murmured some catchwords, cheering the progressive youth, the unity of the people and king, furthermore Prime Minister Peter Groza, afterwards we went boating in Karoly park.**

**That Sunday can be said to be unforgettable, that Bucharest has submerged as has childhood and if I look now I see something different: the gradual descent of the financial situation from the West, the individual compromised of care and neglect.**

**I see that half a century after the war has not done much good to the city.**

**The state has suppressed it severely, the traces of which are visible, in development, the block of flats which overwhelm the whole post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe.**

**What largely took place more toward the West in the nineteenth century, the thrust-like wave of industrialisation and urbanisation remained in the twentieth century in Europe's eastern half.**

**People, ethnic communities disappeared; these fragments were joined by the Jews, and who wasn't murdered emigrated.**

**My cousin, a large company's chief engineer didn't like the fact that at dawn rain-coated people would stand around his bed and shine a light in his face with a torch; he emigrated.**

**Most of the Germans are also there, they had to leave, the head state sold them for good money, they left by their own will.**

**The mill of nation state homogenisation is crazy, from dressing to rhetoric, everything has become the same, and the voices have not yet decided what they should like more, one type or many types.**

**Cultural islands, life and behavioural forms disappeared, new ones appeared, all more intense social changes are accompanied by refinement and coarsening.**





**The direction can largely be suspected, but the road is hard for the majority, even grievous.**

**Past periods, empires fallen into dust left their traces, in reality our cities are three hundred years old at most.**

**The medieval remnants have depleted, the swing forward following the Ottoman Empire started in truth with the Baroque which was soon overwhelmed by enlightened absolutism's sober, solid, horizontal classicism.**

**In Buda and Pest modern town development started approximately three hundred years ago, which though ruptured by the warring catastrophes, can overall be seen as a continuous process.**

**Since then the city has engineers who regulate the whole city's functioning and pass their knowledge onto their successors.**

**The Budapest person is tied to the Danube with the same feeling as love, happy and terrible images, danger and rapture.**

**The Danube separates and connects, different nations and people can be found on its shores but the Danube is the same, running in the upper regions, flowing in the lower regions and sovereign towards everyone, they can be forceful towards it but it surpasses this and sooner or later punishes for it.**

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**We go to listen to the water's words, if we can, we rest our eyes on it, and it is always a pleasure for me to discover the Danube's silver streak when I return home by plane.**

**However, the river is not the sea between two shores, it's not infinite, it's transparent, cannot be fooled, it's limited and still open – it progresses toward the estuary with even calmness, and connects cities, people.**

**This is the continent's sea, main road, as a matter of fact a peaceful link between cities and people.**

**Boat people are always open to the world, we are not all boat people, the Bavarians, the Austrians, the Hungarian, the Slovaks and the Serbs don't have a sea, for us the Danube is the promise of the sea, through it we can reach distant coasts, it goes through and dissolves our detainment.**

**Those combative, who hate one another also love it, that's why the Danube is a great teacher, because that which is loved by all can make us understand that perhaps we are not so far from each other since we have common feelings.**





**It can be said that the Danube is Central Europe's river, this colourful region's chief vein and with its here and there existence suggests that it is not only ours but others' too, or actually we are its, the citizens of the Danube.**

**The Danube valley's people create a geopolitical reality, it's not a coincidence that we are here.**

**Coming from Asia, the Hungarians stopped here looking for a home and said this is a good place.**

**Danube monarchy say the historians about the Habsburg Empire, and now following shocks we are on our way within a United Europe, a European Union towards a self-conscious Danube region, which is formed by the self-government of the people and not the dynastic supremacy.**

**The national boundaries artificially separate the Danube region's people. We acknowledge that the Danube flows from West to East, and takes along it goods and samples for thinking and action.**

**There's no other international river like this, encompassing this many people, cultures.**

**The Danube is not angry with the Volga or the Rhine and is only different from them in the sense that more diversity of colours rules its shores.**

**It is justified that a Danube committee should decide about the Danube.**

**One nation cannot decide within the circle of its own sovereignty about important changes affecting the river.**

**Only common responsibility and public opinion can be competent in deciding the Danube's affairs. We need to protect the Danube from ourselves, so that we don't take advantage of its gifts.**

**The river is an eternal symbol, a wise and maternal element, nourishing and opening, boats and corpses have swum on it, it's always the same, always different.**

**Probably the observer of the river is given this experience through the Heraclitus paradox, that the river knows all, has seen all, because though in one glance it has moved on, since human memory it has passed through here, in this region.**

**Budapest residents could be proud of this river, the city lived from the Danube, the passenger and goods came on the water.**

**The medieval city turned its back on the Danube.**

**It was afraid of the enemy closing in on the back of the river with quiet rowing strikes.**





**That's why there are cities on the shores of the river which retreat from the water and dangers closing in through it with bastions.**

**This fear decreased in the nineteenth century and the newer built cities were more fortunate, the intelligent directors of which recognised that the Danube is their city's spine, and the riverside is the walkway, the Danube esplanade.**

**The Danube is a huge treasure, the riverside apartment is worth a lot.**

**Swimming pools, playing fields, boat-garages and harbour rafts, floating restaurants, coffee terraces and fun boats can overwhelm the colour changing surface with cheerful colours.**

**It is streaming internationalism, there are boats, flags and travellers of different nations on it.**

**In the second half of the nineteenth century Budapest was judiciously smart, it regulated the river flowing on its own path and accepted the Academy and Parliament on its shores, the hotels and shopping centres.**

**This became the main road, and the always inviting, probably the most beautiful spectacle.**

**A gentle relationship needed and could be formed with the great river.**

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**At the turn of the twentieth century the city looked toward the Danube, the most important public buildings crowded on the water front with great confidence, so that they can contemplate themselves in the mirror's river.**

**It was possible to shoot people from the river front, or from the edge of the leak cut into the ice, so that the corpse and the murderer's mirror image could be taken by the river to unknown distances. If we as humans treat each other badly, if we try to kill each other, then the bridges will explode.**

**The first victim of the war is the bridge, and the innocent river can be made into a border river, cities can be cut in two by it, so that it's not possible to peacefully cross and return on the bridge, on the ferry.**

**Who appreciates one's neighbour, also appreciates the river.**

**In the company of the Danube we can give ourselves over to meditative peace, it's possible to watch the boats swim by here and there from the shore, it is possible from the brick step to confess love and to think of our dead.**

