

STOP WHINING, BE OPTIMISTIC

When I was thinking where this essay should be about I realized I believe in optimism. I lived my whole life in The Netherlands, most of the time living the good life. I have a great family, many friends, I am healthy, I have enough money to take care of myself and at the same time do things I really like, I have the privilege to study what I want and most important I am free. Yes it sounds cliché, but it's true and yes I am very privileged. But this will count for the most of the Dutch population or let say Western society.

Off course I know that it is unlikely that I will be killed by a terrorist or will die by a fatal disease. And off course their can go something wrong. So I can not think everything work out OK, but I can say everything will probably work out OK. We, the western world, have a high level of prosperity. So people from the Third World would say 'off course you are optimistic'. But unfortunately this is not the case for a lot of people living in The Netherlands. People complain a lot. But on the other hand they don't know what they are talking about. They don't know anything about big issues like health care, the environment, the financial crisis and the globalisation. But they do know everything about their own little problems. 'Everything that changes in their surroundings is bad'. It is the stupidity of man. I understand this has a lot to do with peoples frame of reference. But also in my circle of friends which exists mainly of high educated people. They have knowledge of all these things but at the same time they are yelling populist language from the couch when watching the 8 O'clock news. Not grounded at all.

The story Lucas told during the workshop is exemplary. He told us about his past as a graffiti artist in his small village. He wrote his nickname LUISS on several walls through the village, in which he wrote the 'SS' in the shape of the waffen-SS. Why did he do it? Because he was sort of afraid of foreign people who were 'causing troubles' in parts of the Netherlands, especially in the big cities. But not in his small village. Basically what he said was that he was afraid of something he didn't know. And that is something common in the mind of people. People are affraid of what they don't know. When it is about people you call it xenophobia.

So-called issues like 'integration', as if people don't want to adapt to the Dutch living standards. Off course they should understand and respect our culture and adapt to it, but that is happening. Afgezien of a few persons. I lived for example in three different cities in The Netherlands: in Groningen, Amsterdam and The Hague. And in that period I maybe once saw a burka. Don't get me wrong, I really think women should not wear a burka, but it is simply not a problem in The Netherlands. People make problems which aren't there. And this fear mostly exists because of the scaremongering politics of people like Geert Wilders from the nationalistic party PVV.

What I try to say is that it is not obvious at all that I am so optimistic. I always look on the bright side, and I would say stop wining, it will make life much easier.

But the story above is something I really do **not** want to preserve for the future, although it is something which is permeating in society. But I think also that this is something every generation has to deal with. The stupidity of man. Not these elements are the problems, but the stupidity of man is the problem.

Be optimistic, everything is going to be alright. I think there are a lot of people who thinks the same way as I do. And there are political parties in The Netherlands who think the same. Unfortunately the nowadays politic

is diffused and so is the population. Paying too much attention to issues facing the drugs-policy, towelheads and dogshit on the streets will distract people from bigger more important issues like the environment, economic crisis, health care and education.

What I really want to preserve and what is very typical for the current period is the battle against the pollution. We started pollute the earth by the beginning of the industrial revolution. The last decades we are facing the problems because of this pollution and started to find alternative ways of generating energy. There is a sort of green revolution going on against the industry. And I am sure that in a certain period the whole world is working on green energy. We will be described in history as the generation who polluted the world, but on the other hand also as the generation who were looking for techniques to realize a green world. Can we provide in current society the whole humanity with green energy only if we just want to? Or do we still need the oil and use more and more nuclear energy? About the oil it is clear that we still need it, but in the near future there is no oil anymore, so we should think of an alternative. Is nuclear energy an alternative? These are all questions which play an interesting role on a global scale. Especially now with the big disaster in Japan. The nuclear power plant collapsed, it was one of the most safe plants in the world. Because of that in Germany all the nuclear power plants will close in 2022.

In the left wing of society people are against nuclear energy. And they let people know with spontaneous communication. So I would say: preserve the protest signs, but on the contrary also preserve a power plant like a monument, or a windmill... Let the people from 2250, who probably live in a society which is 100% green, know that we were looking for alternatives.

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