

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

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DOCUMENT 1-765/83

Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Youth,
Culture, Education, Information and Sport

on the European Poetry Festival

Rapporteur: Mr J.H. VANDEMEULEBROUCKE

Pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure, the European Parliament referred the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr MARCK and others on the European Poetry Festival, the Library of Poetry and the Centre for Research, Documentation and Translation (Doc. 1-378/82) at its meeting of 5 July 1982 and, at its meeting of 13 September 1982, the motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs DURY and Mr GLINNE on the promotion of poetry (Doc. 1-552/82) to the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport as the committee responsible. The Committee on Budgets was asked for its opinion on the motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs DURY and Mr GLINNE (Doc. 1-552/ 82).

At its meeting of 19 and 20 January 1983, the committee decided to draw up a report and appointed Mr VANDEMEULEBROUCKE rapporteur.

The committee considered the draft report at its meetings of 26 and 27 May 1983 and 21 - 22 September 1983. At the last meeting it unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution as a whole.

The following took part in the vote: Mr BEUMER, chairman; Mr VANDEMEULEBROUCKE, rapporteur; Mr ARFE; Miss BROOKES; Mrs GAIOTTI DE BIASE; Mr GEROKOSTOPOULOS and Mrs VIEHOFF.

At its meeting of 16 June 1983, the Committee on Budgets decided not to deliver an opinion.

The report was tabled on 26 September 1983.

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A

The Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution together with explanatory statement.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on the European Poetry Festival

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr MARCK and others on the European Poetry Festival, the Library of Poetry and the Centre for Research, Documentation and Translation in Louvain (Doc. 1378/82),
- having regard to the motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs DURY and Mr GLINNE on the promotion of poetry (Doc. 1-552/82),
- recalling its earlier resolutions of
 - (a) 13 May 1974 on measures to protect the European cultural heritage (Doc. 54/74) (1),
 - (b) 8 March 1976 on the formation of a European Community Youth Orchestra (Doc. 537/75) (2),
 - (c) 8 March 1976 on Community action in the cultural sector (Doc. 542/75) (3),
 - (d) 18 January 1979 concerning Community action in the cultural sector (Doc. 325/78) (4),
 - (e) 16 October 1981 on a Community charter of regional languages and cultures and a charter of rights of ethnic minorities (Doc. 1-965/80),

(1) OJ No. C 62, 30 May 1974, p. 5

(2) OJ No. C 79, 5 April 1976, p. 8

(3) OJ No. C 79, 5 April 1976, p. 6

(4) OJ No. C 39, 12 February 1979, p. 50

- having regard to the communication of 22 November 1977 from the Commission to the Council concerning Community action in the cultural sector (1),
 - having regard to the communication of 8 October 1982 from the Commission to the Parliament and the Council concerning stronger Community action in the cultural sector (COM(82) 590/final),
 - having regard to the report by its Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport (Doc. 1-765/83),
- A - noting the initiative launched by the European Association for the Promotion of Poetry to establish a European Poetry Festival, a Library of Poetry and a Centre for Research, Documentation and Translation of Poetry,
- B - aware that culture in its rich varieties of expression forms one of the elements of European identity,
- C - convinced that obstacles to the free exchange within the Community of the various forms of cultural expression should be eliminated;
1. Calls on the Commission to place the European Poetry Festival under the patronage of the Community;
 2. Calls on the Council to provide support to the festival and its organs on condition that the festival takes account of the fundamental aims of the Community's cultural policy, i.e. the preservation, stimulation and encouragement of the rich diversity of cultures in the countries of the Community;
 3. Calls further on the Commission to help secure the continuity of the European Poetry Festival, the Library and the Centre;
 4. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and to the Commission of the European Communities.

(1) OJ No. C 34, 10 February 1978, p. 2

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTIntroduction

1. In 1979, the editors of the multilingual magazine New Europe (art-literature-sciences) published annually in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, launched a plan for the first European Poetry Festival. On 31 October 1979, a non-profit-making association was established under Belgian law in Louvain, called 'the European Association for the Promotion of Poetry' (Belgisch Staatsblad 28 February 1980). The founders of the association included poets and critics from Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Spain.

The association's objectives are

- the administration of the European Library of Poetry and the Centre for Research, Documentation and Translation,
- the organization of the European Poetry Festivals,
- the publication of poetry collections, anthologies and studies on poetry in Europe,
- the administration of the European Chair of Poetry.

In this way, the association intends to make a practical contribution to the knowledge of the languages written and spoken in Europe, European culture and the exchange of ideas between the poets, critics and literary historians of Europe.

The European Library of Poetry

2. The Library is situated in Louvain (at 9 Blijde Inkomststraat). It functions as a public reading room. The Library currently holds about 2,700 volumes of poetry, anthologies and magazines in 35 languages from 40 countries.

The Centre for Research, Documentation and Translation of Poetry

3. The Centre for Research, Documentation and Translation possesses about 1,000 files containing biographies, newspapers cuttings and critical reviews of a thousand contemporary European poets.

4. The Centre for Translation has undertaken, under bilateral cooperation agreements between the Member States, the translation and publication of the following poetry volumes: 'chants planétaires' by Pierre Roller (Luxembourg) from French into Dutch; 'L'immensità dell'attimo' by Mario Luzi (Italy) from Italian into Dutch; and 'Het land van Amen' by Anton van Wilderode from Dutch into Italian.

Other projects are in preparation. The Centre for Translation is planning to set up 'translation branches' in the countries of the European Community.

Contacts have been made with the university of Urbino with the aim of establishing there a branch for translations into Italian.

European Poetry Festival

5. Every year the association organizes a European Poetry Festival in either Louvain or another European city. The association has held four such festivals since 1979.

To coincide with each festival, the association publishes multilingual anthologies and collections of essays on the chosen topic. Seven volumes have appeared to date.

European Chair of Poetry

6. Every year, an internationally known poet is invited to take up this Chair for a period of ten days. He provides assistance at the working meetings, especially in the translation of his own poetry. No permanent location has been chosen for this Chair and the European universities are invited to cooperate in this initiative.

General remarks

7. The cultural policy for European integration aims to create close cooperation, and encourage an exchange of ideas, between the various European cultures and to ensure that all these cultures receive the necessary impulses and are given a proper chance to survive, in particular the so-called minority cultures, of which some are threatened with extinction. This task should be interpreted very broadly, as explained in the resolution of 16 October 1981 on a Community charter of regional languages and cultures.

Accordingly, the establishment of an Association for the Promotion of Poetry, involving poets from the countries of the Community and other parts of Europe, should be regarded as an initiative worthy of encouragement.

8. The European Poetry Festival provides poets with an opportunity to meet one another, exchange ideas and introduce their work to a wider audience.

The Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport proposes that this festival be held every two years at a venue other than the location of the association, by turns in the various regions of the Community so as to give the Community's regional languages a chance to be heard as well.

9. The committee also believes that the participation at these festivals should be constantly changed and that poets from the various regions should be fairly represented.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION (Doc. 1-378/82) tabled by Mr MARCK, Mr PAPAPIETRO, Mr HAHN, Mr GEROKOSTOPOULOS, Mr VANDEMEULEBROUCKE, Mrs PERY, Mr TOLMAN, Mr RIPA DI MEANA, Mr ISRAEL, Mr PELIKAN, Mr VAN ROMPUY, Mr VANDEWIELE, Mr SCHWENKE, Mr ABENS, Mr ARFE and Mr LEZZI, pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure, on the European Poetry Festival, the Library of Poetry and the Centre for Research, Documentation and Translation

The European Parliament,

- A. aware of the important role which literature, and more particularly poetry, can play as a link between peoples;
- B. whereas cooperation in the field of cultural activities helps to create greater understanding between the citizens of the Member States of the Community;
- C. noting that to date little has been done in this area at Community level in the Member States, which has deprived writers of the opportunity to meet each other, to have their works published in the languages of the Community and to cooperate in matters of common interest;
- D. whereas the future of the European Union will depend to a large extent on the generous cooperation of artists;
- E. stressing that official sponsorship by the Council is necessary to guarantee the continuity of the European Poetry Festival and the future of the European Library of Poetry and of the Centre for Research, Documentation and Translation, which are established in Louvain;
1. Invites the Council to give its total support to the Festival and its organs;

2. Also invites the Commission to give its support with a view to ensuring the continuity of the European Poetry Festival and of the Library and the Centre;
3. Invites the committee responsible to liaise with the European Association for the Promotion of Poetry and to keep itself informed of progress made by the Festival and its organs;
4. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission of the European Communities and the responsible Ministers in the Member States.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION (Doc. 1-552/82) tabled by Mrs DURY and Mr GLINNE
pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure on the promotion of poetry

The European Parliament,

- A. conscious of the importance of cultural activity in the European Community,
- B. whereas all cultural activity requires financial support,
- C. whereas there is evidence in Belgium, in both language communities there, of initiatives that are consonant with the above objectives,
- D. stressing the desirability of official patronage by the Council of the European Festival of Louvain founded in 1980 and of the Centre for Poetry Studies established in Brussels since 1954,
 1. Invites the Council to support the European Festival of Louvain and the Brussels Centre for Poetry Studies based in the Albert I Royal Library;
 2. Invites the Commission to give financial support to the two bodies mentioned above;
 3. Invites the appropriate committee to establish contacts with the two associations in order to keep informed of progress made;
 4. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission of the European Communities and to the responsible ministers of the Member States of the Community.