Gender equality
BECAUSE IT IS 2024
LIVE IN PREGNY-PARC, GENEVA
AN UPScale REAL ESTATE COMPLEX FOR AN EXCLUSIVE CLIENTELE,
NEAR THE CENTER OF GENEVA,
THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS,
THE MAJOR DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS AND EMBASSIES,
BETWEEN THE LAKE AND THE FOREST,
IN TOTAL HARMONY WITH THE ENVIRONMENT.

BECAUSE IT IS 2024

Can you see we have changed? A new look, a new start, it’s all good. Magazines are like people. Some change the colour of their hair using cosmetics, and some wear jewellery. So go ahead, check us out!

International Women’s Day celebrates women’s achievements every year in March, and because of that, we dedicate our March issue to gender equality. But we also do so because it’s a reminder that more action is needed to achieve gender parity.

I hope you will enjoy the articles in this feature, as we must accelerate that progress, for gender equality continues to be one of the greatest challenges of human rights.

As always, we have a wide range of articles for you to enjoy. But with the current wars and geopolitical processes, one article about memorials, that are only a two hours’ drive away from Geneva, to the fallen of World War II, and especially about a particular bombing crew who never made it home, resonated with me in these times. Peace should not be a luxury.

While we look different, we continue to pride ourselves in being a magazine by staff for staff. I hope you enjoy this issue.

PARCE QUE NOUS SOMMES EN 2024


La Journée internationale de la femme célèbre chaque année en mars les réalisations des femmes, et c’est pour cette raison que nous consacrons notre numéro de mars à l’égalité des sexes. Mais nous le faisons aussi parce que cela nous rappelle qu’il faut agir davantage pour atteindre la parité hommes-femmes.

J’espère que vous apprécierez les articles de ce numéro, puisque nous devons accélérer ces progrès, car l’égalité des sexes continue d’être l’un des plus grands défis en matière de droits de l’homme.

Comme toujours, nous vous proposons une large gamme d’articles pour votre plaisir. Mais avec les guerres et les processus géopolitiques actuels, un article sur les monuments commémoratifs, qui ne sont qu’à deux heures de route de Genève, dédiés aux morts de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, et en particulier une équipe de bombardiers qui n’est jamais rentré chez elle, a résonné avec moi en ces temps. La paix ne devrait pas être un luxe.

Même si nous avons l’air différent, nous restons fiers d’être un magazine rédigé par le personnel pour le personnel.

J’espère que vous appréciez ce numéro.
March 2024
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Why Gender Equality matters across all the SDGs

NO MATTER HOW MUCH WE INVEST OR TRY, THE GLOBAL GOALS ARE NOT GOING TO BE ACHIEVED IF WE DON’T MAKE PROGRESS WITH GENDER EQUALITY.

Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is not only an explicit goal under the 2030 Agenda but also a driver of sustainable development in all its dimensions, from ending poverty and hunger, promoting prosperity and inclusive growth and building peaceful, just and inclusive societies to securing the protection of the planet and its natural resources. By contrast, where women and girls are denied rights and opportunities, progress will inevitably falter and the 2030 Agenda as a whole will be in jeopardy. The systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the implementation and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is therefore crucial.

The SDGs have the potential to bring about positive change for women and girls, but further action is needed to accelerate progress, address current blind spots and prevent backsliding. The goal-by-goal assessment in this chapter also underscores the obstacles posed by gaps in data and data quality. Overcoming these obstacles will require serious analytical work that sharpens our understanding of how to capture, measure and monitor meaningful change for women and girls in new and emerging areas, such as the gender implications of climate change. Women and girls are half of the world’s population and as a result hold half of the world’s human potential. When their lives are improved, the benefits reverberate across society. Access to decent work and regular income in the hands of women, for example, contribute not only to poverty reduction (SDG 1) but also support better education, health and nutrition outcomes for women and girls and those who depend on them (SDGs 2, 3 and 4).

Similarly, eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls is not only an essential component of SDG 5 but also critical to ensuring healthy lives and well-being for people of all ages (SDG 3). Women subjected to sexual or physical intimate partner violence are 1.5 times as likely to become infected with HIV (Target 3.3). They are also almost twice as likely to experience depression and alcohol use disorders (Target 3.5). The health consequences of violence against women and girls extend to their children, who may witness the abuse and suffer long-term trauma that impacts their physical, emotional and social development.

Yet, progress on gender equality has been highly uneven across different dimensions of the 2030 Agenda. In some areas, such as girls’ access to education, global improvement is undeniable and is not, however, enough to ensure the education rights of the next generation. While SDG 4 has the potential to bring about positive results for women and girls in the poorest households (SDG 4), this is not enough to keep up with population growth, meaning the number of women and girls undergoing FGM is likely to rise over the next 15 years.

Unless progress on gender equality is accelerated, the global community will not only fail to achieve SDG 5, it will also forgo the catalytic effect that gender equality can have for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda more broadly. The review shows that across countries and regions, women and girls face tremendous structural barriers that impact all aspects of their lives. Eliminating gender-specific constraints, as well as other forms of discrimination with which they intersect, is hence critical.

In 2023, a report from UN gender equality agency UN Women, Gender Snapshot, at the mid-year point towards the SDGs warned that if current trends continue, over 340 million women and girls will be living in poverty by 2030. That represents eight per cent of the female population worldwide. Close to one in four will experience moderate or severe food insecurity and at the current rate of progress, the next generation of women will still be spending 2.3 more hours per day on unpaid care and domestic work than men. UN Women’s report also notes that the gender gap in power and leadership positions remains entrenched. The agency described the report as “a resounding call to action”. The report provides comprehensive analysis on gender factors across all 17 SDGs, in light of the ambitious goal of achieving true equality.

Gender-based discrimination—threatens to undermine the transformative potential of the 2030 Agenda in real and measurable ways. This goal-by-goal review shows that gender inequalities remain pervasive in each dimension. Globally, women under age 40 are countries with available data, there are 4.4 million more women than men living on less than US$1.90 a day. Unequal access to and control over economic resources lie at the root of women’s poverty. Gender inequalities in the labor market persist, largely due to occupational segregation and gender pay gaps.

Despite recent progress, access to quality education is still not universal: 48.1 per cent of adolescent girls in sub-Saharan Africa remain out of school. Women continue to be under-represented in leadership positions, and in other areas, such as maternal mortality, child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM), progress is unsustainably slow and uneven.

Available evidence shows that a substantial share of women and girls experience violence, often at the hands of their intimate partners. In situations of unrest, instances of sexual and lethal violence increase and are commonly perpetrated not only by intimate partners but also by police and military personnel.

Environmental degradation and natural disasters affect women disproportionately. Droughts, floods, pollution and deforestation all put a significant burden on women, who see their water collection time increased, firewood and fodder collection efforts thwarted and ability to provide for their families and cope with disasters disproportionately impacted.

Unless appropriate action is taken to advance gender equality, the promise of the 2030 Agenda – of a better world, with universal respect for human rights and dignity and full realization of human potential – will go unrealized. //
Around half of the world’s population will experience periods at one point in their life. From the very tender age of ten (possibly younger) to the finer age of 55 (possibly older), women have to deal with their periods almost on a monthly basis. Those of us who have regular periods may agree that we have it easier than women with irregular periods. Of course, many things factor into having irregular periods. Irregular periods can be caused by stress, anxiety, diet, contraception, the menopause, polycystic ovary syndrome, an undeveloped thyroid gland, and endometriosis.1 Not only do women have to deal with their periods, they also have to deal with premenstrual syndrome (PMS), ovulation pain, the cost of sanitary products, and the stigma that comes with periods. I’d like to think that we’re becoming more knowledgeable about periods and everything that comes with them. I’d like to think that we are becoming more understanding and supportive towards women and girls who have difficult periods. Sometimes, it’s not just about bad cramps. Sometimes, we have suicidal thoughts (more on that later.)

**LET ME SUM UP WHAT I THINK WE GENERALLY KNOW ABOUT PERIODS**

Young girls and women get periods for about forty years of their life. These periods can be regular; ranging from 21-35 days, or they can be irregular; sometimes you don’t have a period for months on end. With periods come cramps, bloating, migraines, mood swings, cravings, and more… I don’t want to be too graphic. Periods can be affected by oestrogen and progesterone levels, stress, weight gain or loss, polycystic ovary syndrome, and endometriosis. What I also know is that sometimes ‘popping a painkiller’ is not the way to go about forgetting your period. It will not solve all problems.

**LETS TALK ABOUT POLYCYSTIC OVARY SYNDROME (PCOS)**

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome is defined by WHO as a ‘common hormonal condition that affects women of reproductive age. […] PCOS can cause hormonal imbalances, irregular periods, excess androgen levels and cysts in the ovaries.’2 Present in about 10% of women (8-13%), up to 70% of PCOS cases are still undiagnosed. The main symptoms are heavy, unpredictable, or absent periods, excessive hair on the face or body, acne or oily skin.3 There is no cure for PCOS, however, there are ways to improve symptoms. It can be important to be diagnosed with PCOS. This could give you peace of mind if you have irregular periods, but aren’t sure why. It may also be important if you would like to have children, as PCOS causes infertility. WHO also works to enhance public awareness of PCOS, as well as ways of identifying and treating PCOS.4

**ENDOMETRIOSIS**

Endometriosis is about as common as PCOS is. (Roughly 10% of women are diagnosed with endometriosis.) A different kind of condition, endometriosis could be more considered more painful than PCOS. Physically, anyway. The NHS describes endometriosis as ‘a condition where tissue similar to the lining of the womb grows in other places, such as the ovaries or fallopian tubes.’5 Symptoms for endometriosis include pelvic pain (can be worse during periods), pain during or after sexual intercourse, pain when you go to the toilet, nausea and fatigue.6 There is also no known cure for endometriosis, but again, treatment is available and aimed at easing the symptoms. Endometriosis also affects your ability to become pregnant. The pain experienced through endometriosis can be so excruciating that women find it difficult to work, go anywhere, or focus. What’s worse is that endometriosis can be very difficult to diagnose, and the treatment for it is usually hormonal (i.e. contraceptive pill), which can make it even more difficult to get pregnant.7

Periods are still considered a taboo topic and come with shame in some countries. But there is so much more that affects your period.
SOMETHING NEW THAT I’M JUST LEARNING ABOUT

I know about Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS). I know that PMS causes mood swings, food cravings, fatigue, depression, irritability... All of the usual things associated with periods. What I didn’t know that is that periods can cause suicidal thoughts.

PREMENSTRUAL DYSPHORIC DISORDER

While absentmindedly scrolling through Twitter one day, I noticed that someone had reposted a photo of an open book and the tweet said something about periods making women have suicidal thoughts. ‘There is absolutely no way!’ I thought to myself. And I assume I thought I’d come back to read more about it later, but I didn’t. What I didn’t know was that my best friend would know a little bit more about this. PMDD, she called it. Premenstrual dysphoric disorder. I had never heard of this, and was frankly shocked that 1) my best friend believes she experiences it, 2) PMDD is not well-known. PMDD comes with all the symptoms of PMS – bloating, mood swings, irritability – but, it also comes with severe anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts. The Cleveland Clinic also states that PMDD affects 10% of women. PMDD usually happens a week or two before your period, usually after you’ve ovulated and until your period starts. That’s one to two weeks of fatigue, depression, anxiety, insomnia, changes in diet, mood swings, irritability... This means it can be very difficult to go about your everyday life. I think it’s important to share that many of us (most likely a lot of men), assume having your period means bleeding for a few days, getting cramps, feeling irritated, and craving chocolate. But it’s clear that that is not the case. This is only the case if you have regular, vaguely harmless periods.

As I’ve shared in this article, sometimes women miss their periods due to other health conditions, and these conditions can mean that women suffer for two to three weeks every month. [Two weeks of PMDD + a week of your period = three weeks.] Now how do you explain this to a man? A man who has never had to, and will never need to deal with a period in his life. How can you tell a man that actually a period may as well be three weeks long? That you would rather work/stay at home for most of that time.

THE LEGACY OF PERIODS

What I also think is important to note is that these conditions are still not general knowledge. Yes, we teach young girls about periods, maybe at school, or at home, but do we then tell them about endometriosis, or PCOS, or PMS? At no point do we even consider telling girls ‘oh, just so you don’t worry any more than necessary, but you may become depressed around the time of your period’. Why don’t we? Why don’t we teach our girls everything that they need to know? Or should we? When is the right time to tell girls about these things? Yes, maybe the age of eleven is too young to really grasp how complex the topic of suicidal thoughts is, but wouldn’t it be better that they know? That girls grow up educated, and a little more prepared for the world that they have to live in? Why is it that so many of us are shocked to find out that 1) periods can cause suicidal thoughts, but 2) it’s not necessarily normal to experience suicidal thoughts on your period.

Women deserve the right to be educated, to learn, to know, to be prepared for these health conditions that they have to face every day, and that will affect the rest of their lives forever. We need to know so that we can teach our daughters, friends, colleagues, so that we understand a little bit more what it is that our bodies are going through. //

3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
8 Cleveland Clinic. “Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD).” Cleveland Clinic, my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/0112-premenstrual-dysphoric-disorder-pmdd.
During the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action established the goal of attaining a 50/50 gender balance in the Professional and higher categories within the United Nations system. In September 2017, UN Secretary-General António Guterres introduced the “System-wide strategy on gender parity”, aiming for overall parity across all international staff levels in the UN system by 2026. Progress reports have been issued biennially since 2019, offering updates to the General Assembly on advancements in gender parity within the UN system.

The latest progress report from July 2023 highlighted substantial strides during 2020-2021. The overall representation of women in the UN system increased steadily from 43.6% in 2016-2017 to 47% in 2020-2021. The number of UN entities achieving gender parity also rose from 5 in 2017 to 27 in 2023. However, a stratification analysis revealed slower progress toward gender parity at the P-4 level and above compared to the P-1 to P-3 levels. Female staff comprised 51.6% at P1-P3, whereas the figure dropped to 43.7% at the P4 and above levels. Women continued to be underrepresented in middle and senior management, particularly at the P-5 and Director levels (41.4%). Despite an increase in entry-level female staff, the rise did not translate into a proportionate increase in female leaders.

Promoting gender parity within the organization transcends a mere gender issue; research has consistently shown the significant benefits of female leaders. IBM consulting’s research indicated that organizations identified as gender equity leaders reported 19% higher revenue growth than others in their sample. [IBM Consulting, Chief.com, March 2023] Moreover, a 2023 study by Leadership Circle concluded that female leaders are perceived as more effective based on verbatim feedback from global samples of 150 female and 150 male leaders. The analysis of capacities and leadership styles revealed that female leaders demonstrated greater capabilities, especially in forming positive relationships both internally and externally. In areas where female leaders did not outperform male leaders, they performed at par with their peers.

Despite commendable performance by female leaders, there remain obstacles and challenges in advancing their positions. A joint research effort by IBM consulting and Chief emphasized unconscious biases against female leaders. The survey revealed contrasting expectations for female and male leaders, potentially impacting recruitment and promotion decisions. Attributes such as “strategic visionary”, “open and transparent communicator”, and “assertive, bold, and courageous” were prioritized for female leaders, while “innovative, creative”, “analytical, logical, objective, results-oriented”, and “strong ethics, honesty, integrity” were expected from male leaders. It seems that the respondents are more interested to have female leaders to make them feeling well, and to recruit male leaders to deliver the work. This underscores the enduring journey ahead to achieve true gender parity.

**REFERENCES**

Adams, Cynthia, & Lani Van Dusen (Ph.D), (2023). Understanding the differences in reactive and creative orientations between female and male leaders.


Ce poème dédie son message à la reconnaissance mondiale des droits des femmes lors de la Journée internationale des femmes, célébrée le 8 mars de chaque année. Il exprime avec sensibilité une profonde admiration pour le courage, la résilience et les contributions des femmes à la société, tout en plaçant l’éducation et la santé en premier lieu. Les femmes sont valorisées de manière égale et leur épanouissement est souhaité.

Cette journée est soulignée comme un moment crucial pour réaffirmer ces valeurs et poursuivre la lutte en faveur de l’égalité des sexes. Le poème met l’accent sur le rôle fondamental qu’elles jouent dans la création d’un avenir plus juste et équitable. Enfin, il célèbre l’univers des femmes à travers le monde, mettant en avant leur diversité et la puissance de leur collective de leur voix. Cet appel s’adresse à la société, tout en plaidant pour la mise en œuvre de mesures concrètes afin d’assurer leur égalité et leur épanouissement.


Contre la pauvreté qui les frappe de plein fouet, Investir dans leur éducation, leur santé, c’est la clé. Pour un monde où leur potentiel s’épanouit pleinement, Où leur contribution à la société est valorisée ardemment. Des politiques éclairées, prenant en compte leur réalité, Pour un avenir où règne l’équité. Investir dans leur avenir, c’est investir dans le progrès. Dans un monde où règne la justice et la paix en toute justesse. Soutenir leurs combats, leurs aspirations, leurs rêves, Pour un monde où chacun trouve sa place sans trèfle. Leur courage, leur détermination, un exemple à suivre, Pour un monde meilleur où chaque être puisse vivre. Investir en faveur des femmes, c’est sémir l’espoir, C’est bâtir un avenir où règne la joie, le pouvoir. Que cette journée soit le début d’une ère nouvelle, Où l’égalité des genres brille de mille feux, éternelle. Que ce jour de 8 MARS soit un hymne, un Hommage aux femmes, À leur force sans bornes, à leur immense valeur. Femmes du monde, unies dans la diversité, Ensemble, nous sommes invinçibles, ensemble, nous sommes libres.


Contra la pobreza que las mujeres enfrentan, invertir en su educación y su salud, es la clave. Para un mundo en el que su potencial se desenvuelve plenamente, donde su contribución a la sociedad es valorada ardemment. De políticas claras, que tomen en cuenta su realidad, para un futuro donde prevalezca la equidad. Invertir en su futuro, es invertir en el futuro. En un mundo donde prevalezca la justicia y la paz en justa medida. Sostener sus combates, sus aspiraciones, sus sueños, para un mundo en el que cada ser pueda vivir. Invertir en favor de las mujeres, es sembrar la esperanza, es construir un futuro donde reina la alegría, el poder. Que este día sea el comienzo de una nueva etapa, donde la igualdad de géneros brilla de mil fuegos eternos. Que este día de 8 MAMAS sea un himno, un homenaje a las mujeres, a su fuerza sin límites, a su inmenso valor. Mujeres del mundo, unidas en la diversidad, uno, nos somos invencibles, uno, nos somos libres.


This poem dedicates its message to the global recognition of women’s rights on International Women’s Day, celebrated on March 8th every year. It sensitively expresses deep admiration for the courage, resilience, and contributions of women to society while advocating for the implementation of concrete measures to ensure their equality and empowerment. This day is highlighted as a crucial moment to reaffirm these values and continue the struggle for gender equality. The poem emphasizes the importance of investing in women, whether through education, health, or supporting their aspirations, thus recognizing the fundamental role they play in creating a fairer and more equitable future. Finally, it celebrates the unity of women worldwide, highlighting their diversity and the collective power of their voices. This call is for solidarity and collaboration in building a world where every individual, regardless of gender, can live freely and fully.

In every corner of the world, their voices resonate loud, To break the chains of oppression, of taboos, unbowed. Accelerate the pace towards concrete equality, Where every woman finds her place, her secret destiny.

A moral imperative, but also an urgent duty. To build a just world, where hope is not a rarity. Women, pillars of society, deserve respect, Their voice, their presence, a treasure to protect with tact.

Against poverty that strikes them full force, Investing in their education, their health, is the source. For a world where their potential fully blooms, Where their contribution to society is valued in rooms.

Enlightened policies, considering their reality, For a future Where equality reigns with clarity. Investing in their future is investing in progress, In a world where justice and peace aren’t in regress.

Supporting their struggles, their aspirations, their dreams. For a world where everyone finds their place, it seems. Their courage, their determination, an example to follow. For a better world where every being can wallow.

Investing in women is sowing hope, It’s building a future where joy, power elope. May this day be the beginning of a new era, Where gender equality shines eternal, without any error.

May this day of March 8th be an anthem, a tribute to women, To their boundless strength, to their immense worth. Women of the world, united in diversity, Together, we’re invincible, together, we’re free.
Why do women have methods ready to keep ourselves safe? Why do we carry keys in our hands when walking somewhere? Why do we change our routines, change the way we get somewhere? Why do we always make sure to never walk home alone if possible? Why do we feel unsafe about using a running tracking app? Why do we constantly feel like we are never fully in control of our lives? How is that in 2022, gender inequality still affects women around the world?

It’s hard not to miss the news. It’s everywhere. On your phone, on social media, when you’re searching for something online, the TV, the radio... It can be awful watching it. The news isn’t exactly the place you go to if you want to find out good information. I’ve always been an ‘ignorance is bliss’ kind of person when it comes to the news. I know of the events, the happenings, the information. I read the headlines, hear people talking about it. But I don’t let myself be consumed by it. I can’t. It makes me worry. I’ve been a worrier ever since I was little. Recently though, it’s been hard to ignore the news.

It seems like every week there’s a new story about a woman being attacked by a man. The most recent one, as of the time of writing, is Harriet Robson. Harriet Robson has been dating a footballer named Mason Greenwood. Photos surfaced online of the physical abuse Mason had inflicted upon her. All it takes is a quick glance and you can see how much pain he has caused Harriet. How can women feel safe when a professional player with his platform physically assaults his own girlfriend multiple times?

What does it do for boys who are growing up to see men get away with assault practically all the time?

Ashling Murphy was murdered while exercising in Ireland in broad daylight. She was my age, 23, and it is believed that she had no connection to the man who murdered her. She was also a teacher. How are you supposed to explain to her students that their teacher died by strangulation? And what message does that send to both boys and girls at her school?

The biggest recent story in England was that of Sarah Everard. She was brutally kidnapped, raped, and murdered by an ex police officer. Even now, I cannot wrap my head around the whole story. There are so many things that make me angry. So many things that the police missed.

Young women at university have also been sharing their stories of being spiked with needles on nights out. Men inject date-rape drugs into the women’s systems, often hoping that they’ll be able to take them home.

But it’s not just in England, the UK, or Ireland where women aren’t safe.
In Switzerland, one woman dies every two weeks due to domestic violence.1 That’s two women a month. Twenty-four women a year. According to a study that was released last year, 42% of women in Switzerland have experienced domestic abuse.2 That is an unbelievable statistic, and it makes me feel uneasy if I think about it for too long. Sometimes I think numbers can sink into the brain better than if you just share the information.

It is possible that women are subject to more abuse and violence than men because we are still seen as inferior to them. Swiss women earn around 20% less than men and start working for free at 2:34pm.3 For the second safest place for women to be, Switzerland is taking its time in making us feel like we’re as important as the male population.

Doing the research for this article has been incredibly frustrating at times. I kept finding more information that angered me, I kept finding more stories about women who had been victims of violence. One article that really got under my skin was one that was published in August last year. Its title: ‘Swiss protest against court ruling reducing rapist’s sentence’. People were protesting outside a courthouse in Basel because the judge had ‘argued that the rape lasted only eleven minutes and that the victim had been playing with fire and hadn’t been severely injured’.4

I can imagine how damaging that must be to the victim? Eleven minutes can feel like a lifetime, and it’s 11 minutes of the victim’s life to the victim? Eleven minutes can feel like a lifetime, and it’s 11 minutes of the victim’s life.

This reminds me of a book that I read last year called Know My Name by Chanel Miller. Miller was sexually assaulted by Brock Turner on Stanford University’s campus in 2015. Chanel Miller writes about everything from before she blacked out that night to how she wrote her book. That’s a whole four years in one book.

Miller’s victim impact statement went viral when it was published by Buzzfeed. Turner had initially been given six months in prison because a longer sentence would have had a severe impact on him.5 Why are authorities always defending the people who committed the crime? You don’t let bank robbers go free and instead accuse the people working in the bank for not doing the right thing. Why is it that victims of sexual or domestic assault are hardly ever listened to or believed in?

But this article is not all doom and gloom. We need to raise awareness; we need to work on educating everyone. We need to come together and fight for the truth. And we need to do better. Switzerland is doing better, though. Since 2020, anyone who brings forward a case for violence, threats, or harassment no longer has to pay for legal proceedings.6 In 2013, Switzerland signed the convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, which is known as the Istanbul Convention. It was ratified four years later and went into force four months later on April 1st, 2018.7 This convention means that Switzerland has to make consistent progress in protecting victims and developing their measures of prevention against domestic violence and violence against women. There are also shelters for women and their children, and national support programmes available in every canton.8 Furthermore, one of the many programmes that Switzerland has adopted is the Swiss Confederation’s Foreign Policy Strategy 2020-2023, which respects human rights,9 and defending gender equality and fighting gender-based violence are also a focus of Switzerland’s humanitarian work.10

In 2008, UN Women launched Say NO – UniTE by 2030 to End Violence against women, a campaign which aims to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls all around the world.1 Each year, on November 25th, activists, governments, UN partners come together on what is known as ‘Orange Day’ and highlight issues that they hope will prevent and end violence against women.11

If you are suffering from domestic abuse, or know of someone who is, please check OPENHILFE Schweiz, or follow the advice from Women’s Aid on Making a safety plan. (The numbers are different, but there are steps that you can take that will hopefully protect you and/or others.)

5 Swissinfo.ch. “Swiss Protest against Court Ruling Reducing Rapist’s Sentence.” SWI swissinfo.ch #NOTHINGTOHIDE, Swissinfo.ch, 8 Aug. 2021, website.
8 Council of Europe. “Switzerland.” Istanbul Convention Action Against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, website.
11 Ibid.
12 UN Women. “UniTE by 2030 to End Violence against Women Campaign.” UN Women, website.
Giving birth to a child is a sublime act in life. The love, devotion and care to bring up that child to become the best person are incalculable. Many stories about successful women have been published in this journal and elsewhere. There is no doubt that women today are performing all kinds of work, leading, influencing and changing the world. But what are they dreaming about, what do they wish for, where would they like to go and how do they want to celebrate their “Day”? The answers to these and many other questions may remain secret, hidden in their hearts and souls, until someone asks.

To start with a simple question, “what would make for the most memorable International Women’s Day this year?” Many women would respond by asking “can all wars stop to celebrate the day when all those killed and all those still fighting were born?”

This poem – A call from mothers’ souls – is a prayer to stop the killing of all those who were born to live and love, to create and celebrate, and to live long and healthy lives. So let us mark International Women’s Day, Mother’s Day and all of the other days when mothers rejoice to see their children healthy, happy, successful, needed, and building a new world with no wars – a world where peace is the first and foremost aspiration of everyone on Earth.

A call from mothers’ souls

Hey All,
let’s stop the war!
Mothers are praying
from their souls,
reminding us of the roles
of each and every citizen
of the world
in raising a hand
to vote for the end
of meaningless battles,
driven by powerful blindness,
ignoring the miracle of life
given by mothers
to each child
at the symphony
of the first cry.

Young hearts bleeding,
breathless chests wheezing,
dying lips whispering
the secret
that being human
means respecting others,
and nobly nurturing
the spirit of solidarity
and the tenderness of charity.

Mothers, like no one else, know
that everyone killed today
was born to live and love,
to foster peace
in the garden of the heart,
and to discover the art
of being happy, kind, and smart,
to build, create,
write and paint,
dream and innovate
in the name of God
and for the benefit of all,
calm and heal,
sweet secrets reveal,
brothers and sisters call
and pave the path
towards health for all.

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Podcasts

THE GLOBAL HEALTH MATTERS PODCAST PROVIDES A FORUM FOR DISCUSSING THE MOST IMPORTANT GLOBAL HEALTH TOPICS OF THE DAY.

DIALOGUES
A conversation with VIDYA KRISHNAN
and your host, GARRY ASLANIAN

GEOPOLITICS OF GLOBAL HEALTH
PART 1
FEATURED:
RICARDO BAPTISTA LEITE
CEO of Health40

and your host, GARRY ASLANIAN

GEOPOLITICS OF GLOBAL HEALTH
PART 2
FEATURED:
AYOADE ALAKIJA
Co-Chair, African Union’s African Vaccine Delivery Alliance (AVIDA); Special Envoy and Co-Chair for ACT-A, WHO

It’s the little things that mean a lot.
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Gender equality is key to delivering on the transformative vision of the 2030 Agenda

**SDG 1**
Research shows that more cash in the hands of women contributes not only to eliminating poverty but also to better education, nutrition and health outcomes for children and other members of the household.

**SDG 2**
Women play a critical role in food production, processing and distribution and are therefore essential to meeting the agricultural productivity and nutrition targets of Goal 2.

**SDG 3**
Gender equality in health is one of the most direct and potent ways to reduce health inequities overall and to achieve Goal 3.

**SDG 4**
Achieving equality in education will boost women’s employment and empowerment, add to economic growth and contribute positively to child well-being and development.

**SDG 5**
Gender equality is central to the SDGs, and if it is not achieved, the implementation of all the goals will be compromised.

**SDG 6**
Women and girls play a central role in the provision, management and safeguarding of household water and sanitation. Addressing the water and sanitation needs of women benefits the health and well-being of entire communities.

**SDG 7**
As primary energy managers in households, women can play a powerful role in the successful transition to sustainable energy for all.

**SDG 8**
Women’s access to decent work is an essential measure of inclusive and sustainable growth.

**SDG 9**
Increasing women’s participation in technology, science and innovation is critical for meeting the global challenges ahead.

**SDG 10**
Gender equality is crucially linked with overall equality in society.

**SDG 11**
Women have equal rights to the city, and their safety in public spaces is crucial for sustainable urbanization.

**SDG 12**
Unsustainable production and consumption patterns are gendered, with women suffering disproportionately from resource scarcity and natural disasters resulting from climate change.

**SDG 13**
Gender equality is critical to mitigate climate impacts. Women’s inclusion in climate debates leads to improved outcomes of climate-related projects and policies.

**SDG 14**
Empowering women in local fisheries decision-making leads to better resource governance and conservation.

**SDG 15**
Women’s specific knowledge of and dependence on forests makes them key contributors to forest conservation and regeneration.

**SDG 16**
Women play a vital role in preventing conflict and forging and maintaining peace. By fully protecting women’s rights, peaceful and inclusive societies will be within reach.

**SDG 17**
Mobilizing sufficient resources will be critical for meeting the gender equality commitments of the 2030 Agenda.

Source: The infographic is based on a review of existing knowledge on how progress on gender equality can support delivery of the transformative vision of the 2030 Agenda, compiled and distilled by Beales and Gelber 2017.

Notes: The infographic draws from over 600 English language publications and articles published since 2010. The width of the SDG 5 rays in the graphic correspond to the number of articles reviewed. While not a comprehensive mapping of all potential gender-relevant interactions, it aims to represent a starting point for further work towards a more complete understanding of the catalytic role gender equality plays in accelerating progress across the SDGs. Findings and summaries for each article, study and report reviewed are available upon request.
Campaigns in Africa to stop polio and other diseases have a more stable, better-motivated workforce thanks to WHO’s collaboration with countries and partners to pay frontline health workers through their mobile phones instead of in cash.

“Over 80 percent of workers are saying they prefer the digital payments,” said Ahmed Hamasni Djibo, head of WHO’s Digital Finance Team.

WHO has been leading among international organisations in moving away from the unwieldy, less-secure practice of disbursing salaries in cash. Over the past few years, the Organization launched its Digital Finance Team and joined the Better Than Cash Alliance, an 80-member United Nations partnership with a mandate to develop the digitization of payments and expand financial inclusion – activities that support the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Since it was established in 2020, WHO’s Digital Finance Team has designed and implemented digital payment solutions in 24 countries in Africa, including, last year, in Benin, Botswana, Madagascar, Rwanda, Togo and Zimbabwe.

“WHO has successfully digitized payments for more than two million health workers across Africa,” said Tidhar Wald, Managing Director, a.i. at the Better Than Cash Alliance. “With these inspiring results, the WHO is taking a clear leadership role in accelerating the digital transformation in the provision of health outcomes globally.”

“A REALLY BIG DIFFERENCE IN SPEED”

Workers surveyed in Cote d’Ivoire, Liberia and Tanzania said they appreciated the security of not carrying cash, the convenience of no longer having to travel to a disbursement site to receive their wages, and above all, the speed of payment – as short as half an hour after finishing work compared to waits of weeks or even months.

The surveys, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, linked timely compensation to better morale and worker retention.

“‘There is really a big difference in speed,’” said Jean-Luc, a health worker interviewed in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) at the end of a polio immunization campaign. “‘We finished the campaign mop-up yesterday and received a text notification the next evening. I’m going to pay my child’s school fees. Now we can relax.’”

Digital payments also save time and money for campaign organisers, including the burden and expense of transporting large sums of cash and completing documentation.

“When you have 300 to 500 volunteers to pay, doing accounts and signing receipts takes a lot of time,” said Saïdi, a polio team leader in DRC. WHO first used the new digital payments in polio immunization campaigns in Côte d’Ivoire. Although outbreaks of vaccine-derived polio were on the rise, vaccination campaigns were having trouble getting off the ground. In the first quarter of 2020, almost half the polio campaigns in WHO’s Africa Region were postponed, saw workers drop out, or suffered other detrimental effects stemming from delays in cash disbursements.

As WHO and partners worked to develop the nuts-and-bolts aspects of a digital payment ecosystem (registering workers into a database, verifying their profiles with the mobile network operator and more) the benefits of a cashless approach became more apparent.

“There is substantial evidence that digitizing payments can support people, especially women, to gain access to financial services and increase control over their earnings,” said Maria May, Senior Program Officer, Inclusive Financial Systems, at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. “Over the past four years, the World Health Organization has utilized the growing presence of mobile money across Africa to ensure that the courageous frontline vaccinators in polio outbreak campaigns are paid completely, quickly, and securely.”
To WHO on its 75 anniversary

POEM

Gun falling silent in forty-five
war-weary world coming alive,
and under a Californian sun
a new world now begun,
no repeat of the painful past
the promise of Nations United at last.

Then in forty-eight, fresh memories
of an ancient foe
when a war had ended that time too,
but in the air an invisible enemy still flew
and claimed its millions
in the pandemic’s new
Time to stop all the fighting
A safer world is a world uniting.

Now birth of hope and of elation,
birth of a true World Organisation
And what a symbol to embolden the mind,
Aesculapian serpent, rod entwined
six-tongued to reach the world.
But how many foes must now be faced?
Smallpox vanquished, but in its place,
armies of disease still growing,
unending war and casualties unknown.

So missions made, and learning shared
Healing, soothing, death’s withering deferred
But also listening, and knowing
that data and wisdom are not the same
Science saves but wisdom guides
So not just speaking in language shared
but listening too, till all voices heard.

Goals Millennial and then Sustainable
WHO at the head of the table
for without health, no peoples prosper
A vision then that still remains,
not there yet but making gains.

Seventy-five years is a human span
generations have given all they can
to a greater thing than anyone
And what achievements paved their way,
built on a dream, and its siren call
that one day the privileged few
will become all.

//
What Killed Capitalism

BY PROFESSOR YANIS VAROUFAKIS (ATHENS UNIVERSITY)

This thought-provoking book seeks to answer one main killer question (although in doing so, it raises other additional questions). Has the network of computers now known as the Internet made capitalism impossible to overthrow? Or in other words, has the Internet proved capitalism’s undoing? (Page 170).

Mixing chemistry, science, economics and Greek mythology and civilization with popular culture, the book is written as a loving tribute to his late father (who posed the original question). Professor Yanis Varoufakis has written a fascinating intellectual tour de force, exploring past and recent — rather alarming — economic trends.

He explains large-scale economic trends by linking them with technological developments and changes in people’s behaviour.

Professor Yanis Varoufakis traces a number of factors that have changed capitalism over time (including globalization, marketing which has attached consumers’ attention into a vital commodity in itself, and the 1971 Nixon Shock — page 56). He identifies a number of ‘props in our mythology’, meaning tech workers.

Arithmetically, both ‘profits’ and ‘rents’ are calculated as the amount left over from revenues minus costs. However, market-based capitalist profits are vulnerable to competition, whereas rights-based rents are not, as ‘cloud serfs’ are effectively locked into the online service provider (you may have heard of number portability for mobile services, but only a few people have discussed data portability or content portability for social media services — to be clear, it doesn’t exist yet).

While mobile operators can compete to offer the same service at different prices, Professor Varoufakis warns that ‘rivalries between online fiefdoms are not competition’ — Disney offers different content to Netflix (page 133). ‘The cloudalists’ investments are not aimed at competing within capitalist markets, but at getting us to exit capitalist markets altogether’ (page 130).

Professor Varoufakis identifies the huge power in online platforms and algorithms which may know us better than we know ourselves — Spotify or Google may be able to give a much more detailed picture of our musical tastes and/or interests than we can identify or consciously describe. He describes the infinite regress loop, whereby we train algorithms and personal assistants, and they guide and eventually train users.

At the risk of giving away a spoiler to his original question (has the Internet proved capitalism’s undoing?), Professor Varoufakis suggests that the Internet gave capitalism a breathtaking boost for several decades, but it has ultimately proved capitalism’s undoing by giving birth to cloud capital. He claims that the death of the former Wall Street investment ‘recycling mechanism’ has forced capitalism into its last and fatal metamorphosis (page 56). He observes ‘the Internet shattered capitalism’s evolution… by incubating a new form of capital’ [‘cloud capital’], which has ultimately empowered the owners of cloud capital to break free of capitalism and become a whole new ruling class of their own’ (page 55).

Although many of the ideas discussed in this book are not necessarily new, and some have been circulating for several years now, Professor Varoufakis links the broad arcs of these ideas together in a new and thought-provoking way. He describes the upheavals associated with the birth of global markets, and suggests that similar upheavals and chaos may accompany the birth of cloud capital.

INDEED, THE CONSEQUENCES OF MOVING TO ONLINE ‘DIGITAL FIEFDOMS’ CHARGING RENTS ARE MULTIPLE

- People have become unwaged labour giving up their time (as well as their data, tastes, preferences and interests) willingly for free as cloud serfs.
- Original capitalist firms are now paying rents to sell their products on [e.g.] Amazon or Ali Baba.
- Cloud capital now functions largely independently from economic realities.
- Profits have become ‘optional’, as they can be reinvested, while cloud rents can be moved independently from economic realities.
- The historical tools of regulation (price regulation or breaking up monopolies) are now irrelevant or redundant, when services are given away for free, or content and data replace the service.
Many years ago, I’d borrowed a bicycle to explore the countryside around my French in-laws’ house near Louhans. The countryside was perfect for two wheels: a flat, cattle-strewn plain with pretty half-timbered Bressan houses and expanses of dark forest smelling faintly of mushrooms.

The day lay ahead, and I had no fixed plans except to vaguely head for the horizon along which the brooding mass of the Jura hills rose up above the haze of distant Lons-le-Saunier. I was soon tangled within a labyrinth of country lanes and lost my bearings; the countryside sleeping under the thick summer heat with no one to ask for directions and each junction was typically French and sign-less.

I started making fairly random decisions as to where to turn, and not once did it occur to me to retrace my route back – based on my conviction that life’s too short to walk the same path twice if there are other options. Later, when studying the map, I realised I had traced a great inverted crescent that day which looped back on itself and dropped me out a mere 2km from where I’d started at the village of Montcony.

It was here, resting by the side of the road that I came across a small war memorial, a simple grey stone which drivers on the D23 probably shot past unawares.

On October 24th, 1942, a Halifax bomber on a mission to Genoa crashed into these quiet French fields killing the six British and two Canadian servicemen who were on board. A wreath of paper petals discoloured from having been out in the sun for some time.

I asked my wife’s grandfather about the incident when I finally found my way back to the house. He remembered it well; the noise of the stricken aircraft and the sight of it airborne heading east past his farm on fire and lighting up the night. He spoke softly and reverently about the tragedy, the deep sadness that his eyes always wore when he talked about the war. I never liked to probe too much, tears could come quickly from those memories but the little he had told me; growing food for the resistance, sheltering a wounded fighter who died in his bed, furious night-time surgery by the resistance Doctor, the machine gun he hid in his barn, were a frankly terrifying glimpse into another world.

I came across a small war memorial, a simple single grey stone which drivers on the D23 probably shot past unawares. It was here, resting by the side of the road that I came across a small war memorial, a simple single grey stone which drivers on the D23 probably shot past unawares.

They had taken off from Linton-on-Ouse in Yorkshire and my wife’s granddad told me how the villagers had looked after the wreckage and, after the war, had formed a link with the RAF community back in England. The navigator’s log is still held in the village and a delegation from Montcony had visited the United Kingdom in 2009 to strengthen ties and commemorate the airmen together.

The whole experience was a deeply humbling one. The thought that men so young risked and lost their lives in this quiet corner of rural France and the obvious respect and care with which their graves and memories were treated by the villagers of Montcony left a deep impression on me of our capacity for goodness.

If the rows upon rows of headstones at the huge cemeteries in Northern France had made me feel physically sick by the volume and indiscriminate killing in war, the eight headstones reminded me of the utterly personal tragedies, an aircraft of men falling to earth, six telegrams in England and two in Canada, memorials, wreaths and the promise that we must never forget our debt of gratitude nor betray their loss by allowing wars like this to happen again.

A few years later I was able to add a small postscript to the story; my wife’s grandmother had some photos of the airmen’s funeral, so I contacted the museum at RAF Linton and gave them copies for their collection, a tiny contribution to preserving their tragic story.
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Open to all ages

Upon rereading Rilke’s Elegies

POEM

Not just the intimate immensities of Rilke’s symbols, colours, images, his landscapes ripe with nuanced consciousness seduce us – but his pregnant musicalities, his crystal rhythms echoing through time and space, resounding aural clusters, choirs and hymns, nostalgic memories of praise and grace, essential truths that vibrate through our limbs.

A gallant angel guards us. Láres over us, chants ancient litanies of luck and loss, tempts us beyond our primal drive to fiery joie de vivre, seal to strive.

Sub specie aeternitatis – Being is. Our restless present, past and future merge into a living snapshot, cosmic kiss, embracing all, renewing every urge.

The hic et nunc are always ours. We know we own the moment as we go: no dream nor shadow, vital anarchies of visible and deep invisible realities.

What seems to us ephemeral in timeless time becomes eternal, every moment precious in fragility, each flower fragrant in its anonymity.

We too are one, yet bound to every generation, in communion with continuing creation, as all living things engender progeny, the seasons sing of continuity.

//
La Nubie s’étendait autrefois d’Aswan, en Égypte, jusqu’à la ville soudanaise actuelle de Khartoum, au sud. Elle a été le berceau d’une des premières civilisations d’Afrique, le Royaume de Koush, dont les rois surnommés « les pharaons noirs » ont conquis l’Égypte en 747 av. J.-C. et régné sur ce vaste territoire pendant près d’un siècle.

Au sud de Wawa (voir le neuSpecial précédent), sur la route principale qui relie la frontière égyptienne à Khartoum, Delgo se dessine au loin. C’est l’heure du déjeuner, quelques chauffeurs routiers en profitent pour se restaurer au bistro de cette bourgade. Assise derrière son brasero, Noura y concocte de succulents cafés parfumés à la cardamome et d’excellents thés au gingembre. La jeune femme a trouvé refuge dans la région après avoir fuit le Darfour toujours en guerre. Très joviale, souriante, elle met de l’animation dans la salle, mais nous devons avec regret prendre congé d’elle pour poursuivre notre aventure.

Momentanément nous quittons la route pour emprunter une piste qui mène à la 3e cataracte du Nil, proche de la ville de Sebo située sur l’autre rive. Dûs à des encombrements rocheux dans le lit du fleuve, ces rapides, au nombre de six entre Khartoum et Assouan, provoquent des turbulences qui rendent la navigation difficile, voire dangereuse, mais ne l’interrompent pas. Cette caractéristique présente des formations rocheuses en granit rose très spectaculaires composées de prismes divisés par des cassures transversales, semblables aux orgues basaltiques rencontrées dans les régions volcaniques.

KERMA, CAPITALE DU ROYAUME DE NUBIE

Ancien archéologue cantonal et professeur honoraire de l’Université de Genève, Charles Bonnet a consacré la plus grande partie de sa vie à diriger des missions suisses, principalement au Soudan. À partir de 1968, ses recherches concentrées sur Kerma ont permis des découvertes de premier ordre sur les développements urbains de ce site durant plusieurs millénaires, le dégagement de la cité de Doukkil Gel avec ses singulières monuments et la mise au jour des statues des pharaons noirs, révélant dans le même temps aux Soudanais tout un pan de leur histoire préislamique.

Kerma est l’un des sites archéologiques majeurs de la vallée du Nil. Capitale du premier royaume de Nubie, il a livré des vestiges exceptionnels enfouis dans les ruines de villes antiques : des temples monumentaux et de vastes nécropoles. La région renferme les plus anciens cimetières du continent et c’est ici qu’a été découverte la plus vieille momie de la vallée du Nil. Kerma était le centre de ce puissant royaume rival de l’Égypte, dont les textes des anciens Égyptiens signalent qu’il verru régnait l’accès aux routes commerciales permettant d’acheminer vers le royaume pharaonique les produits du reste de l’Afrique. A Kerma se situait le centre d’un empire antique qui domina la Nubie pendant près de 1000 ans. Là s’est développée la première civilisation d’Afrique subsaharienne. Les plus importants témoignages de la civilisation de Kerma sont les deux defufas, énigmatiques constructions en briques de terre d’une vingtaine de mètres de hauteur qui dominent la région.

Le royaume de Koush y trouve son origine, du XXV au XVe siècle avant notre ère. Enfoui dans les sables du désert sur une rive du Nil, la civilisation nubiennne suivit le destin de l’Égypte à partir du VIIIe siècle av. J.-C. et en devient même la XXVe dynastie à la Basse Époque. Après leur chute, les pharaons nubiens battent en retraite au sud de l’Égypte pour former le royaume de Koush, qui va fleurir dans un isolement splendide pendant que le reste de l’Égypte subira les assauts répétés des Assyriens, des Perses et des Grecs.

A moins d’un kilomètre de Kerma, le site de Doukkil Gel renferme sur les vestiges d’une agglomération contemporaine couleurs d’une fondation égyptienne créée par Thoutmosis Ier à la suite de sa conquête du pays de Koush. L’histoire architecturale de la ville sacrée des pharaons noirs a gardé l’empreinte des différents pou-
voirs qui s’y sont succédé, depuis le royaume de Koush à celui de Napata, en passant par la colonisation égyptienne. En 2003, la découverte d’une cachette contenant les statues volontairement brisées des rois de la XXVe dynastie et des premiers souverains napâtens a été tout particulièrement exceptionnelle.

Un musée s’est ouvert sur le site en 2008 et son intérêt est certain car il rassemble de très belles pièces qui témoignent de la richesse passée de Kerma et Doukki Gel, dont les statues des pharaons noirs, des poteries et des objets de la vie courante.

GÉNÉROSITÉ, GENTILLESSE ET SOLIDARITÉ DES SOUDANAIS

Kilomètre 566, à perte de vue le désert s’étend de part et d’autre du ruban d’asphalte rectiligne qui nous conduit à la ville antique de Kawa. Au milieu de nulle part, c’est la panne pour l’un de nos deux 4X4. Garés sur le bas-côté, malgré le peu de circulation rencontrée, nous retrouverons bien vite la gentillesse et la solidarité des Soudanais qui, spontanément, n’hésiteront pas à s’arrêter pour nous dépanner.

Problème résolu, nous perdrons à nouveau beaucoup de temps pour repérer le site de Kawa. Et pour cause : progressivement abandonné au Ve siècle de notre ère, il a été recouvert par le sable et partiellement oublié. Par la suite, fouillé à plusieurs reprises, il a été dépouillé de ses trésors, pour la plupart expédiés en Europe, et aujourd’hui il ne reste plus rien.

A la lumière des phares, quelque peu désorientés, il nous faut faire vite pour trouver de quoi nous abriter pour la nuit. Sélim, en nous proposant de nous recevoir chez lui, sera notre sauveur. Sa maison située sur notre chemin, à deux pas d’une école qui accueille les enfants des environs, sera la bienvenue. Toute la famille va se décarcasser pour nous préparer deux chambres et, une fois de plus, nous ne pourrons qu’apprécier cette générosité qui emplit la population soudanaise. Au petit matin, nous ferons la curiosité des enfants à l’heure de la rentrée scolaire avant de nous rendre sur le marché d’Al-Sélème pour nous procurer des victuailles. À l’écart des étals très colorés, règne une agitation tout particulière et animée. Vétus de leur djellaba, un groupe d’hommes s’affaire autour d’un troupeau de dromadaires. Les transactions vont bon train, c’est le jour où les dromadaires changent de propriétaire.

VIEUX DONGOLA, SUR LA ROUTE DES CARAVANES DE DROMADAIRES

Regorgeant de nids-de-poule, la route est au bon aîné des villageois qui, tant bien que mal, essaient de la rendre praticable moyennant un petit billet amplement mérité. Les paysages sont toujours aussi désertiques, seuls quelques minarets pointent à l’horizon. Pour accéder au site archéologique de Vieux Dongola localisé sur la rive Est du Nil, il nous faut emprunter une piste sablonneuse, puis un ferry. Nos véhicules tout-terrain viendront aisément à bout de la piste, mais lorsque le moment viendra de traverser le fleuve au courant tumultueux, problème se posera. Ferry en panne, il nous faudra trouver une embarcation. Amarrée sur la berge, une barque destinée au convoyage du bétail fera l’affaire et nous voilà partie à la découverte d’une ville importante de la Nubie médiévale.

Point de départ des caravanes de dromadaires vers le Darfour et la province du Kordofan, Vieux Dongola était, du IVe au XVe siècle, la capitale de la Makurie, région s’étendant du nord du Soudan au sud de l’Égypte. Tout d’abord forteresse au Ve siècle, la ville s’étendra rapidement avec l’arrivée du christianisme un siècle plus tard. Plusieurs églises y seront construites, puis des palais ainsi qu’un monastère. Vieux Dongola atteint son apogée au XVe siècle. En 2021, des archéologues polonais ont mis au jour au centre-ville les ruines d’une cathédrale qui est probablement le plus grand édifice chrétien de la Nubie médiévale. Attaquée à maintes reprises par les Arabes, la ville déclinera par la suite. Ce n’est qu’au XIXe siècle qu’une ville nouvelle sera construite à 50 km de là, dans une plaines fertile sur la rive opposée du Nil. Aujourd’hui, Dongola offre des rues ombragées et un souk fourni où il est bien agréable de se promener après avoir séjourné dans le désert.

En attendant de continuer l’aventure, nous nous dirigeons vers Karima et le Djebel Barkal, cœur politique et religieux du royaume de Napata. Suite de l’aventure à vivre dans le prochain numéro du newspecial //
In 2019, a random conversation in the WHO coffee bar led to a full-blown exhibition of artwork created by WHO colleagues, friends, family, and indeed anyone associated with the organisation in any way. The coffee chat noted that there were some fascinating, hidden talents among our co-workers and that we’d be interested and curious, in fact downright nosy, to bring that into the workplace to discover and share.

The beneficial effects of the arts on mental health are well established and the exhibition that was stood up in the WHO library in 2019 was hung on one of the organisation’s key values, that of “people caring about people”.

As such the exhibition did not have a public health theme, in fact it had no theme at all other than celebrating our workforce and inviting them to bring their crafty endeavour to a wider audience. There was a launch party, the UN Choir graced us with a performance alongside a solo artist Chiara, and the Director General recorded a welcome speech. A ribbon was cut, a nice red wine was drunk, and some 120 works were hung over a couple of months with electronic art and paintings from those that could not come to Geneva displayed on a screen.

And it was a lot of fun! In fact, the volunteer organisers made this their golden rule that if they were going to give time to the endeavour then it had to be enjoyable and spread some love, put some smiles on faces and dish out some feel goodness.

The exhibition wound up just before Covid-19 came along and shut almost everything down but at the return to the office, the request came up again and again that people would like to see the WHO Art Gallery resurrected. Artists from 2019 had new works to share and a whole new gaggle of sickeningly gifted guys and gals were keen to share their paintings, photographs, sculptures, drawings, electronic art, poetry etc.

So, we’re back; between 6th and 15th November, a small but we like to think perfectly formed pert-peach of an exhibition was mounted on borrowed easels in the mezzanine area above the WHO restaurant in the main building. Featuring paintings by Geneva colleagues, framed photographs, three-dimensional paper art and a full-length handmade ball gown, the collection of around 15 works announces that the WHO Art Gallery is back as the prodigal son of its 2019 forebear, and it is hungry with unashamed ambition.

DURING NOVEMBER 2023, THE WHO ART GALLERY BRIEFLY RETURNED FOR A MICRO EXHIBITION IN GENEVA HEADQUARTERS, TO KICK OFF PLANS FOR A LONGER-TERM INITIATIVE. BRINGING COLLEAGUES’ CREATIVE CREATIONS INTO THE WORKPLACE FOR A SPLASH OF COLOUR AND A SATISFYINGLY NOSEY LOOK AT WHAT OUR TALENTED PEERS GET UP TO IN THEIR SPARE TIME.
Le Marathon d’Athènes est l’un des plus importants au monde, moins par l’aspect sportif que par le symbole qu’il représente ; c’est en effet là que tout a commencé en 490 av. J.-C., lorsque Philippi dés, un messager grec, a couru la distance séparant Marathon et Athènes pour apporter la nouvelle de la victoire des Grecs sur les Perses à la bataille de Marathon.

Certes beaucoup moins prestigieux que les marathons de New-York, Londres, Paris, Berlin, Boston ou Tokyo, celui d’Athènes est un marathon de légende qui date de plus de 2500 ans. C’est aussi dans cette ville qu’a eu lieu en 1896, grâce au baron Pierre de Coubertin qui souhaitait commémorer la prouesse de Phidippides, le premier marathon olympique. Il sera remporté par un berger grec, Spiridón Louis, qui termina sa course en 2h58’50’’. La longueur du parcours n’était alors que de 40km. Douze ans plus tard, lors des Jeux Olympiques de Londres, la course s’élance de la pelouse du château de Windsor et, sur ordre du roi Edouard VII, se termine au pied de la loge royale au stade de White City. La conséquence de cette exigence sera que la distance de l’épreuve s’établira alors à 42,195 km, distance qui deviendra officielle à partir des Jeux de Paris en 1924. Depuis, le marathon est devenu la discipline reine en course à pied mais également un formidable challenge pour de nombreux coureurs amateurs. Actuellement, les records du monde du marathon — qui ont été pulvérisés en 2023 — sont détenu par le Kényan Kelvin Kiptum avec le temps de 2h00’35’’ établi lors du Marathon de Chicago et chez les femmes, par l’Éthiopienne Tigist Assefa, créditée de 2h11’53’’ au Marathon de Berlin. Pour la petite histoire, il faudra attendre 1967 pour voir une femme courir un marathon — celui de Boston — en même temps que les hommes. Kathrine Switzer fera alors la une de la presse mondiale car, à cette époque, les femmes n’avaient pas le droit de disputer des courses aussi longues. Démasquée au sixième kilomètre par les organisateurs qui tenteront de lui arracher son dossard, elle franchira finalement la ligne d’arrivée avant d’être disqualifiée et suspendue par la Fédération américaine d’athlétisme. Après cet événement, elle n’a eu de cesse d’ouvrir pour la féminisation du sport, en particulier dans la course à pied. Finalement, la ténacité de Kathrine Switzer va payer : le Marathon de Boston sera officiellement ouvert aux femmes en 1972 et le premier marathon féminin olympique aura lieu en 1984 à Los Angeles. Côté performances, l’athlète née en 1947 en Allemagne décrochera une splendide victoire à l’occasion du Marathon de New York en 1974.

LE BERCEAU DE LA DISCIPLINE

Le départ du Marathon d’Athènes est donné sur le site historique de Marathon, lieu où à la fin de l’été 490 av. J.-C., deux armées se sont fait face pour en découdre. Après avoir repris Naxos et Érétrie, les Perses ont pour objectif de reprendre Athènes, et tentent de passer par la mer pour y arriver. Lors de cette bataille, les Athéniens, forts de leur supériorité tactique parvinrent à repousser et battre les Perses. La bataille fut très meurtrière pour les Perses et la victoire des Athéniens va contribuer à renforcer le prestige grec. L’arrivée du marathon est jugée dans le prestigieux et mythique stade en marbre de la capitale grecque, le Panathinaïkó stádio. Inauguré en 330 av. J.-C., il servait de cadre aux festivités religieuses et sociales de la cité d’Athènes, ainsi qu’à des jeux consistant en une chasse réunissant un millier de bêtes sauvages. Rénovés vers 140, ses gradins pouvaient accueillir à cette époque environ 50 000 personnes. Après l’interdiction des cérémonies païennes et des spectacles sanglants par l’empereur Théodose Ier à la fin du IVe siècle, le stade, abandonné, tomba en ruine. Ce n’est qu’après l’indépendance de la Grèce en 1830 que des fouilles archéologiques mirent au jour des vestiges du stade. Quelques années plus tard, l’édifice sera rebâti avec un haut degré de fidélité à l’antique monument et le site pourra accueillir les premiers Jeux Olympiques de l’ère moderne en 1896.

ATHÈNES, CAPITALE DE LA GRÈCE

Fondée vers 800 av. J.-C. autour de la colline de l’Acropole, Athènes est l’une des plus anciennes villes au monde avec une présence humaine attestée dès le Néolithique. Elle connaîtra son âge d’or au Ve siècle av. J.-C. sous la domination du stratège Pélicès. Principale puissance militaire de Grèce, à la tête d’une vaste alliance de cités, Athènes — berceau de grands artistes et philo-
Sophes de l’Antiquité – est également le cœur culturel de la Méditerranée. La ville s’étend dans la plaine d’Attique, sur les rives de la mer Égée. Il n’y a pas d’endroit comme Athènes pour faire un voyage dans les cultures grecques anciennes et se plonger dans la magie des grands temples et des bâtiments majeuritaires capables de durer dans le temps. S’élevant à 156 m au-dessus du niveau de la mer, l’Acropole était la « ville haute », un endroit stratégique d’où l’on pouvait surveiller tous les alentours. C’est là que le Parthénon, l’un des monuments les plus importants de la civilisation de la Grèce antique a été érigé entre 447 et 438 av. J.-C. Centre de la vie sociale, politique et commerciale de la ville dans l’Antiquité, l’Agora antique d’Athènes est l’un des endroits les plus emblématiques de la ville grâce à sa grande richesse historique. Construit d’un vaste espace ouvert entouré de divers bâtiments publics, il abrite aujourd’hui un musée exposant différents objets trouvés lors des fouilles effectuées dans la zone, tels que céramiques, bijoux, armes ou encore des pièces de monnaie.

Athènes est une ville aux identités multiples auxquelles chaque quartier ajoute sa tonalité. L’atmosphère y est bouillonnante, populaire, tout à la fois méditerranéenne et européenne, aussi singulière que typique des capitales d’aujourd’hui. Aussi connu comme le « Quartier des Dieux » en raison de sa proximité avec l’Acropole, Plaka est le quartier le plus ancien, le plus pittoresque et le plus animé d’Athènes. Avec ses ruelles pavées étroites et labrythiques bordées de jolies maisons néoclassiques du XIXe siècle, l’endroit est vraiment charmant.

UNE ÉPREUVE D’ENDURANCE

Les défis rendent la vie intéressante, les relever lui donne un sens. Comme le prétendait si bien Pierre de Coubertin, « l’important c’est de participer ». S’inscrire à un marathon, c’est accepter de chercher ses limites physiques et mentales pour mieux les dépasser. Cette acceptation-là va déjà une victoire après avoir préalablement en- duré des semaines d’entraînement. La veille de la course, 22 970 coureurs – dont votre serviteur – se sont donné rendez-vous à la « pasta-party » pour engloutir des tonnes de pâtes et des milliards de glucides afin de remplir leur estomac de cette énergie lente qui sera diffusée dans les muscles le lendemain. La nuit a été courte, le sommeil ne venait pas. C’était le jour J, celui du grand rendez-vous, du face-à-face avec soi-même. Je ressentais l’angoisse et l’impatience de prendre le départ. C’était aussi l’heure des questions : ma préparation a-t-elle été suffi- sante afin de ne pas craquer au mur du 30 km – le moment crucial tellement redouté par les coureurs – où la fatigue s’installe, tant physiquement que mentalement ? Le marathon est une épreuve d’endurance, donc de maîtrise du temps et de la distance ; surtout ne pas mettre son corps dans la zone rouge trop longtemps.

Au parcours vallonné, le Marathon d’Athènes fait partie des plus difficiles avec un départ donné dans le village de Marathon, au niveau de la mer Égée, et une arrivée située plus en altitude au Stade Olympique d’Athènes. Au fil des kilomètres, plus la fatigue s’accumule, plus il semble que les distances s’allongent et que la durée des minutes double. Perte des notions de temps et de l’espace. Mais à l’approche du stade, porté par les acclamations de la foule, par magie les douleurs ne se font plus sentir et une extror-dinaire énergie décuple nos forces. Moment de bonheur extrême, moment chargé d’émotion. Une fois la ligne d’arrivée franchie, médaille autour du cou, l’ensemble des marathoniens – venus de 140 pays – qui ne se connaissent pas se félicitent et tombent dans les bras des uns des autres pour se congratuler. L’allégresse s’installe, instants de fraternité et d’euphorie qui font oublier temporairement conflits et atrocités qui secouent notre planète et toute cette inhuma-nité de ceux qui en sont la cause.

Le Marathon d’Athènes est également appelé « le Marathon de la Paix ». Il est dédié à la mémoire de Grigoris Lambrakis (1912-1963), homme po-litique grec qui a été sauvagement assassiné lors d’une marche pour la Paix et qui avait pour devise : « C’est si beau de vivre pour la Paix, c’est si magnifique de mourir pour la Paix ». //
Le col de la Maloja
COLS ROUTIERS DE SUISSE (10)

Le col de la Maloja est probablement le col le plus insolite de Suisse : situé à 1815 mètres d'altitude, l'accès depuis l'Engadine est entièrement plat, la route ne monte pas mais longe le beau lac de Sils, avec une belle vue sur les montagnes de la Haute Engadine. C'est uniquement quand on se trouve déjà sur le col, que s'ouvre une descente raide et vertigineuse vers le val Bregaglia, avec un dénivelé moyen de 9%.

De nos jours presque uniquement utilisé par des touristes et pour le trafic local, le col était jadis l’un des axes majeurs entre le lac de Como et le col du Julier, ainsi que, en passant par l’Engadine, vers Nauders. En 1972, une rampe pour chariots fut découverte, avec une pente de 30% probablement déjà utilisée avant l’époque romaine. L’importance du col a continué durant le Moyen Âge. La route entre Silvaplana (qui commence aussi la route du col de Julier) jusqu’à Casaccia (qui fut autrefois aussi le point de départ pour le col de Septimer, maintenant uniquement utilisé pour des randonnées pédestres) dans le Val Bregaglia fut rendue carrossable en 1828. Avant, le transport entre Maloja et Silvaplana se faisait en été aussi en bateau et en hiver par traineaux sur le lac gelé. Le col a perdu son importance pour le transport des marchandises avec la construction du chemin de fer passant par le col de la Bernina, en 1910. Après l’ouverture des tunnels de San Bernardino (1967) et du Saint-Gotthard (1980), le transport de marchandises est désormais limité aux besoins locaux.

Le col forme aussi le point de partage des eaux entre la Mer Adriatique et la Mer Noire après avoir traversé le lac de Sils. Sur place, il y a un petit chemin qui mène à un parking d'où on peut accéder au lieu-dit Orden, où se trouve le musée Segantini, qui a servi d'inspiration à l'artiste, y compris des marmites glaciaires, témoins de l'âge glaciaire qui a pris fin il y a 10 000 ans. Les marmites ont été créées avec le recul des glaciers, quand l'eau de fonte a essayé de s'écouler par les fissures dans la glace et, mêlée de sable, a atteint le sol rocheux avec une forte pression. Cet effet de polissage a créé des marmites, dont beaucoup sont remplies d'eau, la roche empêchant l’eau de s’écouler. Deux itinéraires permettent de visiter plusieurs marmites, mais attention, mieux vaut rester sur le chemin, parce que des trous remplis de sable peuvent être dissimulés dans le sol.

La fin du 19e siècle n’a pas attiré que la jet-set à Maloja, mais aussi des artistes, parmi lesquels le peintre Giovanni Segantini, qui arriva avec sa famille à Maloja en 1894, après avoir passé huit ans à Saroggin. Il se sentait inspiré par la luminosité du lac et des montagnes. Sur place, il se lia d'amitié avec le peintre Giovanni Giacometti, natif de Stampa dans le val Bregaglia. Segantini proposa un gigantesque panorama de l’Engadine pour l’exposition universelle de Paris en 1900, mais dut l’abandonner en raison de son coût. Il ne réalisa que le magnifique triptyque La Vanité, qui a servi d’inspiration à l’artiste, y compris dans le sol. Cet effet de polissage a créé des marmites, dont beaucoup sont remplies d’eau, la roche empêchant l’eau de s’écouler. Deux itinéraires permettent de visiter plusieurs marmites, mais attention, mieux vaut rester sur le chemin, parce que des trous remplis de sable peuvent être dissimulés dans le sol.

Le village de Maloja au col même s’est développé au cours du 19e siècle. Avant, il n’y avait qu’une seule auberge attestée depuis le 13e siècle. Le Belvédère, reste d’une bâtisse du 15e siècle, trône toujours au-dessus du village. Le comte belge Camille de Renesse rêvait d’un hôtel-résidence dans ce lieu pour l’aristocratie européenne. Cela faisait partie de son projet gigantesque du fameux panorama de l’Engadine pour l’exposition universelle de Paris en 1900, mais dut l’abandonner en raison de son coût. Il ne réalisa que le magnifique triptyque La Vanité, qui a servi d’inspiration à l’artiste, y compris dans le sol. Cet effet de polissage a créé des marmites, dont beaucoup sont remplies d’eau, la roche empêchant l’eau de s’écouler. Deux itinéraires permettent de visiter plusieurs marmites, mais attention, mieux vaut rester sur le chemin, parce que des trous remplis de sable peuvent être dissimulés dans le sol.

Juste après avoir passé le col, il y a un petit chemin qui mène à une forêt où on peut se promener en plein air. Le col offre une vue magnifique sur les montagnes de la Haute Engadine. C’est le point de départ pour de nombreuses randonnées et des excursions à travers le val Bregaglia. Maloja est enterré dans le petit cimetière de Maloja, où on peut toujours visiter sa tombe. Son atelier, construit par lui en 1897 comme modèle du pavillon qu’il planifiait pour l’exposition universelle de Paris en 1900, mais dut l’abandonner en raison de son coût, est enterré dans le petit cimetière de Maloja, où on peut toujours visiter sa tombe. Son atelier, construit par lui en 1897 comme modèle du pavillon qu’il planifiait pour l’exposition universelle de Paris en 1900, mais dut l’abandonner en raison de son coût, est conservé à Maloja, mais aussi des artistes, parmi lesquels le peintre Giovanni Segantini, qui arriva avec sa famille à Maloja en 1894, après avoir passé huit ans à Saroggin. Il se sentait inspiré par la luminosité du lac et des montagnes. Sur place, il se lia d’amitié avec le peintre Giovanni Giacometti, natif de Stampa dans le val Bregaglia. Segantini proposa un gigantesque panorama de l’Engadine pour l’exposition universelle de Paris en 1900, mais dut l’abandonner en raison de son coût. Il ne réalisa que le magnifique triptyque La Vanité, qui a servi d’inspiration à l’artiste, y compris dans le sol. Cet effet de polissage a créé des marmites, dont beaucoup sont remplies d’eau, la roche empêchant l’eau de s’écouler. Deux itinéraires permettent de visiter plusieurs marmites, mais attention, mieux vaut rester sur le chemin, parce que des trous remplis de sable peuvent être dissimulés dans le sol.
longueur de 171 mètres et d’une hauteur de 42 mètres à son point culminant. De 1659 à 1956, le val Bergaglia a été frappé par 21 inondations catastrophiques, au cours desquelles de nombreux ponts et maisons ont été détruits, le pire étant l’inondation de 1929. Pour éviter des désastres futurs, le canton des Grisons décida de bâtir le mur de rétention des eaux de crue de l’Orlegna, inauguré en 1971. En 1987, le barrage a fait preuve d’efficacité quand pendant une crue plus importante que celle de 1929, le lac de rétention s’est rempli en quelques heures jusqu’à son plus haut niveau. Sur le mur se trouvent neuf colonnes dans les couleurs de l’arc en ciel, optimiste symbole de paix.

Après Maloja, nous descendons la route raide avec ses spectaculaires virages en lacets vers Casaccia. C’est un trajet d’à peine 5 kilomètres avec un dénivelé de presque 400 mètres, mais il y plein d’endroits où la route affiche un joli 11 % de pente, surtout au début depuis Maloja où des virages se suivent sans arrêt, nous en avons compté 24 ! Motards et cyclistes sont donc avertis !


Personnellement, je trouve que cette région du Val Bergaglia et de Haute Engadine est l’une des plus belles de Suisse. Si on se promène sur un des innombrables sentiers pédestres, on se rend compte de la nature sauvage de ce paysage, malgré tous les efforts pour la maîtriser. Il n’est donc pas surprenant que ces contrées aient attiré des artistes, peintres et même écrivains comme Rainer Maria Rilke qui a séjourné pendant deux mois heureux à Soglio après la première guerre mondiale. Les bruits du monde semblent bien loin ici !
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Churches house eternal questions, seek new answers through the generations, call Our Father the primeval Source, exult with Gloria in the vital Force.

Man is always making meaning, yearning, anxiously for fuller being, learning how to live in doubt and existential searches, countering with Credo and erecting churches.

Churches hail the Logos, teach the Word, the Evangelium through millennia heard. Beatitudes² of personal salvation offer hope² to every congregation.

In the stillness here the soul may pray alone or loudly with the faithful psalms intone. Litanies are heard in muted breath, liturgies³ to cope with life and death.

Endless melodies remembered, judgment through God’s mercy tempered. Agnus Dei reigns upon the mystic throne, Misereere nobis echoes every stone.

Here when doubt arises, faith advises candles hesitate as incense rises. Such are pious homes of contemplation, where we nurture hopes of reconciliation.

Churches, mosques and synagogues adore the self-same God. Their teaching at the core is brotherhood, respect and mutual love, not war or discord, but the dove!

Symbol-rich: the rainbow, cross and sacred shrine, the fish, the dove, the lamb, the bread and wine. Alpha and omega, winter solstice, Birth and new beginning, love⁴ surpassing justice.

Lighthouse for the sailor searching port, refuge for the homeless, faithful fort, profile of old cities, heart of many a town, our eyes scale towers, gargoyles⁵ gazing down.

Centuries of pilgrimage on Jacob’s route⁶ tell histories of journeys on foot to old Santiago or to older Rome, from votive chapels to the highest dome.

Botafumeiro⁷ swings in smoke and prayer, incense over pilgrims cleans the air.

Once Tannhäuser⁸ went to Rome to make confession, and, though not absolved, he found redemption.

Churches consecrate civilizations, elevate in art man’s fears and aspirations: Organs⁹, mosaics¹⁰, frescoes¹¹, icons¹², reliefs¹³, sculpture¹⁴, everlasting treasures of each culture¹⁵.

Heritage of mankind, miracle of art: Stained-glass windows¹⁶ that uplift the heart, smiling angels¹⁷ that inspire the soul, and solace-spending Pietas¹⁸ that console.

Round cupolas¹⁹, thin spires²⁰ and bellfries high are prayers in stone that to the heavens fly. The carillons²¹ sound grateful celebrations that recall the fundamental questions.

Pointed arches, flying buttresses, matter immaterial, light in human dress... Portentous tympana of the apocalypse²² project the mind to the ineffable eclipse.

Religious ruins²³, relics of the past, are vestiges of time become somnolent, still gardens strewn with stories all about are breathing memories of faith lived out.

Lone temerity lies cold in unbelief. In spite of doubt, faith serves man well, for life in brief. Communion in belief bears fortitude, As cosmic union²⁴ counter cosmic solitude.

Behold that churches are like poetry in stone, angelic wings through many ages flown, fine choirs that dona nobis pacem sing, two hands in prayer²⁶ that peace at last may bring.
The Beatitudes, Matthew Chapter V, the Sermon on the Mount.

Deus caritas est, 2006 Encyclical of Benedict XVI.

Motu proprio summorum pontificum Spe Salvi, 2008 Encyclical of Benedict XVI.

The northwest nave of the Basilica of Saint Denis in Paris (where all but 3 of the French kings are buried) is adorned in the main altar of the Cathedral of Antwerp.

At the Basilica of Santa Croce in Florence one can admire Donatello’s high relief of the Madonna del Latte. Also at the basilica the altar of St. Remigius in Falera, Graubunden, Switzerland.

At the Cathedral of Amiens, Old Testament reliefs on the South portal. In the Dom of Naumburg the reliefs of the Last Supper and of the Betrayal of Judas.

The Botafumeiro is the famous bronze thurible that swings at the feet of the Choir of Saint Denis, in Paris. Since the Middle Ages incense is burned in this incensory to dispel the smells of the pilgrims. It is one of the largest censers in the world, weighing 80 kg and measuring 1.60 m in height. Its swaying in a 65 meter arc between the Azabachería and Praterias doorways at the ends of the transept. At the top of the swing, it rises to 22 meters. The original silver thurible was stolen by Napoleon’s troops in April 1809 during the French occupation. It was replaced by the present thurible in 1852.

Supper and of the Betrayal of Judas. Portal, in the Dom of Naumburg the reliefs of the Last Supper.

15th century Russian icons in the Cathedral of the Annunciation in Moscow.

The Wenceslas Chapel in Prague’s St. Vitus Cathedral is the biggest in Europe.

Albrecht Dürer’s Praying Hands (1508) at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg.

The gargoyles of Notre Dame de Paris were immortalized by Victor Hugo.

The road to Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, Spain, where the Apostle James the Greater (son of Zebedee) is supposed to be buried. “Santiago” is a Galician transformation of San Jacinto. In 1993 the route from France to Santiago (El Camino) was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

12th century déambulatoire of the legend of Roland; Chagall’s live-action windows as well as rose-windows, including the 13th century déambulatoire of the legend of Roland. Chapel’s lively window in the Church of St. Martin in Zurich are unforgettable.

The Botafumeiro is the famous bronze thurible that swings from the dome of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, Spain. Since the Middle Ages incense is burned in this incensory to dispel the smells of the pilgrims. It is one of the largest censers in the world, weighing 80 kg and measuring 1.60 m in height. Its swaying in a 65 meter arc between the Azabachería and Praterias doorways at the ends of the transept. At the top of the swing, it rises to 22 meters. The original silver thurible was stolen by Napoleon’s troops in April 1809 during the French occupation. It was replaced by the present thurible in 1852.

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Adressez vos commentaires à : Garry Aslanyan – newSpecial OMS, 20 av. Appia CH-1202 Genève Suisse info@newspecial.org


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