

## Our trip to Budapest, Hungary.

### The arrival:

When we landed in Budapest we were greeted by 3 students at the airport, who guided us to a little private bus.

We thought that we were greeted by a bunch of host students when we got out of the Oriental Hotel, but when we got out of the bus they were not there. But about 2 minutes later 2 cars drove into the parking lot and the two missing hosts came out. We all had a certain amount of expectations when we left

Denmark. But they were all proven wrong when we got out of the bus at the Oriental Hotel. My first impression was that my host, Marton Bokodi was a very busy man. He always had something to do. This gave me a different experience than that of the other Danish students. I got to see how the real life of Hungarian students is. I also was the only one who got to ride with the tram outside of the program. This made my visit even more exciting.



### The program:

I thought the program was good, it gave us an idea about how life is in Hungary. And also the students and the teachers have managed to put a lot of history in the program as well.

It was also very exciting to see how the Hungarian school was put together. It was very different from how we are used to it here in Denmark.

But the thing, I think all the Danish students and I enjoyed the most, was the spare time. We got to see the nightlife and how they spend their time as friends and what they do. Like for example table football and pool.

### The food:

That is what I think was the best part of the whole trip. In Denmark we are not used to all this spicy kind of food. But the food in Hungary were a lot more spicy particularly the goulash soup. I found it very tasty and good.



## **Budapest – An essay**

### *The trip, the observations and the common folk*

Before going into the topic of Hungary and Budapest in particular, we make our start in Denmark at the Hjørring Bus Terminal. It is about 7.00 'o clock in the morning, our designated time of arrival is slowly but surely approaching. We are to fly with the domestic airline from Aalborg to Copenhagen, and then further on; proceed from Copenhagen to Budapest.



My mind is swirling with contemplations as we are nearing the great city, divided by the Danube; some of which has already been *pondered* once before, when I found myself situated by the Lake Balaton in the eastern part of Hungary on a family vacation.

It is with suspense I gather my luggage from the seemingly never ending, ever rotating stockpile of such and continue moving towards the gate of arrivals to greet whoever it is that are picking us up. I spot a sign, a piece of A4 with the scribbles of Knud Erik Sorensen and instantly conclude that this is the crew who is waiting for us. As I drag my vision from the paper to 3 students, I play with the thought of deserting our hosts for a moment just to be able to gauge their reactions to our not showing up. But to no avail, the other Danes give me away at the spot; though I have an assumption that anyone might be able to see right through our nationality.

We exchange handshakes, the Hungarians without making any eye contact, a fact I remember seeing as the first sign of dissimilar culture. Our hosts, the three of them, the minute we step outside light a cigarette.

The trip to the hotel of our teachers was fairly pleasant judging solely on logistics; the confrontation with our contemporary students though, somewhat cynical in it's silent nature. At the hotel Oriental we are being delegated to our respective hosts; a transfer consisting mainly of a lot of Hungarian conversation, a fact which left me slightly nervous when I entered the car which was to transport us to wherever in the city of 2 million inhabitants I might be accommodated. I am to stay with a boy – Tamás or as he would like me to refer to him as; Szmöre. He lives in a park consisting of huge blocks of flats in a part of the city called Ujpest; which looked very much like a suburb in Denmark, though slightly less preserved.

From this point onwards, my experiences keep surpassing themselves, and in retrospect I consider them even more epoch-making than when being in the middle of them.

Amongst the stereotypical and obvious attractions we get to see are: The parliament, the Hero's Square, some cathedrals, an opera house etc. The students of Hungary leave no doubts concerning

their inclination to, for the 1000<sup>th</sup> time having been forced to watch memorable monuments; they even let out audible sighs deliberately, once in a while.



I reckon I would feel just as excited having to show them our great places; some of them at least.

Leaving out all the historically significant places and attractions, even though they may have part in depicting how and when the Hungarians came to be whom and what they are, lets way for the truly interesting aspect of interacting with foreigners; their awareness and reflections of living (as a teenager) in their given environment and with their given background, without reference to how it was once.

To convey a simple message depends on your observations as an individual, which differs greatly from person to person – obviously – but the linguistic peculiarities of the Hungarian family of languages renders them capable of perceiving everything differently than us; of course without changing the objective world as it is. But it is of my strongest conviction that speaking a certain language alters the way you think, which results in amusing coincidences and odd exchanges in both walks of life – That is; Hungarian and Danish alike.



## Comenius – Hungary

### **Arrival:**

We arrived in Hungary at approximately 2 pm. on Monday, 29 May, and the weather proved to be quite grey but the temperature was okay, compared to Danish weather conditions. I was later told though that this weather was not typical for the time of the year and that it had just turned bad before we got there.

We were greeted by three Hungarian students who turned out to be the host of Alexander, the host of Marie and another student from the school which we later visited. Judging from our first impressions they seemed nice, but not the most accommodating people I had ever met, a fact which later would be proved wrong.

After meeting the Hungarian students we were escorted into a bus that had been arranged to drive us to the teacher's hotel, where we got off the bus and continued without our teachers, only accompanied by our hosts, who now seemed more likely to talk. Alexander and I were escorted by our hosts to a car, which belonged to my host student's mother and in that car we drove to Alexander's host's place, where we all got out and the two Hungarian students had a smoke together before I went on with him alone, a phenomenon that should show to be very common for the Hungarians when they were driving. Then my host and I drove on to his house which was not placed in Budapest but in a little town just outside the city which went by the name Dunakeszi which is probably not spelled right because of the funny letters and symbols they have down there, which I will get back to later in the report.

But we drove to Dunakeszi together and got to his house, which appeared to be a regular mansion with a gate to get in, a swimming pool and pool tables in the basement.

My host, whose name was Zoltan, parked the car in their garage and we went inside and met his mother and his big brother. His big brother was the best at English and his mother did not speak the language at all which was a little frustrating at times because her sons had to translate everything I said and they always talked together in Hungarian. But besides from the language problems the family I lived with was very nice and I got everything the way I wanted it basically and when I presented the gift I had bought for them they showed much gratitude and I got both hugs and kisses. The rest of the first day, went by with settling in the huge house, where I got a room with a twin bed, and I got a bottle of water for the night, if I should happen to get thirsty.



Later when everything was settled and we had had some food, we went to Budapest, Zoltan's older brother drove us to visit a pub together with some other students from the school, and all of us Danish students.

The pub was a very nice place which lay in what I guess you could call the outskirts of the huge city. Another remarkable thing about the pub, for us Danish men, was the fact that the Hungarian students always went to pubs all the time. They went all days of the weeks and they seemed to have very strong friendships compared to the more uptight way of having friends in Denmark.

The last thing to report about the pub was its table-football game, and the skills the Hungarians proved to possess at using it. They knew a lot of funny tricks and moves and the little ball was sent to goal several times because of their genius skills. These football games were to be found in a lot of Hungarian pubs.

### **The program:**

The next day I woke up with a funny feeling of not knowing exactly where I was, but I quickly summed up everything in my mind and got out of bed.

I went down the stairs to the combined dining and living room where my breakfast containing sandwiches and pizza was served. We had breakfast, Zoltan's mom made a lot of sandwiches for us and we got set to go, after which we were driven, by Zoltan's big brother again, to the place where we should meet with the rest of our companions. From there we went on by tram to a place called 'The House Of The Future' which is likely to compare with the 'Planetarium' in Copenhagen. We stayed in 'The house of future' for two hours, where we tried a lot of interesting experiments and took a lot of tests to try our minds, creativity and other human qualities.

From the house of future we walked along to a huge shopping centre called mammoth plaza where we had the possibility to eat in one of the restaurants there, which offered a lot of Hungarian food along with the regular pizzerias and so on, and besides we had the opportunity to walk about as we wanted to.



After shopping and eating in the centre for about an hour we went on to see the opera house which was a very beautiful building where a young Hungarian man who's English was a little above average for the Hungarian people guided us around and showed us the different aspects of such a place. The tour was quite okay and informative but a little too through-studied and not as improvised as hoped and expected.

After the good, but a little disappointing trip to the opera house we went to a cathedral called St. Stevens cathedral. The cathedral was very big and interesting to see, even though you have visited a lot of churches and cathedrals before maybe only because this one is stationed in Hungary. We

spent about half an hour there and then we were on the move again, this time going where ever we wanted.



Marie had had a new host for the day because hers was occupied elsewhere.

We spent the rest of the afternoon together learning more about Hungarian culture and talked a lot together with the Hungarian students and we even played more table-soccer, believe it or not but I think we won a game over them even though I think they gave that one away.

I slept tightly through another night and we got up again the next day at approximately eight in the morning because we had to meet with the rest of the group at ten where we were destined to go sight-seeing in Budapest. The sightseeing tour got off nice and quiet, and we started off by seeing a big square called 'Heroes square' which contained statues picturing historic Hungarian kings in the side and Gabriel the arch angel standing on a huge pillar in the middle of the square. During the trip to the square we acquired a lot of historical information about the kings pictured in the statues.



After visiting heroes square we went on to see the city park which was very beautiful filled with trees, grass, bushes, flowers and all other kinds of plants which can be found in parks. After seeing the huge park we got on the bus again, and we both saw and crossed Budapest's magnificent chain-bridge which was also very beautiful and very big. When we had gotten over the bridge we went right across the first street and into a huge tunnel starting just after the bridge ended.

From the tunnel we proceeded to what was called 'the royal district' which I was not completely able to see because I pretty much slept from the start of the tunnel until we had the next stop on the tour: The castle and the Matthias church, which were placed in almost the same place and lay on what appeared to be the a little mountain. There was a beautiful view and most of Budapest could be seen from there.



From the castle and the nice view we went on to other historical and highly interesting places such as: Fisherman's bastillon, Gellért hill and the Elizabeth Bridge.

And from there we went to see a traditional Hungarian market hall in which I think you could buy 400 kinds of meat at least and just as many vegetables and spices as well. In the market hall we had some food (Some funny looking kind of fried bread with stuffing) and I bought a package of smokes.

Then when we had finished in the market hall we were taken to a "prehistoric town" which showed us how Hungarians lived in nineteen hundred and yesterday.

In the small town we decided to take a trip with a horse-drawn carriage which turned out to be a bad idea (for me at least) because my allergy broke out and made my eyes go red and I started sneezing. But it was an okay trip though.

Thursday, 1 June would show to be the hardest of my days in Hungary. We started off by going to the school in which the Hungarian students participated in various classes.

At the school we participated in a meeting where we summed up the whole trip so far. Here everything was discussed and after we went through the week and its programme the German students showed their presentation about Herne, the area they live in, which was about both historical facts and facts of a newer date. Then we presented our own project. I think that our presentation was amusing for the audience because we were not reading allowed from a paper.



After the meeting and the presentations we went outside to play a soccer match, which the visitors (meaning us and the Germans) lost by many goals. We celebrated our defeat afterwards by eating sandwiches and drinking water (With or without effervescence) in the classroom where we had had the meeting and the presentations.

When we had spent the first part of the day in the school we went in to the core of Budapest again, this time to see the Parliament. The Parliament was, from the outside, a beautiful but dirty building even though it was getting cleaned all the time. Smoke from cars and busses simply managed to make the building dirty again before you could manage to clean the building all the way around. The inside though was very clean and nice and there were many beautiful cultural aspects such as pillars of marble, huge paintings and beautiful carpets everywhere. We had a very quick tour there and after that we got back to the school to see how you can make goulash over a bonfire. The goulash was very nice and Alexander's host Tamás made sure that I would not be in a lack of paprika. So we ate the wonderful goulash and then we said goodbye to the people that we would not see again before going home on Friday.

The next day I was brought back to life around eight and we went to visit a shopping centre. After our visit to the centre we went to Kristoffer's host, Marty's, place where our luggage was placed for the day. We picked up our luggage said goodbye to our hosts and were driven to the airport. In the airport we had some pizza, waited for a couple of hours and then went back to Denmark. Back home.

Jens York HH1F

## My trip to Hungary

I didn't really have any expectations to our trip, my host and what else that was going to happen in Budapest. The only thing I knew about my host was that her name was Andrea and that she lived somewhere in Budapest. I also knew that we were going to see a lot of monuments and historical buildings and that we were having a meeting about the future of the Comenius Project.

After take off in Kastrup Airport we were really on our way. We flew for approximately one and a half hours before landing in Budapest where we were greeted by three students. One of the students was my host but we didn't talk much in the bus on our way to her house. But when we came home to the apartment where she lived with her mom, dad and brother the conversation slowly began. In the beginning we had a little trouble understanding each other, but during the week we improved all the time.

In the evening we went to a pub to meet with the other Danish and Hungarian students and we all got to know each other a little bit better. It was nice that we had time together the first day so that we could find out something about the people we lived with and Hungary in general.

The next days we saw a lot of monuments, cathedrals and other historical buildings and learned something about the history of Budapest. Things like these can often be boring, but the visits to these things were spread out so we had time to do other (more funny) things as well. All in all it was a good and organized programme.

Throughout the whole week I learned a lot about the Hungarian culture. I experienced their kindness and their openness and I ate things that I don't think I would ever have eaten if I hadn't been chosen to go to Budapest.

