

**Address of Michail Sergejewitsch Gorbachev  
to the laying of the foundation stone of the European art craftsman's institute  
on the 19th of September, 1996**

Dear Horst Wrobel,  
dear inhabitants and guests of the city of Gifhorn,

it is to me a big joy and a big pleasure to see again you and to spend with you some hours in this miraculous corner of Lower Saxony. I simply am enthusiastically from that what has been created here in a former moor area. How much one single person can perform! Beside him appear immediately many assistants.

We are all his under the deep impression what we have seen here and have belonged. This is no museum in the customary sense. This is a museum of the living history. I have sat just there in the armchair and on the children in her nice national costumes as well as on the scenery, the decoration looked and I has asked me: Where are we real here, which century?

Delightfully. The life is marvellous. Marvellous are the actions of our generation which are directed to protect our earth and to make nicer. Today we speak of a new civilisation and thoughts attack to us whether we are prepared for it. However, nothing grows on an empty place. And the cultural layers which we preserve, and all this what we experience change the person. We everybody are experienced people. But one feels that something proceeds in one if one is here at this place.

I thank the brilliant person Horst Wrobel – namely in the following regard: One must be able of such thoughts, plans, visions and achievements first of all. And one must have first of all such a good wire to other people, such an open setting to other cultures. This is that what we need.

Everything is very easy. If here a Slavic church originates which is built by easy people from different countries and on which Horst even with hammer and ax and many days has co-operated, then you infuse to us from it a big lesson for the present: We have a very nice project, but difficultly to be reached: combined Europe which we need everybody so much. It is the common house Europe.

Maybe this aim should be achieved also as well as here. We must think in whole-European categories. And we must do concrete things. I belong to the advocates of Europe and am very much for the realisation of this idea. Here during the last days we have spoken on German ground a lot of this subject. However, it is in the time that we begin to realise, finally, the available projects, otherwise the danger, this fantastic idea passes Europe which can open a wonderful perspective for the people to cerium talking.

Today I had the honour and the possibility to accomplish three strokes of the clock. For me this was a symbolic action. Our churches can also work together, understanding develop, assistance provide and to the approach of our people contribute. And now we have laid the foundation-stone for the art craftsman's institute „The bridge“ in which people from different countries will meet to break up afterwards again and to go home as well as in other countries. They become a new knowledge, new experiences and above all the ability take to live together, to be glad of the life and to make it nicer.

Dear friends, representatives of the councils and management from Lower Saxony, I am very grateful to you for the fact that you have supported the idea of Horst Wrobel so strongly. I know this person and his abilities and I am sure absolutely that this institute comes about. If you want to create to him please no additional problems. If his only worry may be to establish the institute as quickly as possible and joyfully.

I myself belonged earlier to the party leadership and governance (Nomenklatura). There are few people who can flame up and produce good ideas. There are much more experts to put bat in the spokes of the wheels. I feel how you react to this remark. The bureaucracy is another general-human value. One must also consider this.

I congratulate myself to all on this meeting. I believe, we have supported our friend, the inventor and commercial-competent person Horst Wrobel, something. Till this day I have attacked thoughts what I deal as a patron, actually. Now I know what I must do, but today I still say nothing about it.

Many thanks to everybody which have come here to celebrate this event.