



# EUROPEAN PATRIOTISM AND THE EUROPEAN IDENTITY TODAY

BY MARC GUIOT

*How to reconstruct Europe? Firstly, we really have to ask ourselves what we Europeans actually have in common.*

*We share indeed common values, a European culture and civilization. I intend to organize a huge conference of intellectuals, artists, policymakers in order that they may reflect together upon the nature of our European identity today. Let us not stick to an every man for himself attitude, or we will be heading for disaster.*

Alain Juppé 20 oct. 2016

Alain Juppé, a conservative and most likely winner of next Presidential pole in France, was making that statement one day after the fourth « *Brussels days* » under the motto “*The end of Europe? So what?*” jointly organized by Le Soir, L’Obs and De Standaard.

24 hours earlier, Frans Timmermans, vice-President of the European Commission, had been suggesting that “*our European values are under attack*”. And indeed they are. Philip king of the Belgians and a group of educated youngsters approved silently, while Gilles Kepel and Frans Timmermans were arguing on stage about a « *Europe under threat* »

« *Fracture and disruption is what basically characterizes Europe today* said Gilles Kepel : *a cultural fracture between right wing populist obsession with national identity and Islamic barbaric radicalism on the other hand. In essence, the present French presidential election campaign is more about Islam and migration than about growth and employment. Religious fanatics stand for disruption, an Islamic drift towards*





*cultural isolationism by the creation of more and more autonomous small groups that trust neither the French Republic nor Europe. The most important issue at stake is fundamentally school, the educational system. School no longer works. “Ça ne fonctionne plus.”*

*Frans Timmermans was pinpointing a collective European responsibility for school’s global failure. Our European society has failed to absorb change brought about by mass migration. Integration has not worked like in Canada where the newcomers have been integrated in society. This burning issue has become a matter of survival in Europe.*

*The European Union is helping us overcome all identity illusions and pitfalls. Fair enough, but what we really need is a radical new form of genuine **European patriotism**. I really wonder whether the political world is aware of the scale of the problem?*

*School education should be much more than simple transmission of knowledge. Across Europe we observe more and more segregation between schools. We need to stimulate European citizenship through education from a very early age, which demands considerable financial investments.*

*Gilles Kepel : One of the very first issues is school education which has indeed failed. In France teachers and headmasters are daily insulted, harassed and beaten by frustrated immigrant pupils who feel they are neither respected nor recognized. School is conveying knowledge and values that is now being rejected by desperate youths.*

*Emmanuel Macron: Europe is not doomed to be inefficient.*

*Macron, a brilliant young French socialist and not yet declared candidate for the Presidency, is dreaming of a **European demos** where young citizens talk with each other, are eager to discover each other (Erasmus for all teenagers said Verhofstadt) and build together a **European citizenship and public opinion**.*

He is also advocating pan European lists of candidates for the next European elections in order to stimulate a genuine European democratic debate.





Whether we like it or not the only realistic alternative to the decline of the *European dream* is a *European educational utopia*.

Rachid Benzine was also present on stage: *Europe is missing the point by turning its back to its values, especially solidarity. What those youngsters are trying to tell us must be taken very seriously.*

Yes King Philipp was present in the audience but how many politicians? Where were the politicians when this was said? Are they now meditating these words of wisdom in front of their screens, smartphones and new papers? I honestly doubt it. The tragic thing is that our political class fails to convey meaning and perspective and hope. The only alternative happens indeed to be educational.

*By lack of meaning, sense and direction for their lives, some European youngsters chose to give meaning to their deaths.*

*Daesh can be destroyed military but its rhetoric happens to be a radioactive cloud that will keep spreading and growing.*

(Rachid Benzine)

The answer, for sure, can only be educational.  
The answer is Eyes of Europe.

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