# Speech to Europe (Eine Rede an Europa) by Omri Boehm

**Wednesday 8 May, 2024**

On 7 May, the Wiener Festwochen and the Institute for Human Sciences (IWM Vienna) welcomed Israeli-German philosopher Omri Boehm at the Viennese Judenplatz on the occasion of a Speech to Europe (*Eine Rede an Europa*) 2024, thereby opening the Viennese cultural festival.

Followed by a week of heated discussions about the presence of Omri Boehm, the Speech was successfully held in a crowded Judenplatz, attracting 800 spectators on-site and 1200 viewers through the Livestream, in addition to numerous other viewers through the ORF broadcast.

After an introduction by IWM Rector Misha Glenny and Wiener Festwochen Artistic Director Milo Rau, who supported their decision to invite the philosopher on Judenplatz, Omri Boehm made his way on stage. As a decided universalist, he analyzed the intricacies of Europe's problematic past, represented by colonialism and the Holocaust, and its challenging present, threatened by the rise of right-wing populism and necessarily intertwined with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Referencing Timothy Snyder's first Speech to Europe in 2019, he called for Europe to overcome nationalist myths, asserting that the elaboration of Europe's historical responsibilities must go hand in hand with the upholding of Europe's ideals.

Despite some silence protest from representatives of the Viennese Israeli community, the Speech was welcomed very warmly by the substantial audience in the square, with Omri Boehm being applauded numerous times during the delivery of the speech and especially at its end.

Omri Boehm is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the New School for Social Research in New York. His Israeli politics and philosophy commentaries are regularly published in Haaretz, Die Zeit, and The New York Times. His critically acclaimed book *Radikaler Universalismus* (2022) was awarded the Leipzig Book Prize for European Understanding in 2024.

https://www.festwochen.at/en/eine-rede-an-europa-2024

https://www.apa-fotoservice.at/galerie/36690/

**Query note:**

**Wiener Festwochen and the Institute for Human Sciences (IWM Vienna)**

**Judith Staudinger**

j.staudinger@festwochen.at

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