

EOE IS WILLING TO MAKE EUROPE WORLDWISER

(EoE INTENDS TO MAKE "EUROPA WELTFÄHIG")
EOE IS A THOUGHTPROVOKING IDEA WITH A HUMAN FACE

By Marc Guiot

Europe has tried, with some success to dominate the world between the sixteenth and the 19th century. Therefore it took advantage of the then available technology, using force as well as a restricted Christian message that served as a war banner for its most brutal conquests : from the crusades to the colonial conquests, not to mention the Spanish Reconquista, the bloody conquests of the Spanish catholic kings and queens in Europe and Latin America, always in the name of Christ.

Europe's alibi was its pompous claim to bring about and impose its civilization among innocent barbarians. Roman legions, Western crusaders, German Teutonic knights, Spanish conquistadores, Lyautey, Cecil Rhodes, Leopold II and all the rulers of that aggressive Europe were determined to conquer the planet with the sword leaving behind them a furrow of blood and tears and the hatred of the dominated folks that would eventually rebel against their former masters.

Philip the second of Spain, Napoleon and Hitler remain the dark side of Europe.

Isn't there a different empathic and caring Europe that would swap violence for trust and stand for solidarity, care, concern and empathy towards the others? A Europe that would accept the blame for all the damage that its dominant culture has caused to the oppressed folks and to the planet on the whole, in terms of colonial slavery, exploitation and empirical violence, in terms of aggression towards the planet, its wild life and energetic resources?

That other face of Europe would show the soft eyes of Francesco de Assisi, Jean Jacques Rousseau, the Enlightened, the fouriesists the saint simonians, Leo Tolstoy who, with the American Thoreau will deeply influence Gandhi and later Nelson Mandela. Only this face of Europe, the Europe of the post war founding fathers, of the kneeling Willy Brandt in Warsaw will eventually wash away the shame and damage caused by colonial conquests.

Two suicidal world wars have devastated the old continent and caused its decline. But Europe has risen from its ashes although fairly weakened.

Over the last few years, Europe has tried to recover from its decline and it looks as if it was about to find a fresh élan by exploring new paths in the vast field of collective behavior. It seems determined to overcome the paradoxes of greed, wealth and especially the perversity of hyper consumerism.

Where there is a will there is a way and where there is a dead end there happens nearly always to be a way out beyond the hyper individualism inspired by the American model.

This requires a European Dream as men like Edgar Morin, Jacques Attali, Helmut Schmidt, Guy Verhofstadt, Daniel Cohn-Bendit and even the American Jeremy Rifkin imagine, define and try to implement.

It is Europe's last challenge to shape "homo europeanus" by turning "homo sapiens demens" (Morin) into a "homo empathicus" (Rifkin) capable of saving mother Earth or "terre patrie" (Morin): our threatened biosphere from disaster.

Therefore a paradigm shift is required, what Morin calls the great metamorphosis.

What is there to be done in order to improve life on earth in the hope that the situation stops degrading? Actually, the European Community seems to offer little help and few alternatives to tackle this challenge of all challenges.

Europe's proverbial humanism has grossly failed as a consequence of the twentieth century technological hubris (immoderation).

It is high time for a new outbreak of fresh optimism, a new European dream, a new vision of the future in order to save the threatened biosphere, create world consciousness, get off carbon economy and develop social capital and world solidarity.

This calls for a radical change in mentalities that can only be achieved through a new form of education based on a communication revolution: Eyes of Europe.

Interestingly, the younger generation turns out to be far less rebellious than the angry young men and women of the sixties and the Mai 68 generation. They prove far more inclined to communicate, negotiate and compromise than their parents and grandparents at the same age. Furthermore they are spontaneously internationalists proving fairly enthusiastic about exchanging and dialoguing with members of other cultures and religions. In other words, they are prepared to care and share. This so called internet generation has no objections to exchanging and communicating "wikiwise" with the rest of the world.

Furthermore, these youngsters are spontaneously creative but they tend to become less so under the odd influence of traditional school education. "What we teach and the way we teach it is toxic and dysfunctional for the future of mankind" (Rifkin) Not the individuals are to blame (teachers and pupils); the school system is to blame and therefore it has to be changed radically. The question is no longer why but how and when.

It goes without saying that the school curriculum must no longer be based upon national, religious or local identities but on broader, plural, trans cultural identities and issues. Cultural frontiers are to be abolished by EoE education.

Teenagers dialogue spontaneously across their countries and even worldwide through internet. This is widely encouraged by EoE and is being used as an educational dynamic.

How is that to be done ?

First of all technically, through the use of a sophisticated media platform (internet, face book, television etc), furthermore through a radical reform and reformulation of contents. New contents should include: environmental, issues, to produce a mentality shift that brings about a paradigm shift towards living differently. Furthermore, those topics and issues mustn't be tackled in a traditional way any longer, but they are to be conveyed on behalf of the personal life experience of the learners: the teenagers themselves.

It will indeed be for the teenagers themselves to collect the material and arrange it in a pedagogical way before it is being discussed in real time with all EoE participants.

How. In the simplest of all ways i.d. through homemade videos illustrating the approached subjects such as alternative energy (one group of teenagers reports about the windmills in their village, another group about the use of solar energy in their vicinity, another about the offshore windmills in their region etc).

This demands a radical mentality shift which doesn't occur spontaneously. It needs the support of a strong EoE educational team (men and women of all colors and creeds) and environment, the emphasis being on creativity. Only a creative and ambitious generation will be capable of overcoming the dramatic crisis we are going through.

As Ken Robinson has once pointed out the following:

"Our education system has mined our minds. We don't grow into creativity, we grow out of it. Or rather, we get educated out of it.

Creativity now is as important in education, as literacy

We have to rethink the fundamental principles on which we're educating our children.

The only way to do it, is by seeing our creative capacities for the richness they are, and seeing our children for the hope that they are, and our task is to educate their whole being.

I think our only hope for the future is to adopt a new perception of human ecology. One in which we start to reconstitute our perception of the richness of human capacity.

We need to radically rethink our view of intelligence."

.Intelligence is the only raw material we Europeans have in great quantities but our school systems is squandering it when it is dramatically needed to produce shared knowledge, shared social capital. The many challenges mankind is facing now must be tackled in their full complexity on a global world scale. Therefore, two things must be taken in account: firstly EoE must bring up a variety of common global issues that carry meaning today, that simply make sense to all and especially the youths that are globally bored by the contents of school programs and worried about their own future and that of the human species.

On the other hand, EoE stands for changing the pedagogical approach : how to stimulate creativity in order to urge teenagers to share their worries, concerns and personal experience around a wide variety of topics and issues?

Which issues?

- Teenagers are no longer primarily rebels in contrast with the "angry Young Men" generation, the rebellious baby boomers of the late sixties. The internet generation is radically different: they communicate worldwide and negotiate spontaneously with their parents.
- Their relationship towards nature, wild life, pollution, climate change are spontaneously empathic.
- Their relation towards other cultures, religions, populism, nationalism are specific: contemporary teenagers are globally spontaneously against racism, sexism, dictatorship, crime and violence and in favor of liberty, solidarity and more equality.
- They are more inclined to care and to share, they have no problems with multicultural societies in which they were born and that gradually become inter and even trans cultural. They are basically a cosmopolitan generation.
- By becoming homo empathicus (Jeremy Rufkin) i.e. caring for their fellow citizens of whatever origin, homo europeus is gradually becoming a *worldwise* homo cosmopolitanus. Eyes of Europe is determined to stimulate and reinforce this trend. Teenagers have no difficulty "Living Together" notwithstanding ethnic, cultural or religious differences.
- They are more prepared than older generation to learn how to live differently in order to reduce the energetic footprint through switching to alternative and sustainable energies and lifestyles.
- Living differently implies a change of diet (to struggle against obesity resulting from an excess of soft drinks and junk food, converting to from fast to slow and safe food) that is to affect the climate.
- It also implies loving differently (or more freely), and especially learning differently.
- Learning differently is basically what must make Europe *worldwiser*.
- EoE stands for both learning by doing (it is the teenagers that do the teaching and make the programs.) and learning by sharing (EoE education is based on sharing information and knowledge). EoE is asking teenagers to share and show their personal approach and experience of world issues such as violence, pollution, climate change, the generation gap, analphabetism, religious and political fanaticism, attitude towards death (Thanatos) and sex (Eros)...
- It is for the teenagers themselves to make the reports with interviews and all the rest. Learning by sharing is the foundation stone of EoE and the global approach that will eventually make Europe *world wise* (weltfähig) and change the future.

How is that to be done? By asking small teams of teenagers to make short videos of their own experience of a topic (windmills at sea, advantages and disadvantages, the danger for birds and the Don Quichotte syndrome; sun panels in a self sustaining house e.g. with a team in Algeria or Morocco or

South Spain; traffic pollution (reports about the traffic hell in Brussels and in contrast of the bike friendly Berlin)

- Violence against women or gays in city centers with interviews
- The global intention is towards changing mentalities and awake the general consciousness of a generation that is particularly receptive to the threats of the future. In other words EoE wants to change the future especially when it comes to issues such as environment, religions and cultures.
- What it basically comes down to is to trigger a new debate, to launch a new culture (all reports are being commented in real time by the global EoE community) based on dialogue, mutual respect, exchange in real time.
- EoE programs are meant to respect "the other" to discover him in his differences, to challenge him and to be prepared to be challenged by his face and his eyes. The *Eyes of Europe* are challenging the Eyes of Asia, Africa, Australia, America...

Emmanuel Levinas regards "the face of the Other" as a different self. The other person, whoever it is, (whether black or yellow, male or female, gay or hetero, old or young, friend or foe) is he or him other that each of us encounters directly in his daily experiences. It is the face of every encounter.

By "face" Levinas means the human face ("le visage humain").

To put it in a nutshell, EoE stands for global trans cultural education with a human face.

"The face speaks to me and thereby invites me to a relation" (Totality and Infinity 198)

"The face [is] a source from which all meaning appears." (Totality and Infinity 297)

"The face opens the primordial discourse whose first word is obligation. " (Totality and Infinity 201)

"[The] Other faces me and puts me in question and obliges me." (Totality and Infinity 207)

"The face is what forbids us to kill." (Ethics and Infinity 86)

"In front of the face, I always demand more of myself". ("Signature" 294 in *Difficult Freedom: Essays on Judaism*)

"[T]he Other manifests itself by the absolute resistance of its defenseless eyes. ".

("Signature" 294 in *Difficult Freedom: Essays on Judaism*)

". . . the face presents itself, and demands justice. " (Totality and Infinity 294)

"In the face the Other expresses his eminence, the dimension of height and divinity from which he descends." (Totality and Infinity 262)

Religion is meant to bind (religare) wide communities against other religious communities. We need to overcome these tensions and clashes by teaching a common core of ethical values a kind empathic "moral esperanto" (Paul Cliteur) that speaks to the heart of all humans, worldwide and can be synthesized in the attitude of the Good Samaritan a parable often quoted by Levinas: "a traveler (who may or may not be Jewish) is beaten, robbed, and left half dead along the road. First a [priest](#) and then a [Levite](#) come by, but both avoid the man. Finally, a (*worldwise*) [Samaritan](#) comes by. Samaritans and Jews generally despised each other, but the Samaritan helps the injured man." Jesus is described as telling the parable in response to a question regarding the identity of the "neighbor" which [Leviticus 19:18](#) says should be loved. This parable synthesizes the ethics of Jesus. It has won nearly universal praise, especially from those outside the Church.

The younger generations will have to stop the massive destruction of vegetal and animal life and open the path towards a more equitable and sustainable future, bring about radical fundamental restructuring of human relationships.

Old Europe is the place of all places where perspectives for a better future for the human species are to be taken seriously.

The violent and deep crisis we are going through is the ideal challenge to bring about change towards a post carbon industrial future and launch a new era of cooperative behavior meant to create social capital in a non lucrative civil society and stop civilization from collapsing. The Arab spring has shown that under the circumstances, members of the young internet generation are capable of rebelling against conservative structures and dictators and determined to mobilize the world community in order to bring about a global change of consciousness.

The young demand change. The great recession generated a generation of youths that are deprived of their potential.

Mankind refuses to see the lethal reality of menace of global warming.

What is needed is a new story: EoE is this New Story and it wants to make Europe *worldwise*. (*weltfähig*).

Public education helped develop the second Wave or industrial age. We need a radically new education in order to tackle the challenges of the third wave or post industrial age that has begun. Vertical hierarchies (top down teacher-pupil) are to be replaced by lateral (pupil- pupil) cooperation. Cooperatives are to replace classical concerns and enterprises in the future..The challenge of challenges is to save millions of humans from poverty but also to save wild life from disappearing and to reconcile urban culture with nature.

This implies that we are prepared to share energies, riches and knowledge (based upon the wiki model): sharing knowledge in the way we share music and information (virtual websites) and the urgency of developing a form of empathic conscience to help people from different ethnical, cultural and religious horizons to share the planet resources and the fruits and gifts of civilization.

Eyes of Europe must shape a new European public opinion and turn it gradually into a world public opinion. EoE is willing to turn European teenagers into a European citizens and hopefully into world citizens concerned about the future of our biosphere in a sustainable way. This is awfully ambitious but necessary in order to overcome the lethal conservatism of the various national reactionary public opinions. To put it bluntly, we need EoE education to help the young generations live in a radically new society where teenagers create their own information and knowledge and share it with the others in a virtual space. This can only be implemented with the help of modern Technologie, the Information Technologies (IT), as Eyes of Europe shows and describes since 1997.

It is essential to stimulate and collect the creativity of the Internet Generation. in order to improve their social abilities and develop their skills to help them develop a global "worldwise" consciousness.

Human consciousness must change quickly if we are to survive.

Europe mission is to create a form of world consciousness: bio-spherical consciousness Mankind is at the verge of a new revolutionary era, characterized by planetary interconnection, the first mission of education is to teach and to train pupils to reflect and act as members of the common biosphere.

That means in plain English makes Europe *world wise*, auf Deutsch: "*weltfähig*".

MG, Brussels, 15.12.2012