

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, *Dia dhaoibh ar maidin* as we say in Irish, and *Egun on denoi* – that is Basque, I think, - *Eskerrik asko gonbidapenagatik* and a big thank you to the translators, our hidden friends in the background, for making this possible.

Thank you very much for the invitation, Benan. It is terrific to be here. We have really enjoyed. It has been very nice to be able to be here since the beginning of the Congress and get a feeling for the Congress and its work.

I am also delighted to be here in the wake, if you like, of my good friend and colleague Patrick O'Sullivan who I understand some of you remember from the last Congress four years ago.

Although I work myself in Irish Migration Studies, as Benan has said, I am the Chairman at the moment of this Association of European Migration Institutions, so what I hope to do during the next 40 minutes or so is give you some kind of overview of what is going on in Europe on this theme and to show that you are by no means alone in your interest and concern for relations between your homeland and your diaspora, especially with regard to developing a museum and research centre project.

So, to begin with, as the theme of the Conference is *Zubigintzan*, bridge building, can you see the two bridge builders in this photograph? You recognize Benan and Andoni. You might well recognize me there amongst my colleagues. This is where I work in Northern Ireland and this was Benan and Andoni on their tour of Europe last summer, seeking out institutions that are focused on the theme of migration.

I would like to make a connection between Ireland and this part of the World by showing you this map. This year we are celebrating the 400th Anniversary of what we call 'The Flight of the Earls'. The picture on the top right hand corner is really an icon of the origin of the modern Irish diaspora. These are the two main Irish chiefs leaving Ireland in 1607 to go into exile in Europe, because of the pressure on them from the incoming English. The plan was to take a ship (very much like the ship we visited on Monday, the seventeenth-century whaling ship in Bermeo) the plan was to take the ship and to sail all the way to La Coruña and then get help from the King of Spain and then from the Pope and then go back to Ireland. The plan did not work: they were driven by a storm to France. That is what we are remembering this year: tracing the origins of the Irish diaspora back to this moment 400 years ago.

Ever since that moment, there was a big emigration from Ireland continuously for 400 years and, of course, what replaced it was an immigration from Britain which was not without its problems and you could say that we have only very recently worked out the problems arising from that immigration. You have mentioned conflict in this part of the world and you know that in Northern Ireland we are still just coming out of conflict, very bad conflict for the last 30 years.

Now, to say something about the Association of European Migration Institutions (AEMI). I was very interested to hear all the discussion that you are having

about logos. There you see the Association's logo: It took as several years of discussion to reach an agreement about it. I remember there was some discussion about the wild geese as a symbol of migrants: where we sure they were flying the right way? Not all the wild geese went west from Europe to America; some went east and south and on to Australia and New Zealand.

Who belongs to this Association? Membership is open to any European institution or organization involved in the documentation, research and presentation of European Migration, so that is a very broad definition.

Now, when we talk about migration, what are we talking about? This is a display from the German Emigration Museum. It is the inside of a passenger liner sailing from Europe, it could be going to anywhere, and those are symbols of the migrants: their luggage. And if we think about migration, what we are really talking about is reconstructing, recovering individual stories and family stories, so you could say that each one of those suitcases represents a complicated story of an individual and a family, not just the individual who went on the ship with that suitcase, but also the story of the family left behind in the homeland, and then there is the question of the future to which that individual went. So, this is what is fundamental when we are talking about migration: the reconstruction, the recovery of these individual and family stories, and it has been very interesting to hear how much work has been going on in this respect with regard to the Basque diaspora.

I wonder if anybody in the room recognizes this man, perhaps you have seen this film, two emblematic emigrants (Jack and his friend, who I think is Italian, also) heading for the ship, the *Titanic*, in the film. Again: what is Jack carrying on his shoulder? What does his luggage contain? Where does he come from? And most importantly, perhaps, of all, what is he bringing in his head? I mention the *Titanic* because of course the *Titanic* has a strong association with my part of the world, with Belfast, where the ship was built, but of course what is often forgotten is that the *Titanic* was an emigrant ship, down below, in the third class, there were emigrants like these, and again, what are they bringing with them to the New World? These are Irish musicians: you can see the accordion being played, like the accordion we heard on Monday evening, and the pipes and the fiddle - part of the culture being taken across the Atlantic.

Now, this map is really to remind us that emigration, Irish emigration, Basque emigration, is part of a huge emigration from Europe, and you can see that we have a network of routes from the main ports of emigration. This is a map showing emigration from Europe about 1907. I hesitated to show this because, if you look at where we are now, unfortunately the cartographer has placed the key very insensitively. But I show it because I want to highlight a problem: that in mapping European migration we still have very poor maps, and you can see we need a better one than this to represent emigration from Spain, and Portugal and the Basque Country and from France. We need a comprehensive Atlas of European Migration. That is a big project that is being discussed but it will need to be a big international project.

You have been talking a great deal about the Basque diaspora, and it is very interesting that you are so comfortable with the term diaspora because this is a relatively recent development in Europe. You very rarely if ever hear the term 'the English diaspora' or 'the French diaspora'. The English and the French do not think in quite the same way about their emigrants, but certainly we talk a lot about the Irish diaspora. We can not really understand the Irish diaspora or the Basque diaspora without remembering that it is part of this bigger European diaspora to all parts of the world.

Now, let me say just a word about definition. When we talk about migration, I think we are very simply talking about the moving of people and the settling of people – moving from an old world to a new world, And when we talk about migration heritage, or *patrimoine*, we are talking about the surviving evidence of migration history and culture which is 'treasured' to a greater or lesser extent, particularly in archives, libraries and museums, such as those of the members of AEMI. So, I want to talk a little bit about archives, libraries and museums that look after what we call migration heritage, the traces of migration.

I think that it is also worth remembering that when we talk about migration we are not only just talking about emigration, about people leaving, we are also talking about people moving around inside the country (whether it is inside Spain, or France, or the Basque Country) and we are also talking about immigration, people coming in; so we have a cycle, people coming in, people moving around, people going out, and of course, people coming back, return migration. It has been interesting listening to you talking about immigration to the Basque Country and what you call the new Basques. In Ireland we have a similar situation because for the first time in 400 years we really have more people coming into the country than are leaving it and this is a very new situation for us.

This is a public statue, representing Irish migration. This is Annie Moore and her two brothers at the big port of Queenstown in the south of Ireland near Cork, which is the last port at which the *Titanic* called. Annie Moore has a statue in Ireland and she also has a statue in Ellis Island in New York because she was the first immigrant to get off and then go through Ellis Island in 1892, the big Immigrant Station in New York. I think a lot of Basques must have gone through New York, through Ellis Island, between 1892 and 1924, when the 'golden door' closed. As you can see Ellis Island is now a museum is an associate member of AEMI. When the emigrants arrived in New York they would end up in places like this, This is a room inside a museum in New York: the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, which recreates the kind of living conditions that emigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries found themselves in, in the New World, and this also is an associate member of AEMI.

So, we have three main types of organizations that document, research and present European migration. We talk about them increasingly together because right across Europe I think there is a better understanding now that museums, libraries, and archives cooperate with each other. The possibility of them cooperating much more closely, especially thanks to information and communications technology, is very important. And members of the public find it

very difficult to understand the difference very often between what is a museum what is a library and what is an archive, because very often they go together.

Just another quick reference to the film *Titanic*, because in this slide you can see how were the film makers able to reconstruct what the third class below decks for emigrants looked like on a passenger liner in the early twentieth century and how they had to rely on evidence such as this contemporary drawing for their reconstruction. So, museums and archives are very concerned preserving this kind of documentary evidence, this pictorial evidence of the experience of migration.

This is a map showing the distribution of the member institutions of AEMI and, as Benan said, it started in 1989. The initiative started in Scandinavia. We do not have as long a history as your history of Basque associations, which goes back a long way, but we have a similar pattern of gradual growth. The first meeting took place in Aalborg in Denmark in 1989 and there has been an annual meeting every year since. On the right hand side you can see the places where the meeting has taken place. So you can see that ten years ago our institution hosted it in Northern Ireland. As Benan said, last year we met in Croatia, and also Joseba was there as well, and we are going to be meeting in October this year in Finland. The dots on the left represent Ellis Island, Pier 21 in Halifax in Canada, and the East Side Tenement Museum. At the very bottom is a Museum in Sao Paulo, Brazil, as well. So, this organization has grown slowly from just having 3 members in 1989 to having 34 members across Europe and our ambition is to try and have an institution representative of each country of Europe. You may see that we are looking to expand in the new accession states of the Baltic for example.

So that is what we are concerned with, you are talking about your four year plan, your next four year plan, reviewing your four year plan, reviewing your prospects for the next four years, that is what our organization is trying to do.

We are looking forward to a Europe that is creatively and confidently engaged with its migration heritage, history and culture, and what we are trying to do as an organization is to, as you can see, to facilitate the mutual support of member institutions, being aims documents, research and present European migration; secondly, to provide members with an international forum for advancing knowledge and understanding of European migration in the past and the present; and then, thirdly, to promote internationally the public understanding of European migration.

I think it is very interesting that you are talking about how do we make the Basque diaspora better known amongst, in the Basque homeland? Well, the broader problem is how do we make the European diaspora better understood in the European homeland?

And of course is only by lots of nationally, regionally and locally based institutions coming together to collaborate so this becomes possible.

So just to give you a little flavor of some different institution:

This is a museum in Ljubljana, in Slovenia, you can see that recently they have had an exhibition of connections between Slovenia and Argentina, and the cases give the impression of the sort of objects that the museum may collect in order to represent migration. You can see the building how the museum worked at the Bottom of the slide

This is Norway This is the Norwegian Emigration Museum in Ottestad and you can see this is a very interesting museum because it has 3 elements:

- 1) The first element is an outdoor museum. In Norway they have reconstructed the log cabin of Canut Gundusum, who emigrated to America in 1882, and this is the small log cabin that he built in Minnesota, so it is now in a Museum in Norway.
- 2) Also, in the Museum in Norway, there is an indoor exhibition, so objects like you can see at the bottom of the slide, the emigrants trunk and some of the belongings that the emigrants would have taken..
- 3) A library trying to collect as many books about Norwegian emigration as they possibly have.

So that is Norway.

Benan mentioned Bremerhaven already, and this is the splendid new building in Bremerhaven, in the port, the emigrant port or Bremerhaven in Germany, which is a huge investment and has been extremely successful, I think is very encouraging the amount of support that the public has given to this new institution. As you can see probably displayed in June this year or maybe was May, this museum was awarded European Museum of the Year, so that is a very important recognition for a migration museum, it is the first time such a migration museum gets such a European prestigious award, ask Benan, it is a splendid place to visit.

Just to go back to Norway, and say that The National Library of Norway is also a member of the Association, because it has a special Norwegian-American collection. Inside the National Library they have a special section devoted to emigration from so important was the emigration in Norway to America and again they are collecting books but also in the bottom left hand corner you can see some poster, like Norwegian emigrant reaching you his hand to shake hands with the welcoming Uncle Sam.

The Danish Emigration Archives in Archboud where they found the Association, they took the initiative, and if you look at their website, one of the things they do is they provide a huge database, so if you think you have Danish connections you can put your name in here and trace, and this is a big service that virtually all emigration centers are now trying to provide: Digitalize migration records, passenger lists, also registrations with the police of the emigrants, that happened in Scandinavian countries and in Germany and other but not unfortunately Ireland, have records quite as good, and this is very popular all over the world.

