

## Spoken column

Three old people were overlooking the waters of the river Amstel. They heard the sounds of the seagulls and the hasty chatter of the working lot, the students and the tourists that dominated the ferry to get across the water to the northern side. The ferry made no sound at all, and neither did any of the boats close by. Just a very gentle hum, if you listened very carefully. The air smelled of the sea, and the breeze was clean. The three remaining PGK board members sat on a little terrace on the waterside.

Do you remember that we had a symposium here long ago?, the first one said. What?, no, I don't remember, said the second one. Ha, yes, somewhere in the early twenties I recall, the third one said. Let me think, 45 years lustrum probably. It was a good party! We still were mainly petroleum geologists at that time. The energy transition had only just started.... She was silent for a while, and smiled... those were interesting times. 30 years ago. The three minds were lost in thought for a while.

In the past 30 years a lot had changed in their country, and it turned out pretty well in the end. While there had always been many voices and complaints that the transition did not go fast enough, they kept the pace. Phrases like "not in my back yard!", "oil companies, go away!", and the worst one: "somebody should do something about this!!!", were now just little jokes to remember the attitude of the older generation. The current youth worked hard and embraced the work that was done in the past generation, and enjoyed the new technologies that were the children of this transition.

There had been some remarkable events, like the departure of the major oil, and private equity companies, which left a huge vacuum in the energy business in the country. There had been strikes, and lengthy public debates on this, even minor riots!. But when the government finally decided that energy supply is something essential instead of a free market thing, they took charge. And that is when the real energy transition started. The PGK was still active but had some issues to find sponsors.....

Another remarkable event was the moment that they opened up the old fields again during the cold winters in the thirties. The new energy resources were not sufficient, and within a couple of months gas was again the main supplier of energy. Careful monitoring by the aging experts, gentle production, keeping the public up-to-date on a weekly basis. Funds ready for the potential hazards. All this actually rejuvenated the PGK, where veterans came out of retirement and became active members again

The first member broke the silence. I remember, that we were actually quite busy in those days. Actually, we still are, got a meeting on the Volpriehausen reservoir stability next week. Huh?, What?, the second replied while he was adjusting his hearing implants. Ah, Humbug! In our time we did not even talk about reservoir stability! The third one smirked, yes you did. Just like decades ago, we have been looking at the rocks for all their characteristics from economical and academical point of view to understand how they work. Nowadays CCS is common practice, bunter fields being used for hydrogen storage, and the first geothermal fields onshore are actually economic. Our country did not flood, and we have plenty of energy without aid of energy outside the European Union. I think that the PGK also had a role in this by keeping the connections open and aided to the energy transition.

Two bowls of vegetarian bitterballen and nuts were delivered at their table. And they ordered another round of beer. Should we book the KIVI this year for the lustrum? The first remarked with a smile (and some mustard) on his face. The second member casually remarked that the bank account allowed for such a thing. The third PGK member stood up from her chair and helped the other two on

their legs. While the first member required a stick to get around, the second one required significant assistance. Come on lads, the Annual Meeting is over, there is work to do!