

THE END OF YESTERDAY



MARC GUIOT
(AUTHOR)

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CORONA

"... Can a pandemic end the annihilation-capitalism
so that humanity
can reunite with the globe ...?"

FINIS AUSTRIAE 2019 ? FINIS EUROPAE 2020 ?

« ES GIBT EIN EUROPA VOR UND EIN EUROPA NACH DEM VIRUS. »

UK coronavirus crisis 'to last until spring 2021 and could see 7.9 m hospitalized'

The virus is expected to circulate for another 12 months and lead to huge extra strain on an already overstretched NHS.

It also suggests that health chiefs are braced for as many as 80% of Britons becoming infected with the coronavirus over that time.

“For the public to hear that it could last for 12 months, people are going to be really upset about that and pretty worried about that”, said Paul Hunter, a professor of medicine at the University of East Anglia.

“A year is entirely plausible ». I think it will be around forever, but become less severe over time, as immunity builds up,” he added.

An 80% infection rate could lead to more than half a million people dying. If the mortality rate turns out to be the 1% many experts are using as their working assumption then that would mean 531,100 deaths.

Denis Campbell Health policy editor, THE GUARDIAN

« C'est terrible. »

En dehors de l'Alsace, je crois que les Français ne mesurent pas encore ce que cette crise sanitaire veut dire. C'est terrible. Des jeunes qu'il faut intuber de toute urgence, des personnes âgées balayées en quelques heures, des équipes médicales qui arrivent à saturation complète après 15 jours de mobilisation, des gens en pleurs, des plans nationaux, la peur pour soi et pour ses proches... Quand on est dedans, les choses sont extrêmement compliquées», Si la dynamique n'est pas brisée: 300.000 cas dans 18 jours, 600.000 dans trois semaines.

Dans un mois, 5 millions de personnes pourraient être atteintes par le Covid-19 dans une forme suffisamment sérieuse pour être prises dans le

décompte actuel du nombre de cas. Il est de la responsabilité de chacun de faire acte de civisme pour que cela ne devienne pas une réalité, en limitant au maximum ses interactions sociales.

Tout le monde doit participer à cet effort collectif. Chacun peut à son niveau sauver des vies. Ce n'est pas le virus qui circule dans la population. Ce sont les hommes et les femmes qui le font circuler. Vous, moi, tout le monde.

Jean Rottner, médecin et président de la région Grand Est LE FIGARO

« Nous sommes en guerre »

« Nous sommes en guerre, une guerre sanitaire, certes. Nous ne luttons ni contre une armée ni contre une Nation. Mais l'ennemi est là, invisible et insaisissable, et il progresse. Nous sommes en guerre.

*Beaucoup de certitudes, de convictions sont balayées, seront remises en cause. **Le jour d'après ne sera pas un retour au jour d'avant.***

Hissons-nous à la hauteur du moment. »

Emmanuel Macron

Endlich ist nichts mehr so, wie es ist

*Ein Virus wirft den Alltag um. Dieser neuen Lage kann nicht mit alten Parolen begegnet werden. Der Moment zum Nachdenken ist da: über unser Land, über unser Gemeinwesen. Unser Leben. **Bald sieht die Welt anders aus. In Europa erkennen wir die Absurdität unserer Tradition der Kleinstaaterei. Eigentlich könnte es weitergehen wie bisher, bloß mit mehr Einsatz der digitalen Plattformen.***

*Solidarität und Gemeinsamkeit sind seit Jahrzehnten schon aus der Mode. Unsere Gesellschaft begünstigt den Ausdruck von Individualität und Identität. **Ist es überhaupt noch möglich, gemeinsam etwas zu verändern?***

Jetzt ist also der Moment, Pause zu machen und nachzudenken: über unser Land, über unser Gemeinwesen.

Ewig wird es ein Rätsel bleiben, warum in diesen Tagen nicht die Bundeskanzlerin und beispielsweise ihre Kollegen aus Frankreich, Italien und Österreich gemeinsam vor die Kameras traten.

*Viel wird sich ändern, **es gibt ein Europa vor und ein Europa nach dem Virus.** Europa ist in den Städten entstanden. Sich zu Fuß über einen Platz zu bewegen, dort zu flanieren, zu diskutieren, zu handeln, das ist die wesentliche europäische Erfahrung, **der freie politische Diskurs im Café ist eine historische Errungenschaft.** Der leere Markusplatz von Venedig, die leere Passage Vittorio Emanuele II in Mailand, die leeren Stadien sind Symbole: Wir sehen plötzlich besser, was es für Orte sind, frei und voller Versprechen, in denen man mehr machen kann, als Geld auszugeben und einzunehmen. Nachdenken und diskutieren, wie es jetzt weitergeht nach dem Wahnsinn, den wir für Normalität hielten.*

Nils Minkmar DER SPIEGEL

In her televised speech on Wednesday 18 March, German Chancellor Angela Merkel did not mention the term "Europe" once.

***The term "Europe" was not even mentioned.** For a long time, Merkel had been emphasising European cooperation as a means of defending her country's interests. Now the Chancellor is not even pretending any more. A clarification that does not necessarily herald a bright future for the EU.*

MARIANNE

Europeans, open your eyes to the drama of Italy left to its own devices!"

*Gianluca Di Feo, deputy editor-in-chief of the Italian daily La Repubblica, describes in poignant terms his country's entire struggle against Covid-19. He explains his deep anger and bitterness at what he sees as **the moral bankruptcy of the European institutions.***

Masks, rubber gloves, plastic goggles - these were the first things Italy asked of Europe: Italy asked for help in building the simplest possible barrier against the coronavirus. But its appeal went unanswered. France and Germany closed their borders to these products, thus banning exports, and sent us a worrying signal: not even minimal practical support would have arrived from Brussels. Of

course, Ursula von der Leyen said, "We are all Italians." But these initiatives seem light years away from the trench where a country's survival is at stake.

You may not realise it, perhaps some still think Covid-19 is "nothing more than a common flu". No, it's a ruthless killer. It's spreading at an impressive rate

Gianluca Di Feo, deputy editor-in-chief of the Italian daily LA REPUBBLICA,

The Covid-19 crisis is a chance to do capitalism differently

*'Coronavirus will require governments to respond with a scale and intensity reminiscent of a military conflict – **this is a war against the spread of the virus.***

*The world is in a critical state. The Covid-19 pandemic is rapidly spreading across countries, with a scale and severity not seen since the devastating Spanish flu in 1918. Unless coordinated global action is taken to contain it, the contagion will soon become an economic and financial one too. **This is a war against the spread of the virus and economic collapse.***

Prof . Mariana Mazzucati GuardianO

Face au coronavirus, le chaos de l'Europe intergouvernementale

L'épidémie de coronavirus fournit une expérience grandeur nature et en temps réel de la capacité de coordination des États européens, à l'heure du règne de l'intergouvernementalisme.

*La gestion des systèmes de soins de santé comme celle des conséquences économiques et sociales de l'épidémie restent entièrement du ressort des États. La Commission a tenté de prendre les devants en créant une « corona response team » et un fonds d'investissement pour pallier les effets économiques de l'épidémie. Son action a été peu médiatisée et n'a pas convaincu ceux qui s'interrogent : « **que fait l'Europe ?** ».*

***Face à l'épidémie, les États sont souverainement désordonnés.** Dans un réflexe pavlovien, et faute de procédures supranationales, les gouvernements se replient sur une stratégie nationale et prennent des mesures sans concertation avec leurs voisins, dans l'espoir de contenir la propagation de l'épidémie.*

Politiques et experts ont longtemps argué que la valeur ajoutée de l'Union européenne, et sa légitimité, reposent sur sa capacité à trouver des solutions communes, rapides et efficaces pour résoudre des problèmes auxquels les États, seuls, ne pourraient faire face.

A l'heure où de plus en plus d'électeurs se détournent des partis traditionnels et se laissent séduire par des discours simplistes et réactionnaires, les dirigeants européens n'ont visiblement pas tiré les leçons des crises de la décennie passée.

Commission et Banque centrale européenne font, en matière de santé, aveu d'impuissance face à des États qui préfèrent jouer la carte de la souveraineté nationale plutôt que celle de la coopération européenne.

Faute de procédures efficaces, faute de moyens financiers communs, faute de dirigeants aux sens des responsabilités collectives, l'Europe intergouvernementale, c'est l'Europe qui dysfonctionne.

*Cette approche du « chacun pour soi » aura des conséquences désastreuses comme en matière de gestion des flux migratoires. **C'est une occasion cruellement manquée de faire preuve de solidarité intra-européenne et de redorer le blason de l'Union européenne en mettant tous les moyens en place pour sauver la vie de ceux et celles qui sont en danger dans les pays affectés par le Covid-19 ou aux frontières, fuyant la guerre et la misère.***

Nathalie Brack, Ramona Coman et Amandine Crespy, professeures de science politique, Cevipol et Institut d'Etudes européennes, Université libre de Bruxelles.

The Commission today proposes the activation of the general escape clause of the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) as part of its strategy to respond quickly, forcefully and in a coordinated manner to the coronavirus pandemic. Once endorsed by the Council, it will allow Member States to undertake measures to deal adequately with the crisis, while departing from the budgetary requirements that would normally apply under the European fiscal framework.

The proposal represents an important step in fulfilling the Commission's commitment to use all economic policy tools at its disposal to support Member States' in protecting their citizens and mitigating the pandemic's severely negative socio-economic consequences.

President Ursula **von der Leyen** said: "Today we propose maximum flexibility for our rules which will allow our national governments to support everybody -

their healthcare systems, staff as well as the people so severely affected by the crisis. I want to make sure that we respond to the human as well as socio-economic dimension of the Coronavirus pandemic in the best way possible." The Commission calls on the Council to endorse its proposal as quickly as possible.

The Commission stands ready to take further action as the situation evolves.

Let us just wait and see...

1. WE SHOULD NEITHER DRAMATIZE NOR MINIMIZE THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

**WE ARE NOW AT WAR AND WE REALISE IT.
"CORONAVIRUS ECLIPSES THE REST OF THE NEWS."**

The crisis of the corona virus, the great *Corona Circus* is overshadowing all the others (climate, immigration, recession, radicalism, violence, demography...) by its violence, its suddenness and unpredictability, its immediacy.

There is widespread mobilization against the virus. We are literally **at war**. Everyone is concerned and certain categories of citizens are more directly and cruelly threatened than others. In Italy's overcrowded hospitals, the sick are sorted out by sacrificing the oldest and most affected as would a war medicine. The political personnel are faced with a radically new situation.

The virus is insidious, there is no way to see who is carrying it, unlike jaundice or measles. Politicians hesitate between two attitudes, not to overdo it (Belgium) to avoid panic or overreaction (Italy or even more so China) to prevent an explosion of the pandemic. We will only know in several months or years what the right attitude would have been.

In the meantime we are walking on our heads and we have good reason to find irresponsible a Donald Trump that closes its borders to Europeans. The Europe of Charles Michel and Ursula von der Leyen is completely out of step, out of date. In the face of the pandemic each state reacts with its own sensitivity and without any serious consultation with surrounding countries. ***It is as if there was no Europe anymore.***

The coming calamity is not new... It has been the daily life of human beings since the dawn of time, with the exception of our last fifty years. The coronavirus epidemic and global warming are part of a deamatic return to reality that forces us to rethink our relationship with the environment.
Let's face it, nothing will ever be the same again. We're in the process of changing the software. We've suddenly entering a new era: ***the era of uncertainty und unpredictability***

It's tough, but maybe that's what is going save us from disaster, thanks to a general awareness and a collective responsibility.

Where danger grows, so does salvation, said Hölderlin. Let's hope he's not mistaken.

WITH THE CORONAVIRUS IT IS EVERYTHING BACK TO NORMAL

After Philippe Rahm, Architect, Strauch Visiting Critic in Sustainable Design in the Department of Architecture at Cornell University in the United States.

Both the coronavirus epidemic and global warming are part of a "***daunting return to reality***" that requires us to rethink our relationship with the environment and our lives.

This explosion of human power over the earth and over our bodies, and the resulting transformation of our environment - ***in our favour first and to our disadvantage today . The corona virus crisis is suddenly plunging us into a radically new world: a world of unpredictability and uncertainty.***

THE CRISIS CONSISTS PRECISELY IN THE FACT THAT THE OLD IS DYING AND THE NEW CANNOT BE BORN; IN THIS INTERREGNUM A GREAT VARIETY OF MORBID SYMPTOMS APPEAR. Gramsci

Are global warming and the revealing episode of a coronavirus epidemic phenomena heralding a formidable return to reality?

We must quickly recall here that the Enlightenment and the Moderns, from the 18th century to the 1950s, did not know about antibiotics, that life expectancy was still 40 years at the beginning of the 20th century Man is a naked monkey that can only survive thanks to technology,

The coming tragedy is not new, it has been the daily life of human beings since the dawn of time, with the exception of the last seventy years.

BUT HOW IS EUROPE RESPONDING?

Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, Emmanuel Macron and the majority of European heads of state have gone into teaching mode with both rigour and human warmth. It was about time. We will measure the contrast with the bullheaded brutality of the White House tenant who spits foam against his

European partners and succeeds in breaking the confidence of the markets, leading to a spectacular stock market crash.

What is for sure is that this corona circus acts as a powerful particle accelerator.

The recession was timidly announced and now it is suddenly surging; global warming was influencing a change in lifestyle and now the corona is forcing it on us vigorously; there were half-hearted plans to "virtualize" certain university courses and now they will all be taught online without exception in Belgium, just like in the fifty year old Open University.

50,000 students are suddenly taking distance learning courses among the 400,000 French students now deprived of school because of the coronavirus; health care was thought to be expensive, it is suddenly understood that it is priceless. The public collections of libraries in Flanders go digital in times of corona. Members of the library get free access to the educational reading and picture books. The newspaper archive of Gopress will also be opened free of charge, so that teachers and pupils can work from home on current affairs assignments.

The libraries in Flanders keep their doors physically closed, but a number of services are accessible online.

We were preparing to ***live differently*** and now we are compelled to do so by our governments. ***We can only regret the fact that Europe is largely absent from this spectacular takeover by public authorities.*** The Europe of Charles Michel and Ursula von der Leyen is conspicuously absent when it should be at the forefront of manoeuvres to demonstrate its necessity and, above all, its usefulness in the event of a major global crisis. We wanted leaders of compromise and consensus and we find ourselves with puppets who let

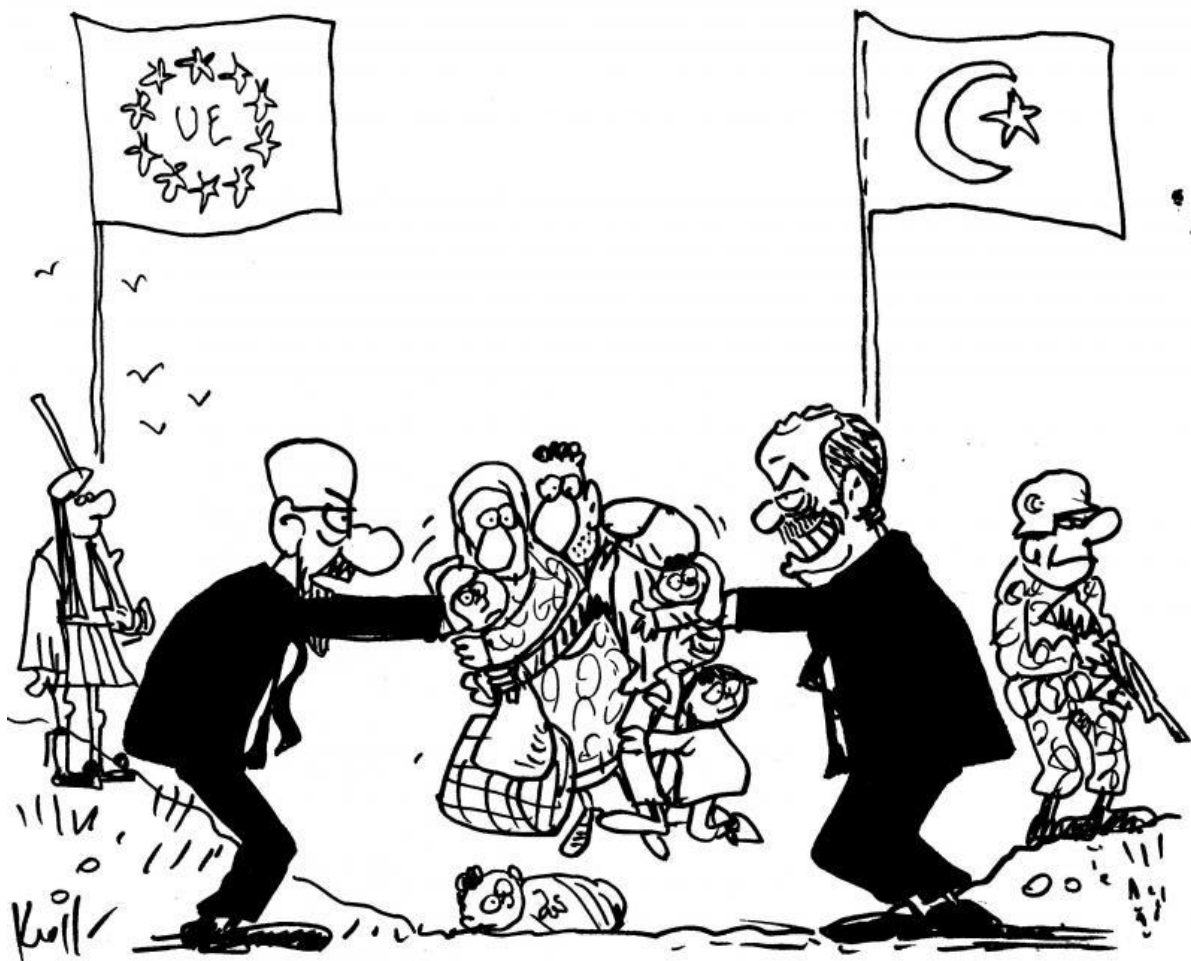
themselves be carried along by events without trying to have a hold on them. This is appalling.

What is lacking at European level is transparent, rigorous and invigorating civic education. Bluntly put, Europe badly needs Eyes of Europe.

It's probably the moment of truth, and the right time to see women and men of responsibility step forward. The coronavirus that strikes the world knows no boundaries.

In the face of the pandemic, the European Union must stand together. It is a question of solidarity with Italy in the front line, with the absolute necessity to support its healthcare system. We must stand firm against Trump's United States, which is playing alone. We are now up against the wall.

This is, in fact, a historic moment.



2 MIGRATION POLICY, THIS CHIMERA...

The European Union is releasing €700 million in support of Greece to manage migration and is sending a peace mission to Ankara to avert another major migration crisis. (Le Soir)

Hide those migrants that we prefer to forget... This short summary of the (non-)policy on migration and asylum in the European Union for months. We rely on coward solutions that "freeze" the problems where they arise and we keep our fingers crossed that it will hold up, so that we don't have to work on the basic problem: a pact on migration and asylum applied by all EU member countries, clearly regulating both the distribution of entrants, legal channels for migration and the strengthening of asylum rights in line with future labour needs.

It seems impossible to agree on a common strategy. And so, between two crises solved by ad hoc solutions, we act as if the problem was solved, no longer exists and we erase from the agendas the point "*migration problem*".

But now and again, "*they*" remind us of their existence and overflow from the Mediterranean - or because the Turks use them as hostages thrown on the political chessboard to serve their particular interests.

A few years ago, when Italy begged not to be left alone with the influx of migrants on its territory, the other EU countries refused to take the problem on board. Later, at the initiative of Angela Merkel, they negotiated a solution with the Turks that exposed them to Erdogan's goodwill but artificially turned off the migration tap. Today, it is the Greeks who are imploding. Suddenly people are mobilising, money is being released - 750 million is not in fact nothing - and border controls are being tightened, but the situation on the Greek islands has been like hell on earth for months.

Italy and then Greece tomorrow. Europe is reacting piecemeal. ***Clearly, there is no common migration policy.*** And the worst thing is to think that there will not be so much divergence and selfishness will dominate, so much so that a certain populist political machine will feed on this migratory imbroglio in order to stir up voters' concerns.

The Juncker Commission tried a grand plan that was bluntly rejected by the member states. The Home Affairs Commissioner mentioned "*a new pact on migration and asylum*". The President of the European Council, Charles Michel, said he was determined to respect international law and human rights. The most virtuous countries have come to terms with the immorality and illegality

of decisions taken on migration. As if that price was now acceptable to the greatest number in order to buy peace.

EUROPE STRENGTHENS ITS GREEK "SHIELD"

The Greek government claims to have repulsed more than 24,000 attempts to cross the border and arrested dozens of people who managed to enter the country illegally. *"This is no longer a refugee problem,"* Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis (New Democracy/EPP) said at a joint press conference with European representatives. *"This is a blatant attempt by Turkey to use desperate people to promote its geopolitical agenda. «*

Not a word, however, on the measures decreed by the Greek government in defiance of European procedures and international law - in particular, the country has decided to suspend access to asylum for a month - just one shy allusion from Charles Michel: *"We trust Greece to protect the borders and at the same time respect human rights and international rules. »*

"ALL NECESSARY MEASURES"

On 18 March 2016, the EU and Turkey agreed to end irregular migration from Turkey to the EU by sending back to Turkey rejected asylum seekers arriving on the Greek islands and taking back, for each returnee, a duly recognised Syrian refugee for resettlement in the EU.

Apart from this arrangement, which in the end proved to be marginal, Turkey's main commitment was to take *"all necessary measures"* to stop the migration wave. In exchange, the Europeans made available two times 3 billion euro to finance NGO projects in favour of Syrian refugees in Turkey - there are more than 3 million of them. The *"deal"* was immediately criticised by human rights organisations and UN specialised agencies: immoral, legally dubious and subject to the moods of President Erdogan, accused by the Europeans of authoritarian drift and criticised for having entered Syria first of all to... hunt down the Syrian Kurds.

"IT WOULD REQUIRE AN INSURRECTION OF CONSCIENCES. »

While the corona virus is attracting all the attention of the media, the population, migratory pressure is once again being exerted on the Greek flank of the European Union with disastrous consequences for the refugees that Erdogan is sending to Europe.

"This is a blatant attempt by Turkey to use desperate people to promote its geopolitical agenda. »

One can imagine that with the approach of spring, the flows of refugees passing through the Turkish camps will begin their irresistible march towards the European Eden. The same goes for the millions of African migrants massed in Libya. The summer will be hot and the migratory pressure unbearable.

In a dramatic interview, old Jean Zieggler expressed his rage and anger: *"Our responsibility is total. We are driving the refugees back to the hell from which*

they are trying to escape with a strategy of terror. We are creating real concentration camps with totally inhuman conditions".

"I find it shameful and scandalous that no party has addressed this issue when it is one of the most appalling tragedies of our time. "There should be an insurrection of consciences. »

We must definitely expect a stiffening of identity and xenophobia induced by the populist currents that gangrene our desperate democracies. *This summer is likely to be a very difficult time for democracy on the old continent, precisely where it was born.*

Faced with the pandemic, the time has come for European coordination.

We are now up against the wall. This is, in fact, a historic moment.

3. WHAT PUTIN REALLY WANTS IN SYRIA

Russia never sought to be a small-time fixer in the Middle East. Its goal was to reclaim its status as a global power broker.

By Dmitriy Frolovskiy (Foreign Poicy)

Russia received the best possible gift from the Trump administration right before Christmas 2019 and now has a free hand to determine the future of its troubled Middle Eastern ally. With the United States preparing to exit the Syrian

conflict, the Kremlin's strategy won't change much. That's because it was never about Syria from the beginning.

The conflict was always perceived as a tool to showcase ambitions that assert Russia as a global power. Moscow perceives U.S. President Donald Trump's abandonment of Syria as a victory that adds greatly to its political capital.

Russia officially launched its airstrikes in Syria in September 2015.

Moscow sensed the opportunity to fill a vacuum in a metastasizing conflict zone that only grew as American disillusionment with an interventionist U.S. Middle East policy deepened. The « fixer » role has delivered its benefits, but Russia didn't enter Syria to fix it. Putin always intended to be much more than a fixer; he wanted Moscow to be an indispensable actor.

Russia's goal in Syria was not to grab what was left but to flex its muscle and showcase power.

THIS SHODDY IDLIB CEASEFIRE WON'T END THE WAR – OR THE SUFFERING OF SYRIANS

Simon Tisdall the Guardian

This deal stitched up between Russia and Turkey reinforces Putin's grip and Erdoğan's position as Moscow's man in Nato.

The ceasefire in Idlib is, like many previous Syrian truces, unlikely to hold. It will not stop the suffering of hundreds of thousands of displaced and terrified people who remain cut off from adequate humanitarian relief and medical aid. It will not solve the refugee crisis on Europe's borders, nor will it bring justice to victims of numerous atrocious war crimes.

This shoddy backroom deal, a stitch-up between the authoritarian leaders of Russia and Turkey, does not end the war. What the ceasefire pact does do is further reinforce the grip of Russia's president, Vladimir Putin, whose power to dispense life and death in Syria on a whim now goes unchallenged by the west.

Erdoğan's weaponising of the Syrian refugee problem to pressure and disrupt the EU is a tactic approved in Moscow.

All this furthers Putin's broader aim of weakening Nato and dividing the western democracies.

European leadership on the Syrian crisis remains woefully lacking, as it has been for the past nine years

Looked at in this wider context, the deal confirms Erdoğan's role as Russia's inside man in Nato. The Turkish leader may think he's a strategic genius, playing power politics on the world stage. In truth, he's little more than Putin's useful idiot.

European leadership on the Syrian crisis remains woefully lacking, as it has been for the past nine years.

Given the scale of the emergency, Europe's "first priority" should surely be saving lives, followed by bloc-wide resettlement quotas – something the EU has failed to agree since the last big refugee crisis in 2015.

4. A GHOST IS HAUNTING GERMANY, THE RETURN OF NAZISM IN AFD'S GARB

A spectre haunts Germany, the return of Nazism in the AFD (*Alternativ für Deutschland*) outfit that sets the tone in Thuringia, the region where Hitler enjoyed his first electoral successes in Germany.

This situation weakens and destabilizes Merkel's party, which is on the verge of implosion, while the SPD, her coalition partner, is at its lowest in the polls since the war.

The crisis is so deep that it is threatening to shake Angela Merkel at the end of the race and lead to a regime crisis while the powerful German economy is threatened with recession.

A GHOST IS HAUNTING EUROPE THE SLOW AGONY OF FREE DEMOCRACY

A German Spiegel reader writes

"Both the trust in politics(s) and the trust in democracy have received knee shots in both knees, nothing can move anymore.

Mother democracy seems to be dead, a new narrative is necessary, but this can no longer be implemented with the existing political systems and their makers (the politicians with their "consultant networks") , too old and too static.

Democratic Europe is in trouble: the United Kingdom has made its brexit, France is in turmoil and Marine Le Pen is waiting for her hour lurking in the shadow, Italy is threatened by the return of Salvini, Poland, Hungary and the former Soviet countries of the Vizgrad group are tempted by illiberalism. Germany is in crisis, not to mention Belgium where the extreme right is preparing to triumph in Flanders at the next elections.

Europe-united in peace and democracy, this magnificent challenge launched by the founding fathers to the peoples of Europe is, it seems, in turmoil and we may doubt that the lack of charisma and above all the lack of ambition and vision of the von der Leyen-Michel couple is liable to put it back into orbit. **Poor Europe.** *Europe-united in peace and democracy*, this splendid challenge launched by the founding fathers to the peoples of Europe is, it seems, in turmoil. It is and it is questionable whether the lack of charisma and above all the lack of ambition and vision of the von der Leyen-Michel couple is capable of putting it back into orbit. **Poor Europe, its future seems at stake.**

Come back quickly Jacques Delors for they don't know what they're doing.

Europe and its twin sister democracy need a new narrative, a new impetus and, above all, a strong pedagogy. This is the time or never to demonstrate that European cooperation can strengthen us. Above all, it seems the right time to get Eyes of Europe off the ground across Europe.

We urgently need to live at last as a European people, that is to say as people who knows that they are bound together by a community of destiny.

"Everyone is responsible for everyone. Each is solely responsible. Each is solely responsible for all." Saint-Exupéry

Every crisis is both a moment of truth and an obligation to choose. This is the ideal moment to give Eyes of Europe a chance to tackle all those challenges.

"EDUCATION AS A CURE-ALL - IT'S SIMPLY MADNESS" -

Miriam Olbrisch, der Spiegel

"SCHOOL IS BLIND TO INEQUALITY"

Aladin El-Mafaalani, 41, knows the German education system from many perspectives. A doctor in sociology, he taught economics at Ahlen, taught

political science at Münster University of Applied Sciences and worked as a department head in the Ministry for Children, Family, Refugees and Integration in Düsseldorf. Today he is Professor of Education and Training at the University of Osnabrück. With his book "*Das Integrationsparadox*" (*The Integration Paradox*) he initiated a debate on conflicts in an immigration society in 2018. His new book "*Myth of Education - the Unjust Society, its Educational System and its Future*" was published in February.

"SCHOOL HAS NOT ONLY AN INTELLECTUAL BUT ALSO AN EDUCATIONAL MISSION" EL-MAFAALANI

"SCHOOL HAS NOT ONLY AN INTELLECTUAL BUT ALSO AN EDUCATIONAL MISSION" EL-MAFAALANI

EL-MAFAALANI: *For a long time I found school very exhausting. So much homework, so much stuff. The workload was too high. At the same time I often felt intellectually underchallenged. My parents immigrated to Germany from Syria, at home we spoke Arabic. Nevertheless, my father insisted that I go to college. Some of my friends were not so lucky, although their grades were often better than mine. They ended up at the Realschule or Hauptschule (professional education), their career paths were very different from mine.*

SPIEGEL: In your book you criticize, among other things, how much success at school in Germany depends on the parental home. The education system is a manifestation of social inequality.

EL-MAFAALANI: This inequality, which is often passed on through generations, is one of our most pressing social problems.

The school system should really be able to reduce inequalities so that children can develop according to their abilities. But the opposite is the case. When children come to school, their opportunities are extremely unequally distributed - by the social background in which they grow up, by the neighbourhood in which they live, by the wealth of their parents. School is blind to such inequalities.

This is why even today, working class children make it to university far less often than their classmates from better-off families - because they often grow up under different circumstances.

SPIEGEL: But today more young people are studying than ever before. Around 40 percent of a year's intake graduate from high school.

EL-MAFAALANI: Middle-class children and even some from the lower classes get a piece of the cake. But this has not made society any more equitable. For those who are excluded, the situation is worse than before.

SPIEGEL: You say that education does not abolish inequality. Should we stop investing in our schools?

EL-MAFAALANI: Of course not. We need good education, that's beyond question. I criticize the fact that many people see education as the panacea for a whole range of social problems: For social inequality, but also for global poverty migration, for the rise of populism, and even for climate change. To really combat inequality, schools would have to change from the ground up.

For primary schools, this would mean more psychologists, occupational and physiotherapists, experts in nutrition, exercise, nature and gardening, craftsmen, artists, musicians and health professionals.

SPIEGEL: And for the older ones?

EL-MAFAALANI: Young people might find it exciting to learn how to do a tax return or a stock market simulation game or program an app. The parental home would no longer be decisive in determining whether a child learns a sport or an instrument, whether it learns proper dental care, whether it can bake a cake or change a tire on a bicycle. And the teachers could concentrate on their core task again: teaching children to read, write and do sums.

From all of this, we will remember that ***citizenship education must be one of the priorities of education with a European vocation.***

This is, it must be repeated, the whole ambition of Eyes of Europe, which wants to develop a critical and constructive mentality through dialogue and permanent interaction between pupils at pan-European scale.

5. « ECOLOGY FILLS THE GAP LEFT BY RELIGIOUS NARRATIVES »

(Régis Debray)

"Our civilization is changing. History is oriented forward and towards something better, tending to accomplishment. Today, it is obvious that we no longer believe in such hopeproviding projects.

We are terrified of what may be coming, whereas previously, like Sisyphus, we used to climb the hill.

*The climate crisis and the Corona virus crisis are teaching us humility. **The discovery of finitude will force us to seek a new narrative, a new ethic.***

We have swapped original sin for industrial sin and therefore we rediscover in ecology the old religious guilt.

Some imagine green dictatorship as an alternative with iron rules and totalitarian experts playing on widespread anxiety, scarcity of resources, and imposing a regime of absolute control.

Is democracy in danger? No doubt we will have to learn to combine civic duties and ecological obligations so as not to sacrifice the former to the latter.

*While the spectre of the collapse of the Earth system is haunting the West, **another world is being born before our eyes.** (Régis Debray)*

The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.
Gramsci

It is this world that is being born, which Eyes of Europe is striving to help become reality : **a world of and for young European mutants.** Eyes of Europe is a self-active educational platform which aims, through dynamic permanent interactions **of all with all** to arouse in young people **a new cultural attitude.** The basic idea is simply to organise through collective intelligence **a permanent intercultural dialogue** of the young across Europe.

In the 18th century, the rational and scientific narrative of the the Enlightenment philosophers definitively eclipsed the biblical story eventually generating representative democracy.

Faced with the explosion of complexity in all fields of human activity a new narrative is again badly needed.

Who is to write it? What if EoE reversed the dynamic? **What if we asked young people to write, this new anti-apocalypse, together in a bottom up logic?**

In his analysis of European cultural dysfunctions, Lambros Couloubaritsis, famous Brussels philosopher observes that the multicultural structure that Europe has developed over the last decades leads to the impasse of

communitarianism, generating frustration and violence. He is therefore strongly advocating a different approach i.e. that of an ***intercultural dialogue of all with all***.

"We are navigating between two worlds, one that we still sustain and the other that we want to see emerge. We will have to turn the tide if we want to avoid collapse and violence and revolutions." (Charles Delhez in La libre Belgique)

Charles Delhez is a member of the Riv Espérance 2020 team with Olivier De Schutter, a Belgian lawyer and professor of international law at the Catholic University of Louvain, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, a position he succeeded to the Swiss Jean Ziegler in 2008.

On 12 October 2019, Olivier De Schutter took part in a demonstration of the *Extinction Rebellion* movement at the Place Royale in Brussels; when he tried to talk to the police, an officer sprayed him pepper in the face. He exclaimed: *"These young people are expressing their dismay."*

They do it peacefully. They are answered with truncheons, dogs and fire engines. This is totally unacceptable. »

Climate and ecological issues and their energy, food and medical corollaries (corona virus) are omnipresent today, generating guilt and producing eco-anxiety. All spheres of human activity are concerned: the political and social field, culture, economy, health, geopolitics (migrations), family and, above all, education.

More and more of us no longer accept the current system. They are rejecting the world as it works, even if - paradoxically - they continue to be its accomplices. ***Young people find it difficult to look forward to a happy future.***

"Some no longer want children, because the future is uncertain. This is not the first mutation in history, but it is happening at an exponential speed. Both global and radical, it is undoubtedly more important than 12,000 years ago, when we went from the Paleolithic to the Neolithic Age as it is affecting man himself. »," said Michel Serres.

Internet is reshaping our attitude to knowledge, new means of communication are transforming our social relations, biotechnologies are affecting our bodily nature, social networks are re-shaping the political sphere, and the articulation

between generations and genders is being redefined. Everything is changing, but is it always for the better?

Numerous challenges invite us to rediscover truer conviviality, refocusing on the human priority. It will definitely require renunciations.

Fortunately, there is something exciting about this transition: imagining a new world. Some are already busy conceiving something radically new, anticipating what is about to come. ***Seeds of hope are everywhere.***

But where do we get started? Some say it's up to politicians to take responsibility. Fair enough. But isn't it at the local level that change should be initiated? Inside the family, in the group of friends, the neighbourhood, the city, acting locally while thinking globally? In the end, the future is in each of us. As one young student put it, ***"If not me, who will it be? If not now, when?"***

So now is exactly the time to set up and activate Eyes of Europe's auto-active educational platform.

"COLLECTIVE LEARNING"

IT'S TIME TO MOVE FROM IDEAS TO ACTION.

In his essay *Les Tisserands*, where he advocates "*mending together the torn fabric of the World*" (Les Liens qui libèrent, 2018) Abdenour Bidar asks himself whether ***"the key to all locks might lie in us, in our relationship to nature and to each other, in the recognition of the spiritual and inner dimensions of this process of transition"***. Olivier De Schutter.

Who will be ***the mutants of a new world***, worthy of man? When will this critical mass tipping us in the right direction come about? ***Let's bet on the boldness of the new generation!*** Let's bet on the Greta Thunberg and Olga Musik generation. There are millions like them in Europe and let's bet on a post-growth economy, renewable energies, a more participatory democracy, a more convivial humanity.

In his studies on governance, Olivier De Schutter emphasizes the virtues of ***collective learning*** that gives social actors a greater role in identifying the solutions that best meet the situations they experience. He believes that our

failure to make the transition to a low-carbon society is due in part to our inability to capitalize on the motivations of stakeholders, especially young people who are fed up with the degradation of their planet and the deterioration of the climate. ***If we continue to act and produce in the next thirty years as we have done in the past thirty years, we will be killing our grandchildren,***" said a French philosopher three decades ago.

« I AM CONVINCED THAT EUROPE IS AT A TURNING POINT AND THAT IT IS NOW TIME TO PROPOSE SOLUTIONS TO GET OUT OF THIS DEADLY CONFRONTATION BETWEEN EUROPE AS THE TRANSMISSION BELT OF THE FREE ECONOMY ON THE ONE HAND AND THE IDENTITY-BASED ECONOMY ON THE OTHER. »

*"What has changed over the years is that politics is now under pressure. Young people are demonstrating in the streets and many legal actions are underway. **Politicians need to get out of their inertia**".*

For De Schutter, Europe's budgetary discipline must be accompanied by **social and environmental discipline**.

"We really must make people desire to change things : to change themselves in order to change the world. »

We need "doers" who invent their own solutions, become actors. This is what we must focus on today.

Let us not wait for these systems to collapse before we personally move on to transition paths.

Wouldn't the key lie in us, in our relationship with nature and with each other?

EYES OF EUROPE TO MAKE YOUNG EUROPEANS WANT TO CHANGE THINGS, TO CHANGE THEMSELVES IN ORDER TO CHANGE THEIR WORLD.

When will it finally be understood that it is up to the younger generations of Europe to tackle the challenges that their elders have proved unable to handle. ***"Will there soon be the critical mass that will make us move in the right direction?"*** asks De Schutter. Together with the Erasmus programmes, Eyes of Europe is undoubtedly both the way and the method and the virtual agora ***to forge a European mentality on a large scale***, a critical and supportive European opinion, in short a clear-sighted European people endowed with true discernment.

Eyes of Europe is a virtual Erasmus for all teenagers in Europe. A self-active educational platform capable of creating among young Europeans a dynamic of permanent interaction on all the subjects and issues that annoy and divide us.

WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF EOE HAD BEEN CREATED AND IMPLEMENTED TEN YEARS AGO?

There is no doubt that if EoE had been around for the last ten years it would not have had the capacity of preventing the coronas virus from infecting 60-70% of Europeans as is now feared. What is certain however, is that the generation of young Europeans who could have enjoyed the benefits of a digital and virtual Erasmus for ten years or so, would have demanded from their political leaders much more drastic and better concerted measures at European level than those taken today by the European states in their present dispersion and cacophony. This is undoubtedly even more true for the fight against global warming and against violence and radicalism.

It is clear that if EoE could boast of ten years of existence we would have among young people, especially among teenagers and twenties, a true European opinion which is desperately lacking today.

The Greta effect, which today is individual, isolated and somewhat caricatured, would certainly be an effect of ***the collective intelligence of young Europeans, resulting from collective learning***

. It is very likely that the young European public opinion formed by the daily attendance of EoE would have very quickly put politicians on the alert.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM EOE IN THE NEXT TEN YEARS?

It is not too late, but it is high time to create, in the face of the demise of representative democracy, ***a new, more direct form of democracy*** a virtual agora that allows young people to express their opinions and in this way to have a real impact on politics, which today remains in the hands of older generations who are very unresponsive and singularly reactionary.

It is a popular saying in England that the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton College. The patriotism of the belligerents of 1914 was instilled by the nationalist and vengeful teachings dispensed in the schools of the protagonists. Nazi fanaticism is said to have flourished in the classrooms before spreading throughout German society. It is clear that only a resolutely

*pan-European and interactive education can create **what Europe lacks: not a single market or currency but a common culture of shared values carried by a true European people.** And above all, **a new attitude to culture, i.e. a new intercultural dynamic** -*

this European people still does not exist, more than sixty years after the founding of the European Union.

50,000 STUDENTS ARE ALREADY TAKING DISTANCE LEARNING COURSES.

Jean-Michel Blanquer, the Minister of National Education, praises the performance of the public platform for distance learning, the Cned. The 400,000 French pupils now deprived of schooling because of the coronavirus, from the Haut-Rhin to Corsica, via the Oise, are gradually beginning to take distance courses.

Via digital workspaces, which have been widespread for the last ten years or so in middle and high schools, whether public or private. But Jean-Michel Blanquer, the Minister of National Education, also praises the performance of the public platform for **distance learning**, the Cned. A free offer "complementary" to that offered locally by teachers, he said Thursday afternoon, traveling to Chasseneuil-du-Poitou (Vienne), headquarters of the Cned, a stone's throw from the Futuroscope leisure park.

Let's put it **bluntly with Eyes of Europe, schools, although closed because of the Corona crisis, could have continued their activities virtually**, like the Belgian universities today and like the English Open University for nearly fifty years. **Eyes of Europe is not only a virtual Erasmus for teenagers, it is also a possibility to dematerialize the educational mission in Europe to a large extent and on a paneuropean scale.**

EYES OF EUROPE TO PROMOTE INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE HOW AND WHY TO FOUND INTERCULTURAL HUMANISM IN EUROPE.

We like to be reminded that Jean Monnet would have said that if it were done over again, he would have started his European odyssey with culture. The idea is appealing, even though the quote is obviously apocryphal.

But do we realize the immense complexity of this fascinating challenge that is lying ahead? asked philosopher Lambros

Couloubaritsis. (Université Libre de Bruxelles)

In a long but essential article, he recalls that Robert Schuman would have claimed that "*before being a military alliance or an economic entity, Europe, was to have become a cultural community in the highest sense*".

What is now at stake in terms of culture in our contemporary Europe? And how to bridge the cultural abyss which marks the European Union (EU) today, asks Professor Lambros Couloubaritsis in the brand new journal Ulenpiegel.

1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF "CULTURE".

Aristotle already considered that he who is in all things well educated is capable of criticizing all things.

As a metaphor, Cicero attributed culture to the blossoming of the human spirit. From the 15th century on, the scope of culture was broadened: "*the task of developing human faculties*."

The evangelization of the planet and its colonization, viewed as civilizing missions have imposed the idea of a dominant culture : a dominant Western civilization as an expression of a superior civilization, which '*from the seventeenth century onwards included modern experimental science and the technologies it generated*'.

From then on, the word '*civilization*' included the totality of the human production and condition (institution, education, legislation, arts, letters, science and technology...), while '*culture*' was referring solely to education, the arts, literature and science.

Diderot, co-publisher in 1755 of the Encyclopaedia, focused on the the encyclopedic nature of culture under the influence of the Anglo-Scottish Lights. As for Germany, it sublimated the opposition between Kant (the autonomy of reason) and the romantic thinkers who put the focus on feelings. Herder restricted "*culture*"(Kultur) to the idea of "*nation*" (all organic, where language and morals had to play a central role). Hence, an ambivalence arose between the multiplicity of national cultures and a more general idea of culture, based on regional and national basic values common to mankind as a whole.

This ambivalence is important for anyone who wants to "reflect" (in the philosophical meaning of the word), upon the concept of culture in the European field. Its foundation was an attempt to end the obsessive repetition of geopolitical and cultural, not to mention religious conflicts with a culminating moment after World War II.

2 . "CULTURE TODAY": A TWO COMPONENT CONCEPT.

The first meaning concerns the "*specific*" cultures of the various European folks who, through their many interactions, make up the European Union. The cultural richness of the different entities (countries and regions) that make up the EU is impressive and exceptional on the surface of our planet. Since the 18th century a second meaning of "*culture*" was defined as a "**cultural attitude**" that advocates new values, freeing itself from the sclerotic "*traditional habits*", often dominated by a nationalist quest for power. Europe as a cultural idea and project was founded in the 18th century with the advent of Enlightenment, which toppled religious dogmatisms and superstitions, while stigmatising traditional warlike violence in favour of a new state of mind seeking to promote freedom of thought and the scientific method (*experimental sciences*) as well as political and economic liberalism. (*democracy*)

The industrial revolution radically changed the historical foundations of Europe in economic and financial terms.

The defeat of fascist and Nazi totalitarianism during the Second World War facilitated the emergence of a new cultural attitude with the establishment of liberal democracy in Europe, first within the six founding states and later on in all 28 (minus) member states.

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, voted on 10 December 1948 by the General Assembly of the United Nations, marked a historic moment both concrete and symbolic of this *new cultural attitude*.

This did not prevent a Cold War between the partisans of political and economic freedom and those of a State democracy under the banner of so called people's dictatorships.

It ended on European ground with Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik based on the non-use of force to settle conflicts and the signing of a series of bilateral treaties of

non-aggression and good neighborhood between Germany and its former enemies and the Helsinki Multilateral Security Agreement. The latter was calling for the recognition of borders and the principles of détente and cooperation advocated by General de Gaulle, who was dreaming of a united Europe from the Atlantic to the Ural...

The founding fathers of the United Europe and later on the European Community deliberately promoted "**a new cultural attitude**", reminiscent of the Enlightenment, with the hope of *overcoming the traditional conflicts and disputes that have clashed and ripped Europeans apart for centuries*.

The European Union thus established itself to the world as "*the most ambitious political idea in modern history*". The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 allowed Eastern European countries to free themselves from a totalitarian ideology by joining the EU, making its political, economic and cultural coherence more uncertain.

The gradual rapprochement within the EU of the countries that make it up was to be the first political priority of the European Commission, with the desire to preserve the multiplicity of cultures, but without a clear plan for future unification to avoid its centrifugal fragmentation.

3. CULTURE IN TODAY'S EUROPE

The obsession with cultural relativism influenced in the 1960s by decolonization and new immigration to Europe, reinforced by the arrival in Europe of other religions (Islam and those from Asia) created, alongside the "*multicultural*" idea, a kind of *multi-religious* space.

The result was a desire to respect each culture (and therefore each religion), sometimes even to the detriment of respect for the elementary rules of human dignity. Thus, **communitarianism** has imposed itself as a concept just about everywhere in Europe.

The power of modern techno-economy has gradually become fairly uncontrollable, which has undermined the democratic organisation of our European nations in which the rule of law, human freedom and dignity are no longer capable of always imposing themselves.

The European Union has reacted by increasing the number of procedures, regulations and rules of all sort, which are making its democratic action more and more opaque.

Above all, it poorly assumes the ***new cultural attitudes*** in accordance with the ideals that presided over its constitution. Beyond a lacking federating European project, we miss a *new cultural attitude* in line with the gallant ambition of the founder of the European Union: overcoming conflicts. In essence, this idea should be conveyed by the media and especially by our education systems ideally by both in close synergy (E.o.E)

We badly need appropriate information and education to ensure that young Europeans struggle for a better future through a clear vision of Europe. The thesis that it must be achieved in small steps with gradual rapprochements without forcing the course of events by a unifying medium-term project towards a credible destiny for the EU. without forcing its pace doesn't really make sense. It seems indeed a short-sighted view that doesn't recognize the aspirations of European youths who wish to swiftly promote a real culture of hope in Europe.

This is precisely the segment that Eyes of Europe Eyes of Europe as a self-active education platform wants to conquer. Self-organization involves interactions within the system while multiplyng the number of new properties and functions.

4. A CULTURAL ATTITUDE TO TRANSCEND CONFLICTS THAT HAVE BEEN BLOODYING EUROPE OVER CENTURIES

European authorities tend to avoid dealing with the problem issue resulting from cultural diversity. The first election of the European Parliament (June 1979), the Schengen Agreements with the abolition of border controls (1985) and, especially the implementation of the Erasmus exchange programme (1987) was *"a decisive step towards raising awareness of the EU's multiculturalism and the need to bring people of different cultures and languages closer together, to promote information and to deepen education."*

Unfortunately, these promising first steps were not followed by a reflection upon the meaning and scope of culture in Europe, and the need to adopt a new attitude towards the potential of culture. The brexit crisis reflects a profound lack of common culture.

5 .EUROPE LACKS A GENUINE CULTURE COMPARABLE TO THAT OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT BUT ADAPTED TO OUR CONTEMPORANEITY, CAPABLE OF PRESERVING THE UNITY OF THE EU.

The cultural climate that currently prevails in Europe is insidiously reinforcing antagonism as a cultural driving force, encouraging competition and conflict, rather than sound emulation. It seems that antagonisms serve the interests of many industries, especially the arms industry. Through this short-term policy the European Union is multiplying rivalries instead of promoting emulation among Europeans

6. OUTLINE OF A THEORY OF INTERCULTURALITY

Today's Europe is faced with a major phenomenon unknown since the time of the Religion Wars: mass migration of populations that began with decolonisation and continued by conflicts in regions more or less close by, and stimulated by the attraction of our

countries produced by an imagination that shapes the idea of a free and prosperous Europe, the migration of populations has become a major problem for the EU.

Faced with increased interactions between diverse cultures, the idea of multiculturalism has become obsolete and therefore requires new responses. Interculturality is undoubtedly the most adequate alternative in this respect.

Increasingly multicultural, the EU is facing the presence of diverse cultures, which are not always welcomed on the basis of equality and reciprocity. Immigrant communities tend to retreat into isolation and develop **communitarianism** which favours the juxtaposition of cultures under the influence of various national or foreign religious authorities, who advocate proximity of identities, in contrast to the secularization trend in society. In the minds of many Europeans, however, what dominates the

idea of cultural pluralism today is still divisive religious pluralism. Cultural diversity is naturally inducing a dynamic of interactions capable of bring people closer together through parameters such as food, music, cinema, literature, the arts, hospitality, etc.

Imported religions increase divisions seeking to preserve their followers from Western contamination and tending to impose their own truth.

Globalization combining religious and political antagonisms, is exacerbating passions.

Increasingly multidimensional, reality is becoming more and more complex which ultimately threatens the very foundation of western liberalism that, since the 18th century, has largely accounted for the blossoming of the European spirit.

In the face of this explosion of complexity, no one is left in any doubt that in the future, population movements for economic reasons or because of conflicts will be one of Europe's major problems.

Hence the interest in reflecting on ways of overcoming multiculturalism in favour of interculturality that is likely to impose a common world under the banner of liberalism and social solidarity that it made possible

7. HOW TO IMPLEMENT INTERCULTURALISM CONCRETELY.

Where interactions take place, a new culture emerges, the whole being more than the sum of its parts.

Multiculturalism resulting from the "*juxtaposition*" of diverse cultures has been in the EU since immigration has expanded..

The integration of new populations through education, i.e. the conscious acceptance of the values of the host culture can be perceived as a submission to another culture and a denial of one's own culture. Hence the search for a new dynamic that preserves the freedom, sensitivity and dignity of immigrants. It is in this context that a series of new terms and concepts such as intercultural dialogue and interculturality have emerged.

The process of interculturalisation, induces interactive processes with a view to favouring living together. (M. Lavallée and B. Kremer, Bulletin of the "Association for Intercultural Research")

8. BRINGING MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES INTO INTERACTION.

Whenever there are "interactiond", new properties emerge according to the complexity theory. In the opinion of C. Clanet, interculturalisation is "*the set of processes by which individuals and groups interact when they belong to two or more sets that claim to be from different cultures or that can be referred to distinct cultures. Interculturalisation embraces a class of new phenomena*".

Are such developments sufficient to generate a new unity transcending cultural differences? As a matter of fact, when different cultures interact, they **generate new attitudes** that challenge past habits.

Interactions generate a whole that is more than the sum of its parts and is producing new properties and functions, creating something completely new. Not a new culture replacing old ones, but **new cultural attitudes**,

FROM MULTICULTURAL TO INTERCULTURAL.

In the field of sport, not everything is allowed. Players, whatever their origin, colour or social status, respect common rules that are not affecting the creativity of their game. Possible protests are addressed to the referee. Rules as such are rarely challenged. Likewise, it will be possible to establish new regulatory and creative rules of life in politics, while respecting diversity facilitating living together through a switch from multicultural to intercultural, requiring respect for two basic principles:

1° Not everything is allowed in a specific culture under strict respect for cultural identity (for example, inequality of men and women, excision, stoning, etc.).

2° References common to all cultures, need to be defined in order to promote "*living together*" in a common world that account for the novelties produced by interactions.

Basically, we should not expect a new culture to replace old ones , but rather foster *a new cultural attitude* capable of changing our habits with regard to our own culture and establish a common world with common values.

Eyes of Europe considers it essential to foster cultural humanistic attitudes that safeguard freedom of choice and promote the well-being and development of all EU citizens.

Eyes of Europe is encouraging a common cultural attitude promoting freedom and emulation to achieve a common project which remains to be defined. But it is clear that it can only be attained through a bottom up dialogue of all with all of with everyone with everyone across europe.

10. INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM IS STOPPING WHERE THE SUFFERINGS OF THE OTHERS BEGINS

EoE is committed to consider the suffering of others the measure of all our actions. E .o.E.'s aim is to participate in the fight against human suffering (illness, poverty, insecurity, fear for one's life, identity and for its culture, etc.) on the ground of a new cultural attitude compatible with freedom and solidarity.

***What Eyes of Europe is standing for is nothing less than
Implementing intercultural humanism in Europe.***

As long as the cultural richness of countries and regions and EU citizens is not respected by all in its diversity without causing unjustified moral suffering and as long as it remains

incompatible with human dignity (which excludes all forms of dogmatism and fanaticism), and as long as an intercultural project advocating new cultural attitudes in the interests of European unity are not established, the disintegration of the EU will be jeopardized by nationalist and regionalist fanaticisms claiming autonomy, let alone independence.

A cultural Europe, as I sketched it out in its double meaning seems to me to have to be thought through, with its gaps and shortcomings before being implemented.

(Lambros Couloubaritsis, professor emeritus at the ULB, and Member of the Royal Academy of Belgium. Latest book : La violence narrative d'une réforme constructive des rapports humains (Ousia, 2029)

THE CORONA PANDEMIC WILL UNQUESTIONABLY HAVE A DRAMATIC IMPACT ON US ALL.

In the very first place, we cannot exclude, as Jacques Attali fears, that its lethality will be much higher than expected. Worse still, such a situation could definitively tip our civilizations to the height of individualism i.e. *the war of all against all* : a savage struggle for life : no respect left for others, no such thing as empathy any more.

Nor can we rule out the possibility that the pandemic ends up with very serious impact on the world economy.

This crisis will truly leave its mark on people's minds, and we need to detect as swiftly as possible, in the interspaces between these threatening catastrophes, signs of a better world. That is also part of EoE's job.

Important changes are clearly taking shape:

We will definitely have to make the most of new practices and attitudes that this crisis is imposing on us: respecting, washing and watching over ourselves; spending more time with our family, friends and nature; cooking and spending time at the table; selecting the most useful journeys; discovering the virtues of teleworking and distance learning ; reducing the length and number of participants in meetings, whether real or virtual; making real use of these new technologies to listen to music, to inform, to teach and to diagnose.

Living differently, promoting a whole new mode of growth, and new economic sectors, especially those of health and education, in all their dimensions.

This will teach us to take seriously the one thing in the world that is really rare, that really has value: time, the good time of our daily life, which we may no longer lose in futile activities.

All the more reason to promote as quickly as possible Eyes of Europe as a self-active educational platform that advocates ***living differently in an intercultural Europe of emancipation and emulation in solidarity***.

In the future it is going to be Eyes of Europe's responsibility and ambition to

- force national and European leaders to account for their handling of the crisis, through asking the right questions.
- try to understand what's happening in the economy and work out what recession means for businesses and workers alike, and what the future holds.
- bring international perspectives on how different countries are responding, working out which approaches work best, and why,
- investigate why this pandemic has happened, understanding what caused it, so we can work out how to prevent it from happening again
- and more than anything listen to the community of young Europeans who will be asking crucial questions and giving invaluable insights into what's happening where they live, in order to inspire new acts of solidarity.
- not forget that other issues still matter, most especially the climate crisis
- bring hope/ With clarity and imagination, and with Eyes of Europe will help find a way to build a better society, and a new and fairer way to live.

Mother democracy seems to be dead, a new narrative is necessary, but this can no longer be implemented with the existing political systems and their makers (the politicians with their "consultant networks") , too old and too static.

Therefore Eyes of Europe is badly needed.

Together we can find a way through this crisis together with Eyes of Europe and all Europeans old and especially young

Finis Europae 2020 ? Not really and certainly not until Eyes of Europe has said its first and last word.

EYES OF EUROPE : A DEMOCRATIC AGORA FOR ALL SEASONS

« **Democracy must learn to cope with crisis** »

Adapted freely from Stefan Korneli Süddeutsche Zeitung

Liberties are reduced, rights are bent. The community will not tolerate it if there is even the slightest suspicion that these rights and freedoms will not return.

It has no name, this catastrophe, it connects with no feeling. Just as the coronavirus cannot be smelled, tasted or seen, the extent of its destructive power cannot yet be put into words. A state of emergency? A global apocalypse? A human crisis? Terms do not adequately convey the power that has gripped the globe.

Humanity has not experienced such a collective state of emergency since the Second World War. It is now experiencing a common threat, it fears simultaneously for life and health, for stability, prosperity, work and security. Societies close themselves off in existential moments, pay attention to their own survival, develop unexpected powers - in cohesion, but also in destruction.

The first few weeks already show the constructive, but also the destructive impact of the corona pandemic. Democracies react differently than totalitarian structures. The radical isolation of the people in Wuhan by means of repression and censorship was merciless. What happened behind the wall, in all its cruelty, will perhaps be revealed later.

Hardly any democracy can withstand this pressure in the long term. Democracies initially react with an outburst of solidarity and unity. But what if this unity does not deliver the desired success? What if the methods of disease control are called into question? Winning time is now the decisive factor, say the experts, but time is a subjective concept. Not every psyche will survive isolation for weeks. No scientific logic will be able to imprison the free mind and the emotions.

*Democracies do not wage wars, they say. Nor are democracies created for a state of emergency, at least not permanently. **Democracy needs contradiction and requires clarification:** why it is so difficult to produce masks or protective suits or to test millions of citizens for the virus in the shortest possible time.*

But democracy cannot solve the greatest ethical dilemma: How much damage is a community capable of sustaining in order to save human lives? Or put otherwise and formulated in all harshness: Must society decide whether it prefers to save people from death - or whether it wants to maintain its community character with all its working structures, lifestyle, institutions from the time before the crisis? This is not about the fun society and its playgrounds. It is about fundamental achievements such as the European Union and its currency, social stability thanks to low unemployment or the promise of security for pensioners and young people alike.

No society, no ethically thinking person can give us the answer. Whoever loses his loved ones to the virus may not forgive society and those responsible if they have not done everything possible to save them. Whoever loses his economic existence, whoever sits with an empty gaze on the political ruins after the crisis, will ask whether the sacrifice was worth it.

This moral dichotomy must be addressed, in a reasonable tone.

Political leadership in times of crisis is not characterized by demonstrative harshness, but by sensitivity. It must spare society the decision between life and death.

Trust in the institutions of the state, in the health system, and also in the democratic reasoning of the elected is high. This makes Europe, unlike the USA for example, a predictable democracy even in existential moments.

*But **in times of crisis, this democracy must learn**, because the virus is insidious. It can infect even democracy. Liberties are reduced, rights are bent, securities are taken. The community will not tolerate it if there is even the slightest suspicion that rights will not return. Israel has suspended the powers, and in the United States, even the most sensible people now believe that they must protect themselves with weapons. Irrationalism and fear can unleash terrible forces that no curfew can tame.*

Humanity will not have the strength to respond collectively to the greatest challenge imaginable at the moment. Leading nations such as the USA have abdicated, and new powers such as China are proving unsuitable for leadership. The state theorist Thomas Hobbes laconically stated that man is a wolf to man, that states tear each other apart in the face of conflict, but do not help. That is

the bitter realisation after the short period of crisis. Societies are withdrawing, seeking salvation in ever smaller communities. But this disaster will not stop at them either.

Thomas Hobbes laconically stated that *man is a wolf to man*, that *states tear each other apart in the face of conflict*, but do not help Hobbes has indeed anticipated *the war of all against all*.

But what would happen if a counter-power, **a virtual European agora** could, if necessary, offer precisely the opposite, **namely a dialogue of all with all?** ***Democracy needs contradiction and requires clarification ; in times of crisis, democracy must learn.***

Has it been asked whether the political agora as we have known it for a little over a century with its parliamentary rituals, its critical media, its public opinion, its public education could not be reinforced by a **virtual agora** with a view not to promoting *the war of all against all* but its exact opposite: ***the dialogue of all with all?***

And this is precisely what Eyes of Europe proposes, a democratic model for stormy weather but also for peace time, in short a **democratic agora for all seasons**. *Humanity indeed needs to have the strength to respond collectively to all great challenges.*

MARC GUIOT

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Marc Guiot - Who is?

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Also see article: [Corona Eine Zeitenwende](#) (Prof. Dr. Böttcher, 29.3.2020)

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