

# newSpecial



## Gender equality

BECAUSE IT IS 2024

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MARCH 2024 - N°835

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## 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

**Voyez-vous que nous avons changé? Un nouveau look, un nouveau départ, tout va bien. Les magazines sont comme les gens. Certaines changent la couleur de leurs cheveux avec des produits cosmétiques, et d'autres portent des bijoux. Alors n'hésitez plus, consultez-nous!**

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.

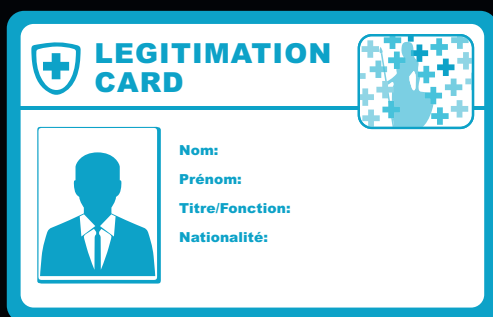
Même si nous avons l'air différent, nous restons fiers d'être un magazine rédigé par le personnel pour le personnel.

J'espère que vous apprécierez ce numéro. //



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# March 2024

N°835

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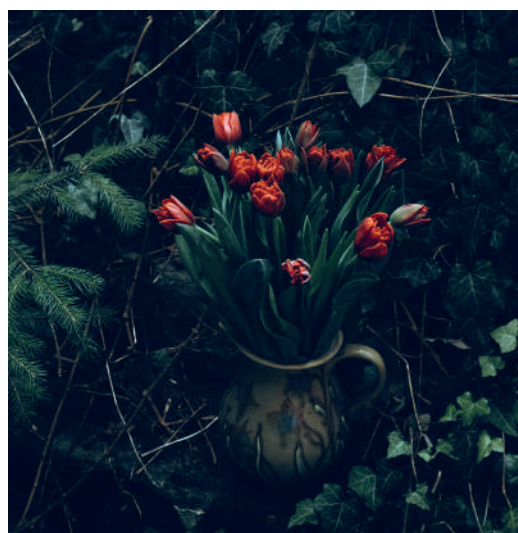


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PHOTO COVER  
PRISCILLA DU-PREZ - UNSPLASH



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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 gender statistics. In addition to improving data collection 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.

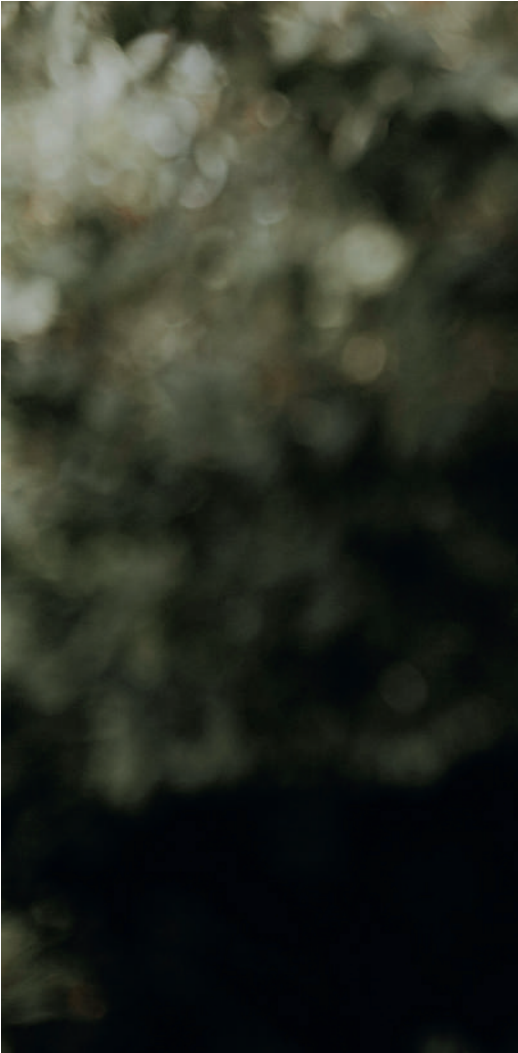
Yet, progress on gender equality has been highly uneven across the different dimensions of the 2030 Agenda. In some areas, such as girls' access to education, global improvement is undeniable yet insufficient, often leaving behind women and girls in the poorest households (SDG 4). In areas such as labor force participation (SDG 9) and innovation and knowledge creation (SDG 9), significant gender gaps remain and progress has been minimal. In other cases, such as maternal mortality (SDG 3), progress is too slow and uneven to achieve SDG Target 3.1 by 2030. Similarly, while progress has been made towards eliminating the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) (SDG 5), 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 midway 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

TEXT GARRY ASLANYAN  
PHOTO PRISCILLA DU PREEZ - UNSPLASH





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-countries-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 unacceptably 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. //

Gender and intersectionality do not exist independently, they intersect and overlap, magnifying the severity and frequency of the impacts.



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# What we're still learning about periods

PERIODS ARE STILL CONSIDERED A TABOO TOPIC AND COME WITH SHAME IN SOME COUNTRIES. BUT THERE IS SO MUCH MORE THAT AFFECTS YOUR PERIOD.

**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 underactive thyroid gland, and endometriosis.<sup>1</sup> 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.

## LET'S 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'.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

## 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'.<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup>

TEXT LISANNE HOPKIN  
PHOTO SASHA SASHINA - UNSPLASH

## 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.<sup>8</sup> 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 know? 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. //

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3 *Ibid.*

4 *Ibid.*

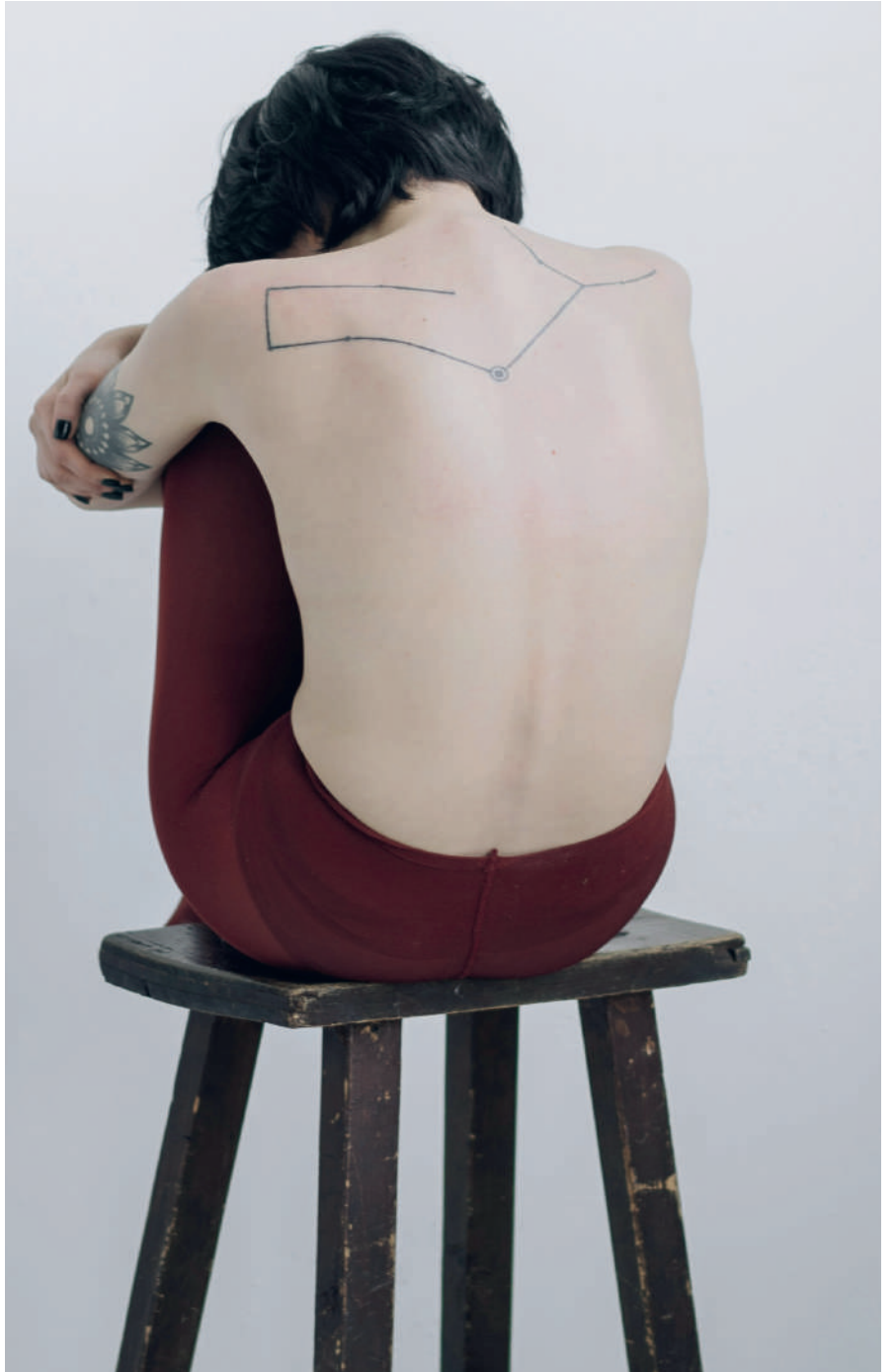
5 "Overview | Endometriosis." NHS, NHS, [www.nhs.uk/conditions/endometriosis/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/endometriosis/).

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8 Cleveland Clinic. "Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD)." Cleveland Clinic, [my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/9132-premenstrual-dysphoric-disorder-pmdd](http://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/9132-premenstrual-dysphoric-disorder-pmdd).

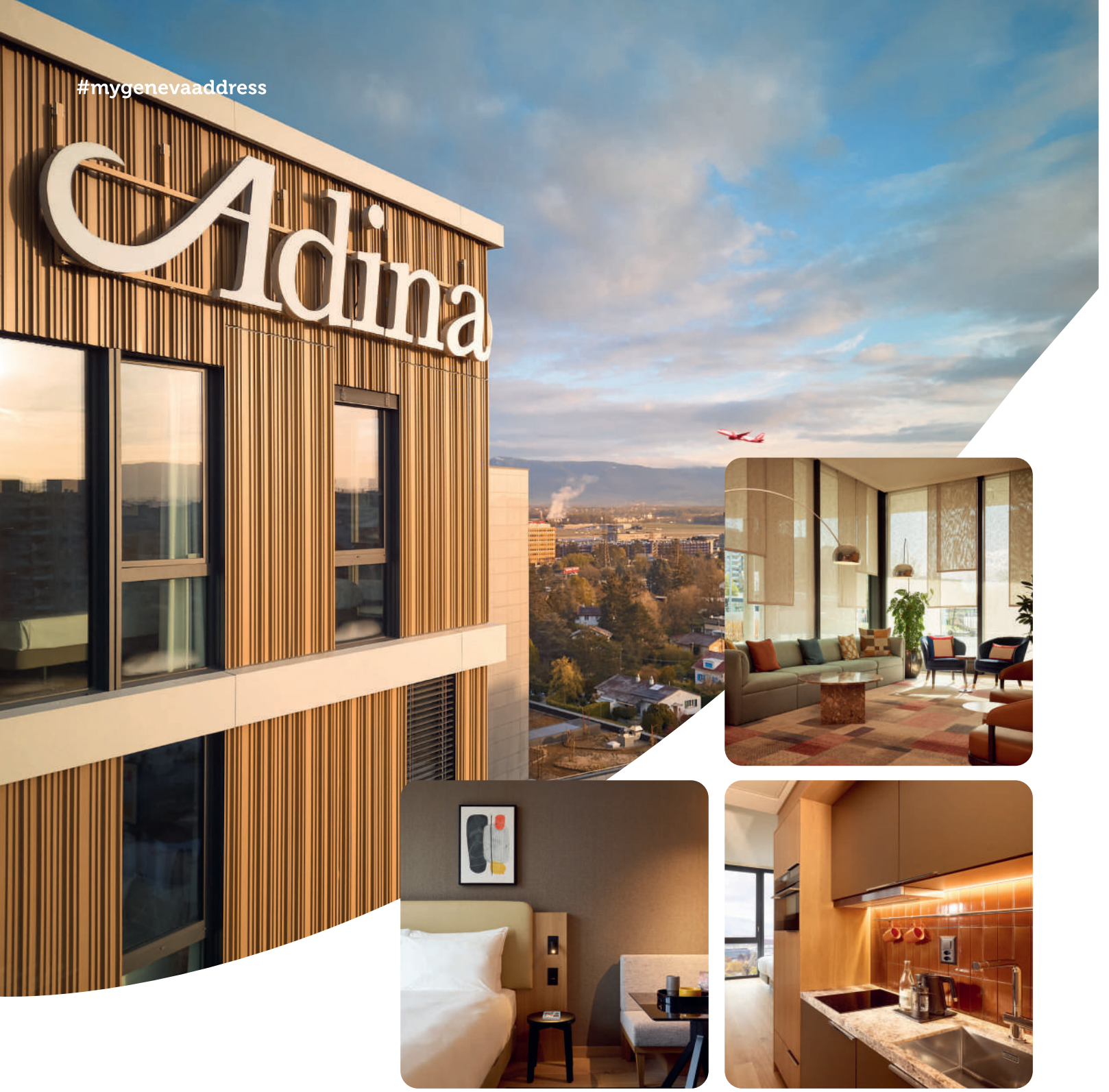




Periods can make us feel  
out of our depths.



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# Gender parity in the UN

## WHY WE NEED MORE FEMALE LEADERS

**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.

The research also unveiled that female leader exhibits a more creative orientation across all management levels, age groups, and cultures. They often adopt a “playing to win” approach, focused on creating the future, while male leaders tend to adopt a “trying not to lose” orientation, dedicated to avoiding undesired outcomes (Adams & Dusen (Ph.D), 2023).

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. //

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# La Voix du 8 Mars

## The Voice of March 8<sup>th</sup>

POÈME - POEM



TEXT ARLETTE OSSERE-OKOPOUE  
PHOTO LEONHARD SCHONSTEIN - UNSPLASH

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 plaidant pour la mise en œuvre de mesures concrètes afin d'assurer leur égalité et leur épanouissement. 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 l'importance d'investir dans les femmes, que ce soit à travers leur éducation, leur santé ou en soutenant leurs aspirations, reconnaissant ainsi le rôle fondamental qu'elles jouent dans la création d'un avenir plus juste et équitable. Enfin, il célèbre l'unité des femmes à travers le monde, mettant en avant leur diversité et la puissance collective de leur voix. Cet appel s'adresse à la solidarité et à la collaboration en vue de bâtir un monde où chaque individu, quel que soit son genre, peut vivre librement et pleinement.

Dans l'éclat de 8 mars, une voix s'élève,  
Pour leurs droits, pour leur dignité,  
elles ont osé lutter.  
Investir en faveur des femmes,  
c'est réparer les torts,  
C'est reconnaître leur valeur, leur force,  
leur essor.

Dans chaque coin du monde,  
leur voix résonne haut,  
Pour briser les chaînes de l'oppression,  
des tabous.  
Accélérer le rythme vers une égalité concrète,  
Où chaque femme trouve sa place,  
sa quête secrète.

Impératif moral,  
mais aussi impérieux devoir,  
De construire un monde juste,  
où règne l'espoir.  
Les femmes, pilier de la société,  
méritent respect,  
Leur voix, leur présence,  
un trésor à protéger avec tact.

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 trêve.  
Leur courage, leur détermination,  
un exemple à suivre,  
Pour un monde meilleur  
où chaque être puisse vivre.

Investir en faveur des femmes,  
c'est semer 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 invincibles,  
ensemble, nous sommes libres.

//

Ce poème plaide en faveur de l'investissement dans les droits et la dignité des femmes, exhortant à l'action pour briser les chaînes de l'oppression et promouvoir l'égalité des genres.



This poem advocates for investing in women's rights and dignity, urging action to break chains of oppression and promote gender equality.

This poem dedicates its message to the global recognition of women's rights on International Women's Day, celebrated on March 8<sup>th</sup> 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 the radiance of March 8<sup>th</sup>,  
 a voice rises,  
 For their rights, for their dignity,  
 they dared to fight.  
 Investing in women is to right the wrongs,  
 It's to recognize their worth,  
 their strength, their rise.

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 equity 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 8<sup>th</sup> 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.

//



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# Women's safety

SWITZERLAND STILL DOES NOT INCLUDE THE LACK OF CONSENT IN THEIR DEFINITION OF RAPE. WOMEN ARE STILL FIGHTING FOR EQUAL PAY IN THE WORKPLACE. WHY ARE WE STILL NOT SEEN AS MEN'S EQUALS? IS THE WORLD LISTENING TO ANGRY OUTCRIES AND ARE WE ON THE ROAD TO A BETTER FUTURE FOR WOMEN?



TEXT LISANNE HOPKIN  
PHOTOS WIKIMEDIA COMMONS &  
JASON LEUNG - UNSPLASH

**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.

Women are still fighting against sexual assault.



In Switzerland, one woman dies every two weeks due to domestic violence.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> 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 3:24pm.<sup>3</sup> 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 11 minutes and that the victim had been playing with fire and hadn't been severely injured'.<sup>4</sup> Can you 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 that she can never get back.

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'.<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018.<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, one of the many programmes that Switzerland has adopted is the Swiss Confederation's Foreign Policy Strategy 2020-2023, which respects human rights<sup>9</sup>, and defending gender equality and fighting gender-based violence are also a focus of Switzerland's humanitarian work.<sup>10</sup>

Advice for those who are experiencing violence.

**If you are experiencing violence during COVID-19:**

- Reach out** to supportive family, friends or neighbours
- Call** a hotline or access information online if possible
- Seek out** local services for survivors

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Everyone should be treated as equals.



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.<sup>1</sup> Each year, on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 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.<sup>12</sup>

If you are suffering from domestic abuse, or know of someone who is, please check Operhilfe 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.) //

- 1 "Irregular Periods." NHS, NHS, [www.nhs.uk/](http://www.nhs.uk/)
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- 3 Keystone-SDA/SRF/Sotomo/SWI [swissinfo.ch/ilj](http://swissinfo.ch/ilj). "Domestic Violence 'Widespread' in Switzerland." SWI [Swissinfo.ch](http://Swissinfo.ch) #NOTHINGTOHIDE, [Swissinfo.ch](http://Swissinfo.ch), 9 Nov. 2021, website.
- 4 Rodriguez, Leah. "Thousands of Swiss Protesters Screamed Together as Part of a Gender Equality Protest." *Global Citizen*, 16 June 2020, website.
- 5 [Swissinfo.ch](http://Swissinfo.ch). "Swiss Protest against Court Ruling Reducing Rapist's Sentence." SWI [Swissinfo.ch](http://Swissinfo.ch) #NOTHINGTOHIDE, [Swissinfo.ch](http://Swissinfo.ch), 8 Aug. 2021, website.
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- 8 Council of Europe. "Switzerland." *Istanbul Convention Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence*, website.
- 9 Operhilfe-Schweiz. "Protection." *Protection - Victim Support Switzerland*, website.
- 10 Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. "Combating Violence against Women: A Priority of Swiss Foreign Policy." *Federal Department of Foreign Affairs*. Confédération Suisse, 25 Nov. 2020, website.
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- 12 UN Women. "UniTE by 2030 to End Violence against Women Campaign." *UN Women*, website.
- 13 Ibid.

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# ORIGIN

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# Women's dreams

POEM



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 and 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.

//

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.



TEXT IVANA KNEZEVIC  
PHOTO YANA HURSKA - UNSPLASH



# Podcasts

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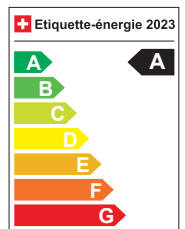
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GENDER EQUALITY IS KEY TO DELIVERING ON THE TRANSFORMATIVE VISION OF THE 2030 AGENDA



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



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



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



**SDG 13** | Gender equality is critical to mitigate climate impacts: Women's inclusion in climate discussions leads to improved outcomes of climate-related projects and policies



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



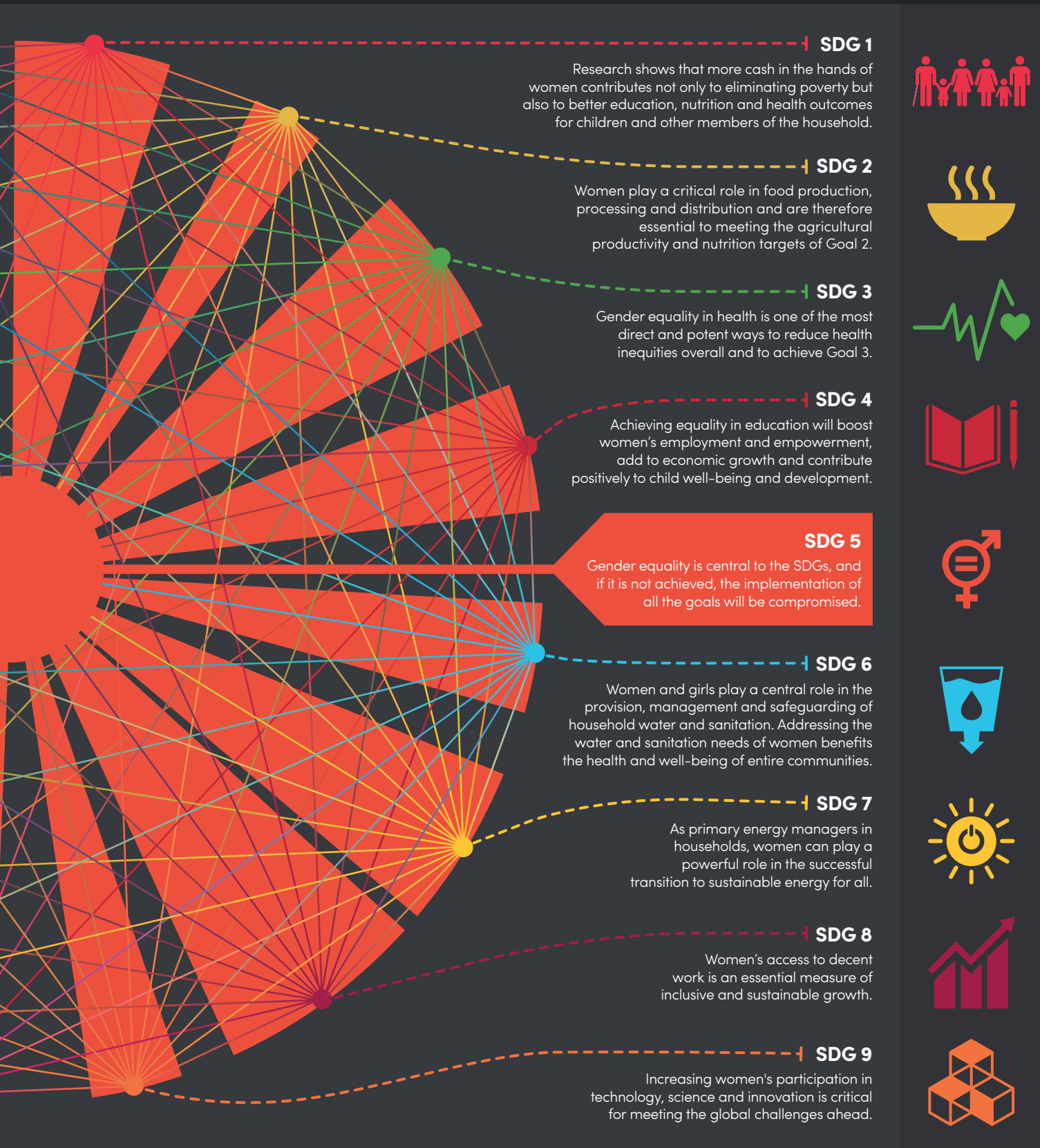
**SDG 11** | Women have equal rights to the city, and their safety in public spaces is crucial for sustainable urbanization.



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

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.



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.



# Digital wage payments

HELP COUNTRIES RETAIN HEALTH WORKERS,  
STRENGTHEN INITIATIVES

**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 Hamani Djibo, head of WHO's Digital Finance Team.

WHO has been leading among international organizations 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 organizers, 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." //

## ALSO SEE

Story



Vidéo





A polio immunization team on the job in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.



An immunization worker gets set up to receive her wages on her mobile wallet in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.





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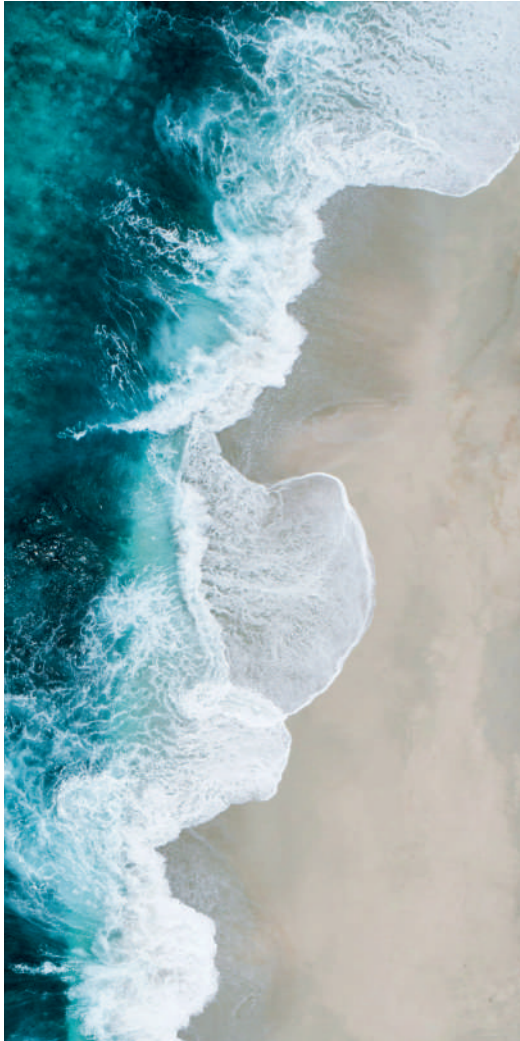
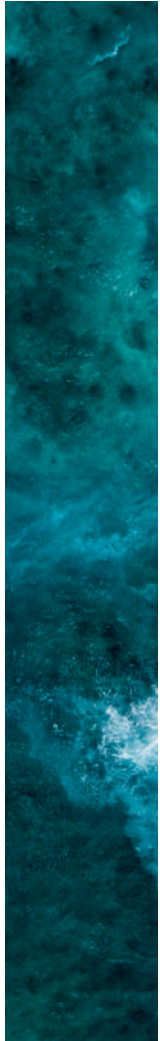
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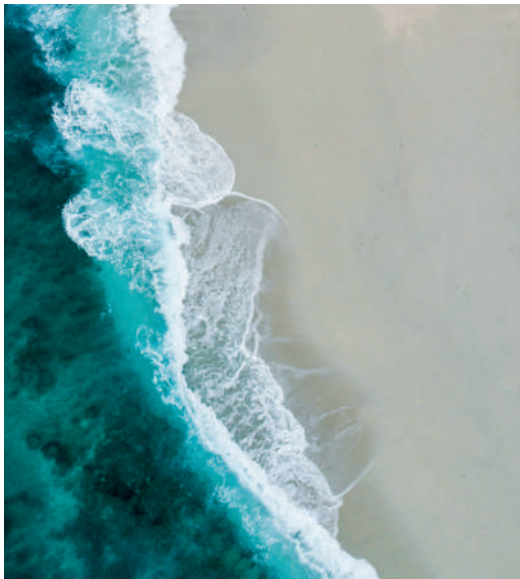


# To WHO on its 75 anniversary

POEM



At a time when the world is becoming divided,  
WHO's anniversary reminds us of the power  
of people coming together in shared  
humanitarian endeavour.



Guns falling silent in forty-five  
war-wearied 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 slew  
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 Organization  
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  
and 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.

//

TEXT TONY WADDELL  
PHOTO SHIFAAZ SHAMMOON- UNSPLASH



# Technofeudalism: 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 largescale 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 globalisation, marketing which has turned consumers' attention into a vital commodity in itself, and the 1971 Nixon Shock - page 56). He identifies a number of 'props in our present drama' (Big Finance, Big Tech, neoliberalism, industrial-scale inequality, and atrophied democracies). He also recognizes a vital role for the 'recycling mechanism' of American capitalism (or what he calls America's Global Minotaur, taking in dollars from the rest of the world to be invested in Wall Street and recycling them into productive investments elsewhere).

## PROFESSOR YANIS VAROUFAKIS SUGGESTS THAT

- Large swathes of the Internet 'commons' have now been 'privatized' and are no longer freely accessible.
- Central banks have been busy creating new money supply (the printing of money has now been replaced by the digital creation of currency). Meanwhile, companies, commercial and investment banks have essentially been engaged in stock market speculation and share buybacks, rather than productive business investment (accelerated by the 2007/8

financial crisis, austerity and national stimulus plans).

- In the meantime, 'cloud capital' has emerged as an important form of capital, mostly in the hands of an emerging class of 'cloudalists'.
- Stock markets have become decoupled from underlying economic realities, making productive business investment more difficult.
- 'Cloudalists' (most notably in the United States and China) are well-positioned to extract significant rents from cloud-based platforms. These large online platforms resemble markets, but they are definitively not markets (he calls them 'fiefdoms' due to their practice of charging rents, not profits), hence an emerging geopolitical techno-rivalry.
- Users of online platforms are today fast becoming 'cloud serfs' contributing to a vast pool of unpaid labour generating content and value for cloudalists or 'cloud proles' (short for proletariat), 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 131). "The cloudalist's 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.

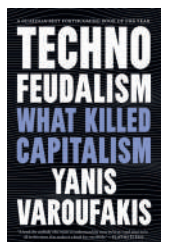
### INDEED, THE CONSEQUENCES OF MOVING TO ONLINE 'DIGITAL FIEFDOMS' CHARGING RENTS ARE MULTIPLE

- 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 around the world between countries, costed in terms of consumers' time and data, rather than dollar amounts.
- 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.

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 evolutionary fitness... 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. //

Big tech has replaced capitalism's twin pillars – markets and profit – with its platforms and rents.



# Montcony Memorial

A 2-HOUR DRIVE FROM GENEVA ON THE FLAT RURAL PLANES OF SAÔNE-ET-LOIRE, THE QUIET COUNTRY LANES ARE DOTTED WITH MEMORIALS TO THE FALLEN OF WORLD WAR II. A CHANCE STOP ON A CYCLING TRIP LED TO A DESIRE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ONE PARTICULAR BOMBING CREW WHO NEVER MADE IT HOME.

**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 realise 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 single grey stone which drivers on the D23 probably shot past unawares.

On October 24<sup>th</sup>, 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 poppies had been laid against the stone, their 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 bedroom, furtive night-time surgery by the resistance Doctor, the machine gun he hid in his barn, were a frankly terrifying glimpse into another world.

He told me that despite the Nazi presence in the area the airmen who died were buried at Montcony churchyard with full honours and a crowd of some 2,000 local people attending the funeral. A memorial service has been held every year since.

The next weekend I returned to find the graveyard and pay my respects properly to the neat row of eight Commonwealth War Grave headstones that, to my shock, recorded that the youngest fatality was 20 and the oldest 32. I was 36 when I made that cycle ride to Montcony, and these graves seemed to me to be those of boys.

## I READ

- ALLEN, FREDERICK GEORGE, 30 years old - 24/10/1942
- BEVERIDGE, JOHN, 21 years old - 24/10/1942
- CHAMBERS, GEORGE JAMES, 32 years old - 24/10/1942
- MESSER, ALBERT ERNEST, 21 years old - 24/10/1942
- RAUSCH, WILLIAM STANLEY, 20 years old - 24/10/1942
- RHODEN, HAROLD, 22 years old - 24/10/1942
- TEAGUE, DENIS FRANK, 21 years old - 24/10/1942
- WALTON, ERIC, 20 years old - 24/10/1942

TEXT KEVIN CRAMPTON  
PHOTOS UNKNOWN PHOTOGRAPHER,  
GUILLAUME VAN DER WENDE 03/02/2012  
& UNITED KINGDOM GOVERNMENT, PUBLIC DOMAIN





Halifax Wreckage, Montcony - France, October 1942  
Halifax Bomber

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 tele-

grams 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. So many headstones, so many plummeting aircraft or sinking ships but by focusing on and learning about all that was being done to celebrate and remember these eight, I hoped in some way to remember them all.

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. //

Halifax Wreckage, Montcony - France, October 1942  
Montcony Memorial





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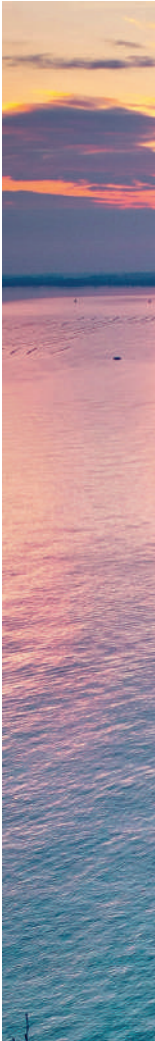


**SATURDAY MAY 25<sup>TH</sup> 2024**  
OPENING 10AM - 5PM  
OPEN TO ALL AGES



# 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 as *Lares* over us,  
chants ancient litanies of luck and loss,  
tempts us beyond our primal drive  
to fiery *joie de vivre*, zeal 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.

//

Rilke began his ten *Elegies* at Duino castle on  
the Adriatic and completed them 1922 at Muzot  
in Sierre, his most intensely lyrical poem.



TEXT ALFRED DE ZAYAS  
PHOTO BIEMME ZETA - UNSPLASH

# Au royaume des pharaons noirs

SOUDAN 2/4

**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 *newSpecial* 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 bistrot 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 fui 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 3<sup>e</sup> cataracte du Nil, proche de la ville de Sebo située sur l'autre rive. Dus à des encombrements rocheux dans le lit du fleuve, ces rapides, au nombre de six entre Khartoum et Assouan, provoquent de fortes turbulences qui rendent la navigation difficile, voire dangereuse en certains endroits, mais ne l'interrompent pas. Cette cataracte 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 Doukki Gel avec ses singuliers 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 verrouillait 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 deffufas, énormes et énigmatiques constructions en briques de terre d'une vingtaine de mètres de haut qui dominent la région.

Le royaume de Koush y trouve son origine, du XXV<sup>e</sup> au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle avant notre ère. Enfouie dans les sables du désert sur une rive du Nil, la civilisation nubienne façonne le destin de l'Égypte à partir du VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle av. J.-C. et en devient même la XXV<sup>e</sup> 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 Doukki Gel renferme sur les vestiges d'une agglomération contemporaine ceux d'une fondation égyptienne créée par Thoutmosis I<sup>er</sup> à la suite de sa conquête du pays de Koush. L'histoire architecturale de la ville sacrée des pharaons noirs a gardé l'emprunte des différents pou-



Typique et coloré, le marché d'al-Séléme sera une halte agréable pour renouveler notre stock de provisions.



Les plus grands marchés de fromagers d'Afrique se trouvent au Soudan.



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 XXV<sup>e</sup> dynastie et des premiers souverains napatéens 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. A l'écart des étals très colorés, règne une agitation toute particulière et animée. Vêtus de leur djellaba, un groupe d'hommes s'affairent 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 soin 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 convoiement du bétail fera l'affaire et nous voilà partis 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 IV<sup>e</sup> au XIV<sup>e</sup> 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 X<sup>e</sup> 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 XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle qu'une ville nouvelle sera construite à 50km de là, dans une plaine 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.

Entaillés de profondes failles, les paysages se font plus montagneux. Trois heures de route nous séparent de Karima et du Djebel Barkal, cœur politique et religieux du royaume de Napata. Suite de l'aventure à vivre dans le prochain numéro du *newSpecial*. //



Trouver un moyen pour traverser le Nil n'est pas toujours facile et tout type d'embarcation est le bienvenu.



Fondé en tant que forteresse au V<sup>e</sup> siècle apr. J.-C., Vieux Dongola est devenu par la suite la capitale du royaume de Makurie.



# Return of the WHO Art Gallery

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.

**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 nosey, 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 else down but at the return to the office, the request came up again and again that people would like



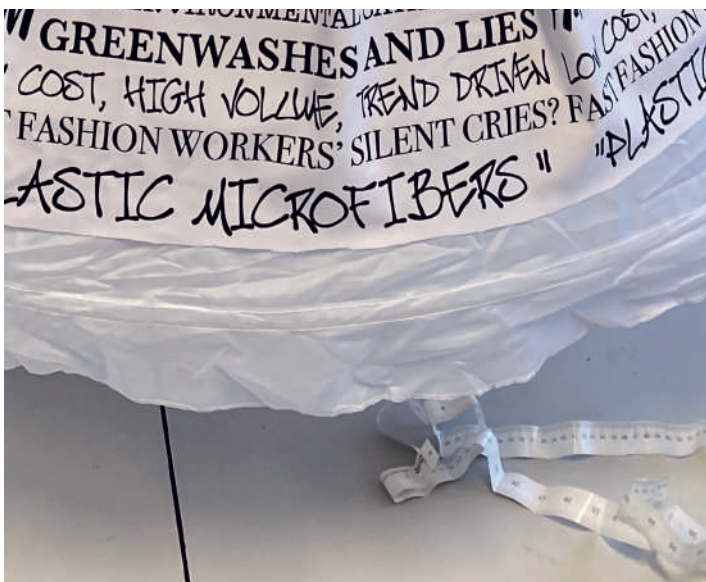
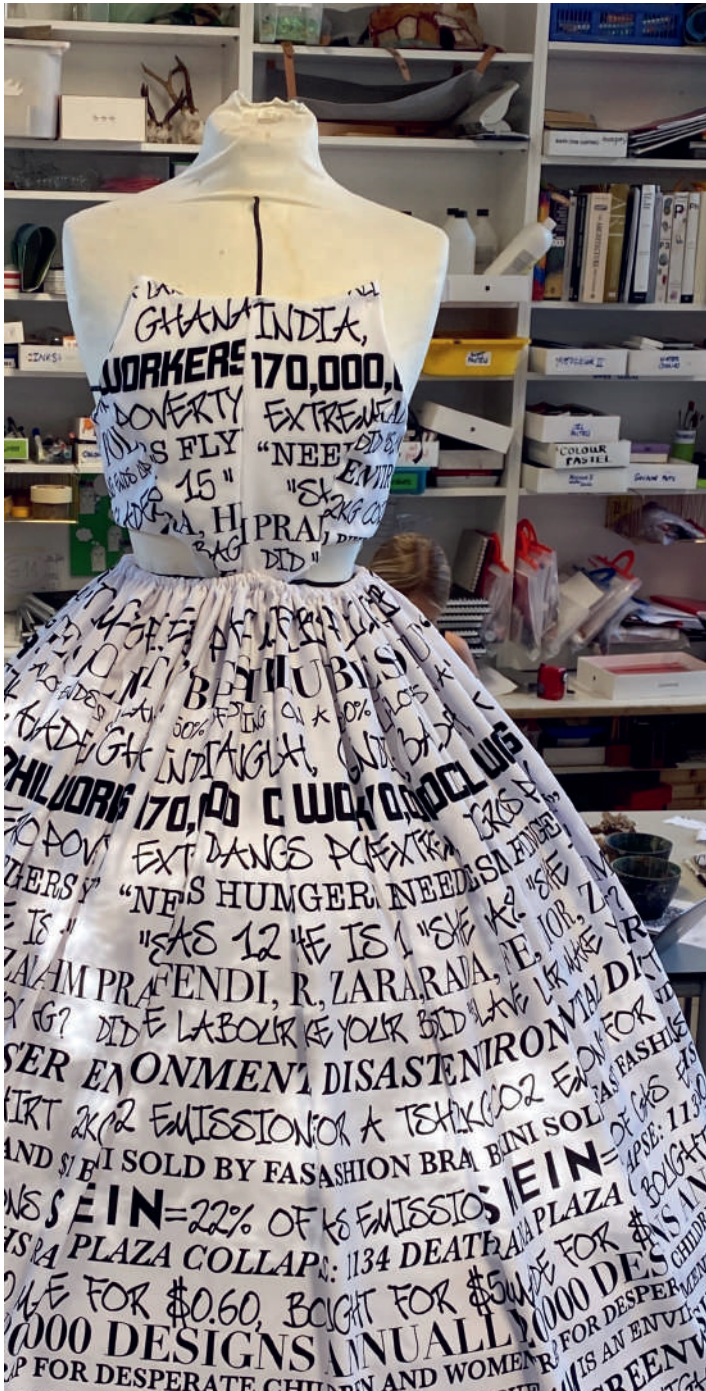
to see the WHO Art Gallery resurrected. Artists from 2019 had new works to share and a whole new gaggle of sickeningly gifted guys and gals were keen to share their paintings, photographs, sculptures, drawings, electronic art, poetry etc.

So, we're back; between 6<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> 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.

Tiger  
Danyi Zheng



The True Cost  
Victoria Durcheva



One key ambition is to expand this beyond just a Geneva and headquarters initiative, but to make it WHO-wide. With that in mind, the art gallery entered the 2023 WHO LEAD Innovation Challenge at the start of the year, in which community-led good ideas get put up for some organisational support and benefit from coaching from start-up leaders. The gallery successfully went through the process and was one of the five finalists chosen for support and some seed funding.

This support will primarily go into the creation of an eGallery, an online, virtual space for sharing artwork to WHO users anywhere in the world and a way of encouraging spin-off galleries in other locations. By the time you read this; the first eGallery should be up and running in its initial home on the WHO Photo Library website.

And the ideas and ambition doesn't stop there, in fact half the problem is choosing what ideas deserve energy and support. Should we do a re-run of the "meet the artist" lunchtime sessions linked to the gallery; how about hands-on workshops, what about a guest artist in residence? How can we bring the fledgling WHO Poetry Garden group more fully into the fold to share their work and poetry reading recordings? Can we restart the lunchtime concerts? Ultimately this is a community-led deal... and it should be directed and guided by the feedback of the artists and those that enjoy the artwork. We want it to be a living and growing initiatives, a few exhibitions per year ideally and a rich flow of material into the virtual space.

Get in touch if you fancy being a part of that at [whoartgallery@who.int](mailto:whoartgallery@who.int) //

TEXT KEVIN CRAMPTON  
PHOTOS VICTORIA DURCHEVA & WHO ART GALLERY PHOTO

# Grèce - Athènes

« THE AUTHENTIC MARATHON »

**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 Phidippides, 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, Spiridon Louïs, qui termina sa course en 2h58'50". La longueur du parcours n'était alors que de 40 km. Douze ans plus tard, lors des Jeux Olympiques de Londres, la course s'élança 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'établit alors à 42,195 km, distance qui deviendra officielle à partir des Jeux de Paris en 1924. Depuis, le marathon est devenu la distance 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 détenus chez les hommes par le Kényan Kelvin Kiptum avec le temps de 2h00'35" établi lors du Marathon de Chicago et chez les femmes, par l'Éthiopienne Tigst 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'œuvrer 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 font face pour en découdre. Après avoir repris Naxos et Erétrie, 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 50000 personnes. Après l'interdiction des cérémonies païennes et des spectacles sanglants par l'empereur Théodose I<sup>er</sup> à la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> 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 connaît son âge d'or au V<sup>e</sup> siècle av. J.-C. sous la domination du stratège Périclès. Principale puissance militaire de Grèce, à la tête d'une vaste alliance de cités, Athènes - berceau de grands artistes et philo-



Proche de la côte, face à Athènes, la petite île de Poros est un véritable joyau grec à découvrir.



Comme le Parthénon dédié à Athéna sur l'Acropole d'Athènes, le temple d'Aphaïa d'Égine fait partie des édifices antiques exceptionnels.



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 majestueux capables de durer dans le temps. S'élevant à 156m 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. Constitué 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 apporte 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 labyrinthiques bordées de jolies maisons néoclassiques du XIX<sup>e</sup> 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 vaut déjà une victoire après avoir préalablement enduré des semaines d'entraînement. La veille de la course, 22970 coureurs - dont votre serviteur - se sont donné rendez-vous à la «pasta-party» pour engloutir des tonnes de pâtes et des millions 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 questionnements: ma préparation a-t-elle été suffi-



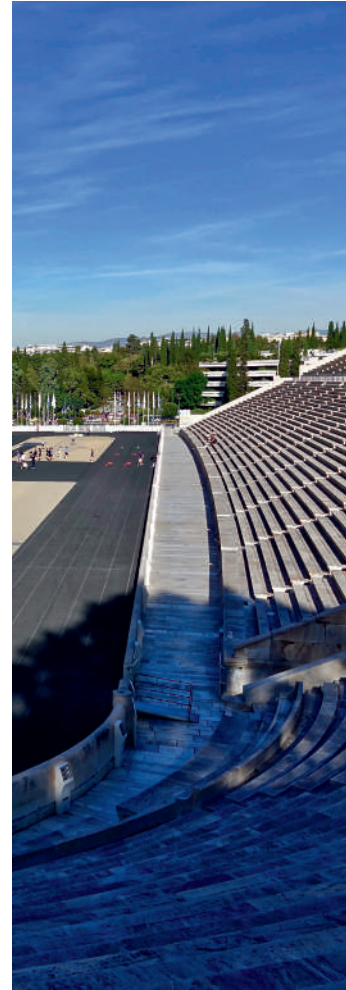
sante afin de ne pas craquer au mur du 30km - le moment crucial tellement redouté par les coureurs - où la fatigue s'installe, tant physiquement que mentalement? Le marathon est une épreuve d'endurance, donc de maîtrise du temps et de la distance; surtout ne pas mettre son corps dans la zone rouge trop 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 extraordinaire 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 momentanément conflits et atrocités qui secouent notre planète et toute cette inhumanité 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 Grigóris Lambrákis (1912-1963), homme politique 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». //

Marathon d'Athènes:  
42,195 km, 4h58'12" d'effort  
et une belle médaille  
à l'arrivée.





Capitale de la Grèce, Athènes qui est l'une des plus anciennes villes au monde, compte 665 000 habitants intra-muros.

L'arrivée du Marathon est jugée dans le prestigieux et mythique stade olympique d'Athènes





# 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 (où 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 traîneaux 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-Gothard (1980), le transit des 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. Dans sa course vers la Mer Adriatique, la rivière Orlegna a créé le précipice depuis le col vers le val Bergaglia même avant le dernier âge glaciaire. La rivière Inn se dirige vers le Danube et donc la Mer Noire après avoir traversé le lac de Sils. Sur le lac, le vent surnommé Maloja souffle presque toujours, ce qui fait du lac de Sils un eldorado pour les surfeurs. En hiver, le lac gèle et la neige le beigne d'une luminosité splendide ; idéal pour des belles promenades dans le magnifique décor enneigé de la Haute Engadine. Chaque hiver, au deuxième dimanche de mars, Maloja est le point de départ pour le célèbre marathon de ski de fond d'Engadine, pendant lequel plus de



14000 skieurs commencent leur périple par la traversée du lac.

Le village de Maloja au col même s'est développé au cours du 19<sup>e</sup> siècle. Avant, il n'y avait qu'une seule auberge attestée depuis le 18<sup>e</sup> siècle. Le Belvédère, reste d'une bâtisse du 19<sup>e</sup> 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 de construire à Maloja le « Monte Carlo des Alpes », où la noblesse mondiale devrait se divertir en tentant sa chance aux jeux d'argent. L'hôtel Maloja Palace au centre du village a aussi été conçu par lui et fut à l'époque le plus grand bâtiment profane de la Suisse, avec le premier parcours de golf du continent européen. Malheureusement, il manquait d'argent pour ac-

Le Belvédère.



Les serpentes descendant depuis le col de Maloja vers le val Bergaglia.



complir son rêve, et le bâtiment du Belvédère ne fut finalisé qu'après sa mort. Après un incendie, seul la tour persiste aujourd'hui. Le terrain est maintenant propriété de Pro Natura.

Dans le paysage autour du belvédère se trouvent des dizaines des marmites glaciaires, témoins de l'âge glaciaire qui a pris fin il y a 10000 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 dissimilés dans le sol.

La fin du 19<sup>e</sup> 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 Savognin. 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 Bergaglia. Segantini programma un gigantesque panorama de l'Engadine pour l'exposition universelle de Paris en 1900, mais dut l'abandonner en raison de son coût en ne réalisant que le magnifique triptyque *Devenir, Être, Disparaître*, célèbre œuvre d'art maintenant exposée au musée Segantini à St. Moritz. Mort d'une péritonite en septembre 1899, pendant qu'il séjournait à la cabane du Schafberg à Pontresina, il 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, se visite les week-ends et sur rendez-vous. Depuis l'atelier on peut suivre le sentier Segantini, qui mène à plusieurs endroits qui ont servi d'inspiration à l'artiste, y compris des marmites glaciaires, qu'il a représentées dans son tableau *La Vanité*.

Juste après avoir passé le col, il y a un petit chemin à gauche qui mène à un parking d'où on peut accéder au lieu-dit Orden, où se trouve le plus grand mur de rétention de Suisse, d'une

TEXT CARLA EDELENBOS  
PHOTOS CARLA EDELENBOS & ALFRED DE ZAYAS



## SAVOIR +

Famille  
Segantini



Atelier  
Segantini



Musée  
Ciäsa Granda



Centre  
Giacometti



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 a 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!

Un peu plus loin, quand la route suit tranquillement la rivière Mera, nous arrivons à Stampa, village où est né le peintre engadinois Giovanni Giacometti et ses trois enfants, tous devenus artistes, Alberto, le célèbre sculpteur, Diego, sculpteur et designer et Bruno, architecte. Et n'oublions pas leur cousin Augusto, peintre lui aussi, dont nous admirons un vitrail coloré dans l'église San Giorgio. Au cimetière à côté de l'église se trouvent les tombes de Giovanni, Alberto, Diego et Augusto Giacometti. Le musée Ciäsa Granda à Stampa montre une modeste mais belle collection d'œuvres de la famille Giacometti et du peintre Varlin qui a déménagé au val Bergaglia en 1963 et y a vécu jusqu'à sa mort en 1977. Le musée organise aussi des visites guidées de l'atelier Giacometti, une grange aménagée au centre du village. Un peu plus loin, le centre Giacometti complète l'offre avec des expositions temporaires.

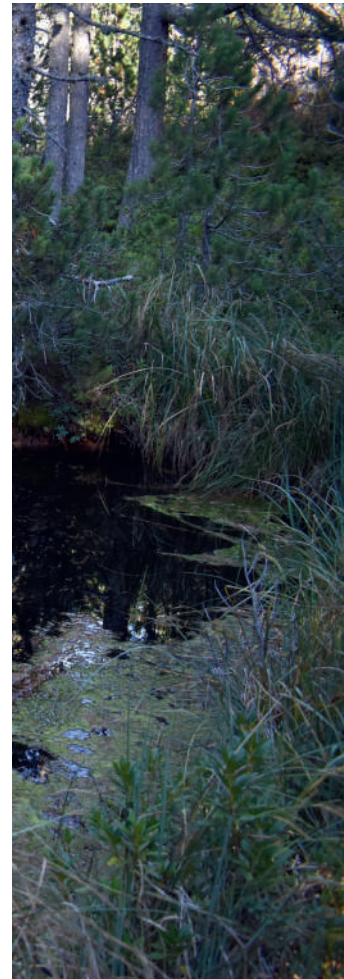
Personnellement, je trouve que cette région du Val Bergaglia et de Haute Engadine est l'une des plus belles de Suisse. Si on se promène sur un des innombrables sentiers pédestres, on se rend compte de la nature sauvage de ce paysage, malgré tous les efforts pour la maîtriser. Il n'est donc pas surprenant 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! //



(De haut en bas)  
Lac de Sils, eldorado pour les surfeurs.  
Ciäsa Grande à Stampa.



Marmite glaciale  
près de Maloja.



Tombe de Giovanni Segantini  
et de sa femme Bice.



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# Churches

## A RHYMED ESSAY

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.  
Beatitudes<sup>1</sup> of personal salvation  
offer hope<sup>2</sup> 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,  
liturgies<sup>3</sup> to cope with life and death.

Endless melodies remembered,  
judgment through God's mercy tempered.  
*Agnus Dei* reigns upon the mystic throne,  
*Miserere 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,  
love<sup>4</sup> 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, gargoyles<sup>5</sup> gazing down.

Centuries of pilgrimage on Jacob's route<sup>6</sup>  
tell histories of journeying on foot  
to old Santiago or to older Rome,  
from votive chapels to the highest dome.

*Botafumeiro*<sup>7</sup> swings in smoke and prayer,  
incense over pilgrims cleans the air.  
Once Tannhäuser<sup>8</sup> went to Rome  
to make confession,  
and, though not absolved,  
he found redemption.

Churches consecrate civilizations,  
elevate in art man's fears and aspirations:  
Organs<sup>9</sup>, mosaics<sup>10</sup>, frescoes<sup>11</sup>, icons<sup>12</sup>,  
reliefs<sup>13</sup>, sculpture<sup>14</sup>,  
everlasting treasures of each culture<sup>15</sup>.

Heritage of mankind, miracle of art:  
Stained-glass windows<sup>16</sup> that uplift the heart,  
smiling angels<sup>17</sup> that inspire the soul,  
and solace-spending *Pietas*<sup>18</sup> that console.

Round cupolas<sup>19</sup>, thin spires<sup>20</sup>  
and belfries high  
are prayers in stone that to the heavens fly.  
The carillons<sup>21</sup> sound grateful celebrations  
that recall the fundamental questions.

Pediments and columns, ogives fine,  
high altars where rich candelabra shine...  
Baptismal fonts<sup>22</sup> remember centuries  
of idle tears, ablutions, dreams of peace.

Pointed arches, flying buttresses,  
matter immaterial, light in human dress...  
Portentous tympana of the apocalypse<sup>23</sup>  
project the mind to the ineffable eclipse.

Religious ruins<sup>24</sup>: relics of the past,  
are vestiges of time become iconoclast,  
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.

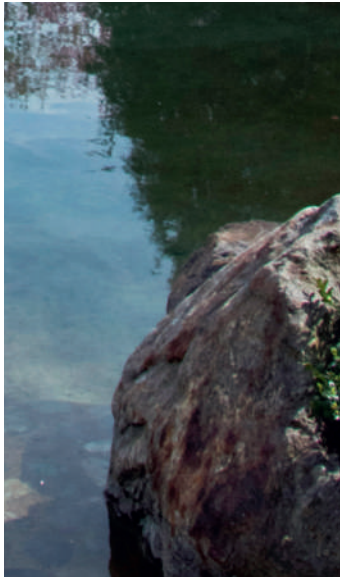
Communion in belief bears fortitude,  
As cosmic union<sup>25</sup> counters cosmic solitude.

Behold that churches are like poetry in stone,  
angelic wings through many ages flown,  
fine choirs that *dona nobis pacem* sing,  
two hands in prayer<sup>26</sup>  
that peace at last may bring.

//

- 1 *The Beatitudes, Matthew Chapter V, the Sermon on the Mount.*
- 2 *Spe Salvi, 2008 Encyclical of Benedict XVI.*
- 3 *Motu proprio summorum pontificium*
- 4 *Deus caritas est, 2006 Encyclical of Benedict XVI.*
- 5 *The gargoyles of Notre Dame de Paris were immortalized by Victor Hugo.*
- 6 *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 Jacobo. In 1993 the route from France to Santiago (El Camino) was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. St. Francis of Assisi, Queen Isabella of Castile and Pope John XXIII all made the journey to Santiago.*
- 7 *The Botafumeiro is the famous bronze thurible that swings from the dome of the Cathedral of Sandiago 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 80kg and measuring 1.60m in height. It swings 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 21 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 1851.*
- 8 *Opera in three acts by Richard Wagner. Tannhäuser is denied absolution by the Pope, but he is saved through the intervention of Saint Elisabeth.*
- 9 *Garrels Organ in the Grote Kerk of Maassluis, inaugurated in 1732, suffered in World War II under allied air bombing, but it is fully restored. The Domorgel in the Passau Cathedral is the biggest in Europe.*
- 10 *9<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine mosaics at Hagia Sofia and Holy Saviour of Chora, in Istanbul. For my 60<sup>th</sup> birthday I went to see the 12<sup>th</sup> century mosaics of the Abbey Church of Saint Philibert in Tournus, France.*
- 11 *11<sup>th</sup> Century frescoes in the Church of Assinou in Cyprus. 14<sup>th</sup> century Giotto fresco of Christ entering Jerusalem at the Arena Chapel in Padua, Italy. 14<sup>th</sup> century frescoes of the Wenceslas Chapel in Prague's St. Vitus Cathedral. 17<sup>th</sup> century fresco of the Last Supper (1646), in the Church of St. Remigius in Falera, Graubunden, Switzerland.*
- 12 *14<sup>th</sup> century Russian icons in the Cathedral of the Annunciation in Moscow.*
- 13 *At the Basilica of Santa Croce in Florence one can admire the bas-relief (1478) of the Madonna del Latte. Also in Florence one discovers Donatello's high relief of the dancing children in the balustrade of the Duomo. In 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.*
- 14 *Michelangelo's Pieta at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome Donatello's Maria Magdalena in Florence.*
- 15 *Rubens' magnificent painting of the Assumption (1626) in the main altar of the Cathedral of Antwerpen.*
- 16 *The northwest nave of the Basilica of Saint Denis in Paris (where all but 3 of the French kings are buried) is adorned by magnificent stained-glass, especially the rose window with its metamorphosed light Saint Denis is the patron of France, and the Basilica (begun in 1136) is the first Gothic structure ever erected. The Cathedral of Chartres in France boasts some of the largest gothic stained-glass windows as well as rose-windows, including the 13<sup>th</sup> century déambulatoire of the legend of Roland; Chagall's lively windows in the Church of St. Martin in Zurich are unforgettable. The old Benedictine Abbey of St. Pierre de Montmartre (hill of the martyrs) in Paris (1147) has very colourful modern windows by Max Ingrand (1955).*
- 17 *Smiling angel on the West Façade of the North Portal of the Reims Cathedral. In the main portal Archangel Gabriel smiles at Mary upon the Annunciation.*
- 18 *A particularly moving Pieta can be admired in a side altar of the Church of Saint Emilion in Bordeaux, which I saw in the late afternoon light, splashed in the magic colours of the stained-glass windows.*
- 19 *St. Peter's Basilica in Rome boasts the tallest dome rising to 132.5m (435ft).*
- 20 *The tallest church tower in the world is still the Ulmer Münster in Germany, rising to 161.5m (530ft). I climbed the 768 steps back in 1972). Stephansdom in Vienna is Austria's tallest church, rising to 137m (449 ft). the spire of Salisbury Cathedral in England rises to 123m (404ft). The Nieuwe Kerk in Delft rises to 108.8m (357ft). Wilhelmus Taciturnus (William of Orange-Nassau) is buried there.*
- 21 *The Cathédrale de St. Pierre in Geneva, Switzerland, plays a happy carillon, as does the Lange Jan tower of the Nieuwe Kerk in Middelburg, Netherlands, which rises to 90.5m (297ft). The greatest concentration of carillons is in the Netherlands and in Belgium, with 182 and 89 respectively.*
- 22 *The bronze baptismal font by Renier de Huy in the church of St. Barthélemy in Liège is particularly impressive. The font in the Cathedral of Magdeburg in Germany is made of rose porphyry from a site near Assuan, Egypt. Full-immersion baptisms are usually not practiced in Catholic churches, but in Eastern Orthodox Churches, usually in a body of water such as a river, a lake or the sea.*
- 23 *I was fascinated by the tympanum of the Christ at the pilgrimage Church of La Madeleine in Vézelay in Burgundy (1130); the tympanum of Christ in Majesty in the central portal of the Cathedral of Chartres, the frightful tympanum of the Last Judgment in the Cathedral of Bourges, as well as the tympanum of the Last Judgment in the Abbey Church of Ste.-Foy in Conques.*
- 24 *The ruins of churches, monasteries and abbeys have inspired many artists like Caspar David Friedrich, whose Abtei im Eichwald (1809) and Klosteruine Eldena bei Greifswald (1824) can be admired at the Nationalgalerie in Berlin. The Lutheran Frauenkirche in Dresden was immortalized by Canaletto's 18<sup>th</sup> century painting of the Dresden skyline on the River Elbe. On 13/14 February 1945 air bombardment destroyed it, leaving scant ruins. In October 2005 the reconstructed Frauenkirche was again consecrated.*
- 25 *Orbi et urbi.*
- 26 *Albrecht Dürer's Praying Hands (1508) at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nürnberg.*





*Eriorum nimi, ilitatur ma sam  
hariosa ntiberum sunt ped miniae.  
Itatibusdam rati cum ut plitibus  
dolum fugit utem.*

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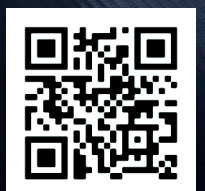
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