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**RUPTURE INDICATORS**

**POLITICAL ANTICIPATION MAGAZINE**



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## EDITO

# To anticipate is to foresee in order to act

by Marie-Hélène Caillol



The “three tips to the G20 leaders” following this editorial are a perfect illustration of the GEAB slogan “To anticipate is to foresee in order to act.” These “three tips” are in fact the result of careful consideration of six years work by LEAP on the global crisis, work that has attracted respect and credibility due only to its quality and relevance unreservedly recognized around the world. In 2009, the significance of this patient anticipation work enabled LEAP to issue, ahead of the London summit, “three tips to the G20 leaders” that received full page coverage in the Financial Times International Edition.

Today, it's no longer certain that the Financial Times - or any other major media moreover- is the best base from which to circulate these ideas, or where we want, i.e. at the highest level. Our own network tools (GEAB, Press Reviews, MAP, impromptu internet traffic, etc ...), putting us in contact with hundreds of thousands of people in countries worldwide and in dozens of languages (since, in addition to our own translations in four languages, our publications are regularly the subject of impromptu translations on the internet), are probably more relevant in this regard.

All the more so since we have matched the classical circulation of the message to the G20 leaders with a pro-active approach of systematic meetings with the advisors in charge of the next summit in Cannes in the 20 capitals and their embassies in France, especially, of course, those involved in the preparation of the briefing files for the next summit in Cannes. The “three tips” that you will read here have thus circulated at almost decision-making level in the 20 largest countries of the world. The welcome we received during these meetings was most cordial, the discussions arising from them the most open, and the approach which one might have feared as seeming arrogant, was actually well accepted, understood and welcomed.



We have been clear on the fact that these tips are not (in fact no longer, because they were in our release in the Financial Times in 2009) so innovative as that. For example, the idea of a basket of currencies to replace the dollar as the sole pillar of the international monetary system is now the subject of statements by this and that decision maker on a regular basis. That said, these ideas have not yet jumped the hurdle of international summits' official proceedings. They are still, from a diplomatic point of view, taboo ideas. The whole of the old system led by the Anglo-Saxons, is buttressed to prevent them being discussed whilst they are central to resolving the current crisis. As long as our leaders won't address these issues at their summits in front of everyone, the crisis will only increase in intensity. Conversely, it would be sufficient to refer to them so that a virtuous circle to resolve the crisis can begin.

These three tips, and therefore the work to circulate them to which they are subject, are intended mainly to contribute to the abolition of the tragic taboo that currently blocks all hope of a peaceful and constructive transition, and which is plunging the world into the growing chaos we are now seeing.

Unfortunately we didn't really have much hope that the G20 summit in Cannes would be the one which sees things unblocked. With all the energy which has been used to make us believe that the crux of the problem is some European countries' debt; even Nicolas Sarkozy, just days before the start of his 'historic' summit, felt compelled to dramatize the European situation and hammer in the nail on this misinterpretation of the crisis. It didn't bode well for the relevance and usefulness of the discussions taking place on November 3 and 4 in Cannes.

But, in leading this work of raising awareness of the real reasons for the crisis, we hope that it gradually makes its way behind the scenes then into the summits' corridors and that soon, it jumps the hurdle of the major news channels, and makes its entry into official discussions. Taking into account the change in much of the G20 leadership in 2012, the window of opportunity is open around the end of 2012/early 2013, during the G20 summit which will bring together the newly elected leadership of the major G20 countries (Russia, China, the USA, France, and probably Italy and Germany...) for the first time. It would suffice then, that prior to the summit, some of them, from the Eurozone and BRICs countries, should make official statements at the same time to that effect, thus forcing this / these question (s) onto the agenda.

Don't forget that in politics the word is an act.

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## WORLD GOVERNANCE

### Advice to the G20 leaders :

# The G20's three strategic priorities in 2012/2014 to avoid a "tragic decade"

A document by LEAP/E2020

On March 29, 2009, Franck Biancheri signed an open letter in the Financial Times international edition from LEAP/E2020 to the G20 leaders who were going to meet in London the next week. In its introduction, this text predicted that if the three recommendations it contained were not implemented as soon as possible, rather than a crisis of three to five years, the world would sink into a crisis for more than a decade.



Here we are two and a half years later and, alas, it is now clear that not only has the crisis revealed in 2008 not been resolved<sup>1</sup>, but is getting worse instead now combining loss of confidence in paper currencies and the Western banking system<sup>2</sup>, relapse of the world economy into recession, permanent rise in Western unemployment, explosive public debt in Western countries and growing unease of the emerging powers in front of an old order that refuses to think of its' succession.

In 2009, LEAP/E2020 gave three pieces of strategic advice to the G20 leaders :

- in priority, create a new international reference currency to replace the US Dollar, which is now unable to hold the role of the pillar of the global monetary system



- at the same time ensure that the public authorities take control of the major banks which have become real "black holes" of liquidity, either by nationalization or other methods

- finally, carry out via the IMF, a thorough audit of the American, British and Swiss financial systems at the heart of the financial world.

Without these essential reforms and their rapid implementation in the six months following the G20 summit in London, we indicated that the "window of opportunity" would close for several years.

1. Contrary to what the majority of the political, financial and economic leaders have unceasingly maintained during these last two years.

2. Of which gold's return to the forefront as a safe haven is the best indicator.

To complete these recommendations, the open letter stressed the importance of publishing a statement from the G20 which should be brief and easily understood by world public opinion in the absence of the power to curb people's fears.

Today everybody realizes that almost three years have been lost since the same problems remain a burning issue<sup>3</sup>.

But political anticipation is not a school of regret, but an instrument to help decision-making.

For LEAP/E2020 it is time, therefore, on the eve of the new G20 summit to be held in Cannes on 3-4 November 2011, to continue the effort begun in 2009. This effort is intended to prevent the world plunging into what Franck Biancheri calls "the tragic scenario for the 2010-2020 decade". And the time seems particularly favourable since, according to our team, a new "window of opportunity" will open in 2012, for a maximum period of two years.

## **A new window of opportunity for action by the G20 opens in 2012**

In effect, during 2012, the leaders of almost half the G20 countries will be replaced. This will be the case for Mexico, South Korea, the United States, China, Russia, India, France, Italy and probably Germany<sup>4</sup>. From the end of 2012, the G20 Summit will, therefore, bring together political leaders mainly elected "in the crisis", and not before the crisis as is now the case. On this basis, the preparation of summits for 2012, 2013 and 2014 will no longer be paralyzed and / or interfered with by the many "taboos", "impossibilities" or, on the contrary, "now obsolete certainties" or "the obvious which is no more" belonging to the world before the crisis. In any case, this new generation of leaders will not be able to pretend they have discovered a situation for which it has not been prepared; and to paraphrase the conclusion of our 2009 open letter, it won't be able to pretend either not to have been advised of the available opportunities to take the planet on a path of peaceful transition to the world after the crisis.

At the same time, the recent widespread awareness (since the beginning of the second half of 2011) of the fact that that everything remains to be done to try to overcome the global systemic crisis created, for a year or two at most, a situation conducive to political audacity. Exhausted by the consequences of the crisis and alarmed by the inefficiency of the steps taken to resolve it, public opinion everywhere is now ready to support or go along with major upheavals in the order that has prevailed in recent decades, both in socio-economic and geopolitical terms. But here also, keep in mind that this state of mind will only be positive if it is exposed to proposed ambitious solutions reflecting the interests of the vast majority and that otherwise, from 2013, it will metamorphose into destructive anger everywhere, targeting existing systems and leaders.

Having defined the conditions for the exercise of a first effective power by the G20, LEAP/E2020 advises the G20 leaders to focus on three strategic priorities in 2012/2013. We emphasize the importance of a tight agenda, refusing dissemination over a wide variety

3. In addition, LEAP/E2020 recommended that the Eurozone leaders, from 2007, establish a Euroland governance as soon as possible. We recall here that the term Euroland, which has become very fashionable, was created by Franck Biancheri and used for the first time in an article entitled "2004 or the birth of Euroland", published the 11.02.2004 in NewropMag).

4. Where the prospect of early elections is very likely.

of subjects. In fact, the complexity of the problem, namely the emergence of a new global governance, like the need to communicate to convince public opinion consisting of several billions of citizens in very diverse political, social, cultural, economic contexts, requires focus on the essentials.

## The G20's three strategic priorities for constructing the future from 2012/2013

And for LEAP/E2020, the essentials are contained in these three strategic priorities that fundamentally determine all the future architecture of global governance and, at the same time, purify the dangerous areas of the current system. Simply put, it's a case of building the future whilst defusing the present from the bombs of the past.

- **First priority** : From 2012 (at the latest) launch the process for creating a new global reserve currency. At this stage the simplest method would be to turn SDRs into this new global monetary instrument giving it a more “sexy” name of course, and retaining the currencies of the major economies in the basket defining its value: US Dollar, Euro, Yen, Yuan, Real, Ruble, the Gulf currency (if it emerges by then), South African Rand, and possibly gold, which de facto has once again become a safe haven currency. It's a case of restructuring the world monetary system on the real economy, then exiting the “financial” currencies such as the Pound sterling or the Swiss Franc.

Technical problems do not exist. The expertise exists within the international institutions to carry out all the work required to create such a currency within a year. The difficulty exclusively arises, therefore, from the emergence of a determined political will from the G20 to keep to a schedule of two years to create and launch this new currency.

This willingness, and the decisional weight necessary and sufficient to bring it to fruition, will potentially exist in a subgroup of the G20 consisting of Euroland, the BRICs, and several other emerging countries. The political changes at the head of the main Euroland countries like the current growing confrontation between Euroland on the one hand and Wall Street and the City on the other will create, in the next 12 months at most, the perfect conditions for a Euroland-BRICS convergence on such an agenda.

It's starting with this “creative” core that the G20 summit's agenda in late 2012 must be prepared which will include of course, otherwise nothing will happen, a radical reform and with immediate effect of the composition of the capital and caucus of the major global organizations (IMF, World Bank, WTO, UN Security Council)<sup>5</sup>. At the rate of evolution of the crisis, in 2012, neither Washington nor London will no longer be able (even if they still wanted to<sup>6</sup>) to oppose the creation of this new global reference currency.

The vision and determination of Euroland leaders<sup>7</sup>, the BRICs and other emerging countries in the G20 will be the only factors of the success or failure of this fundamental reform without which the current international monetary system will continue to sink into increasing chaos year after year, producing

5. If the G20 wants to be at the heart of global governance, the leaders who participate must act as political leaders on a scale that addresses and resolves the major issues, and not as managers discussing technical issues.

6. Which would be the proof for LEAP/E2020 that their leaders lack vision for their countries' medium and long term interests; because, anyway, the developments in this area are inevitable. The only question to ask is: will this be done as part of a peaceful and controlled process or via a decade of all sorts of conflict ?

7. And their advisors.

terrible setbacks for world trade, the global economy and international cooperation, all whilst fueling the rise in unemployment and the impoverishment of Western middle classes, and considerably slowing down the development of emerging economies.

Without a “reliable standard” there is no stable economic and financial system. It’s here that this priority is strategic: without it, nothing significant or lasting can be done since any measure is corrupted by a standard (the US Dollar) which has become weak, elastic and unpredictable.

- **Second priority** : Put all the world’s major financial institutions under public tutelage, wholly or partly, from the beginning of 2013 at the latest. The list is known already since it’s those that, at the request of the G20, the Financial Stability Board qualify as carrying systemic risk. To which should be added the BRICs and emerging countries’ major institutions because it is obvious that many of them will become “systemic” in the next five years. The objective in this area is twofold: first to ensure that these institutions resist speculative temptations - although we already know that it isn’t possible to trust their leadership and / or private shareholders in this area; second, to organize a “gentle deflation”, which doesn’t break the real economy, of the virtual economy. Any country refusing such a policy will have their establishments concerned blacklisted, just like what has been tried unsuccessfully for tax havens. Without success, because there was no determined political will on the subject, and especially because it’s not the tax haven that speculates ... it is the major bank that uses it. This time, the G20 has no room for error: neither mistaking the target, nor the method.

- **3° priorité** : At the end of 2012 launch a huge ten-year public infrastructure programme on a world scale. In the term “infrastructure”, LEAP/E2020 particularly includes all essential public services such as education, access to medical care and basic services (water, electricity, telecommunications) and some symbolic science programs (medicine, space and energy). Through this bias of supporting effective and sustainable global growth by the best use of the current imbalances in financial resources: the countries benefiting from substantial surpluses finding a useful and safe means of recycling them. It’s also, in our opinion, the only way to put a stop to the accelerated evaporation of trillions of US dollar assets generated by the current financial crisis and economic recession. Imagine a budget of one trillion Euros (a symbolic figure in communication terms) split into two geopolitical envelopes: one for infrastructure or projects involving many regions of the world; the other focused on a single region or one country. Western countries should also benefit because otherwise we remain in the logic of the world before the crisis and their economies and because their economies also need a big hand (especially the United States as regards infrastructure).

To conclude this second piece of advice to the G20 leaders in less than three years, LEAP/E2020 wishes to draw their attention to a fundamental methodological point. The content and form are closely related, it is essential that from the end of 2012 the world should be able to see a radical change in the process of the geographic location of the G20’s work, and beyond, from 2013, global governance. The urgency and complexity of the G20’s work in this period justifies the holding of two G20 summits per year. After that planned in Mexico mid-2012, it is necessary to make provision for one in the last quarter of 2012 so that all the new leaders elected during the year can begin to bring their weight to bear on the institution’s work and agenda.

In addition, from this date, it would be desirable, for obvious reasons of global credibility, that the summits leave the Atlanticist fold<sup>8</sup> to be held with the emerging powers: China, Brazil, India and Russia seem obvious choices, to show that the G20 is not a G7 decorated with invited countries. No doubt this will help to

8. Since the end of 2008 summits have been held in Washington, Pittsburgh, Toronto and Seoul. The next will be held in Cannes and the following in Mexico. These are very American-centred locations. Source: Wikipedia.

radically progress the agendas, an indispensable condition for overcoming the crisis.

Finally, in this sense, it is inevitable that from 2013/2014 the discussion will start on the relocation of major international institutions to ensure that the geography of global governance after the crisis reflects the real world and not that of 1945. Far from being details, these changes go to the heart of the decision making process and will be tremendous assets in convincing public opinion so it really feels that there is indeed an historic change taking place in the minds of those who lead them and not just in their meetings' press releases.

Speaking of method, we have to explain to our subscribers what we have chosen for this "G-20 2011 Action"<sup>9</sup>. This year LEAP/E2020 has chosen a very different approach from that adopted in 2009. There will be no open letter published in the Financial Times or any other international newspaper: first, because LEAP/E2020' audience today is wide enough to no longer need an intermediary<sup>10</sup>. Secondly, because it's time to no longer depend on the Anglo-Saxon media, whose international coverage reflects "the world before the crisis", to communicate such messages aimed at preparing "the world after the crisis". Thus we reaffirm by example that the content and form are closely linked to ensure coherent action and discussion, thus ensuring maximum effectiveness for the effort undertaken.

This advice will, therefore, be distributed to GEAB subscribers initially then exceptionally<sup>11</sup> posted publicly on the website in mid-October, two weeks before the Summit in Cannes. Meanwhile, for the last six months, in partnership with LEAP and Anticipolis editions, Franck Biancheri, LEAP/E2020 Director, has begun an operation to distribute the international<sup>12</sup> edition of his book "The World Crisis: The Path to the World Afterwards" and LEAP/E2020's work with diplomats and special advisers from all countries participating in the G20 summit in Cannes. Moreover, we can only praise the very positive welcome received to date by almost all the countries concerned. This awareness work will continue right up to the summit itself in early November.

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9. And this is especially true since many of you ask us how we can share our analyses at the highest level.

10. See the information on LEAP/E2020 site traffic, which has become the site on the global crisis benefiting from the largest global audience. Source: 21.08.2011, LEAP

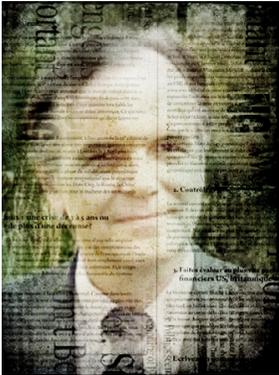
11. We are sure that GEAB subscribers will understand this bending of our rule of waiting three months before eventually putting any excerpts from a GEAB issue in the public domain.

12. English, German, Spanish and Italian versions.

## NEW GOVERNANCE

# Towards a trans-European referendum on the issues of new governance ?

by Baudouin de Sonis



**“More Europe without delay”, is the program that has just been put forward in Die Welt by the very pro-European German Finance Minister, Wolfgang Schäuble. Once again it calls for the transfer of increasingly significant fiscal and budgetary powers at European level, whilst hoping it benefits from democratic legitimacy, but without saying how<sup>1</sup>.**

**On the other hand, Nicolas Sarkozy has announced that France and Germany would prepare a number of versions of the Treaties to strengthen Eurozone integration.**

Currently, Euroland has a monopoly of power via its technostructure and a sort of oligarchy (laws are drafted by unelected officials who are subject to pressure from lobbies and other various associations; trade unions, press...). MEPs are, in the main, subject to the instructions of their own country’s government and leaders’ discipline, not to mention the influence of lobbies, not always devoid of corporate or industrial interests. In this context, Euroland citizens feel that the Eurocrats and MEPs are disconnected from daily reality, which causes the feeling “that we are no longer in a democracy”.

It would, therefore, be consistent with the logic of this development that the citizens who are affected by changes beyond national borders, should have the right to democratically influence, in their role as citizens of the Union, what their government leaders negotiate or decide in a legal grey zone<sup>2</sup>.

One solution would be to use direct democracy such as is practiced in some US states, Germany or in Switzerland (since the thirteenth century) and also rely on the groups that are launching themselves in this field at present, “[www.directdemocracynow.com](http://www.directdemocracynow.com)” in the USA, Poland<sup>3</sup> and Iceland<sup>4</sup>. It could be based on articles 6 and 14 of the Declaration of Human Rights as the basis of the claim. These two articles allow citizens to start off the political processes

1. “Les causes et les conséquences”, Paul Jorion, 04.10.2011, [24hGold](#)
2. “Rendons l'Europe plus démocratique !”, Jürgen Habermas, 25.10.2011, [Le Monde](#)
3. Source : [www.demokracjabezposrednia.pl](http://www.demokracjabezposrednia.pl)
4. “The Iceland experiment”, 26.01.2011, [Direct Democracy](#)

and act on them in the field of legislation, expenditures, taxation and others.<sup>5</sup>

As a basic tool the popular initiative referendum based on the “right of petition<sup>6</sup>”, has the advantage of opposing the technostucture and/ or lobbies’ takeover because it is difficult to face up to an entire population. This way, the citizen’s reality is brought back to the centre of the debate, the balance between civil servants and politicians is restored and citizens’ power against oligarchies is reinforced. It once again gives meaning and dimension to the idea of Europe (here in Euroland), by putting the citizen back at the center of the debate a Euroland dialogue is established advocating a cross-border convergence of ideas.

The giant strides taken towards reinforcing budget, geo-financial, even tax integration of the Eurozone since the decisions of the May 2010 summit, are a landmark in the history of European unification. On the other hand, the lack of visibility and democratic control of decisions taken and acted upon by the technostucture puts the ground covered and the results obtained at risk. In fact these two elements, added to the factors of rejection of the European idea, and the lack of visibility in the decision making process risks turning the citizen and reinforcing this idea of a European Commission responsible for all ills. An idea repeated “ad nutum” by politicians for purely electoral ends.

The next steps towards a strengthening of economic, financial, fiscal and budget integration will lead to such a transfer of power that it will be impossible not to seek the approval of Euroland’s citizens. Although, the affair of the Constitution showed that the system of allowing each state to “do what it wanted as and when” completely failed, this time, to improve the odds in their favour, Euroland’s leaders will have no other choice but to call for a trans-European referendum.

One can envisage this trans-Euroland referendum taking place by 2015, on both the basis of what has taken place and a new Treaty. In fact, two years seem necessary both for the people to “digest” these giant steps, but also so that the next generation of national leaders, who will be elected in 2012, have the time to offer citizens a text which validates Euroland’s achievements, ignites European unification and puts the tools of direct democracy in place for the reasons mentioned above. But also because Democracy “enables more influence to be given to the people against the lobbies, because the lobbies can influence a parliament but not a whole people : direct democracy reduces not only the power of the chamber but the power of the anti-chamber...”.

On the other hand the citizen votes in secret, he is less acquiescent than the Member to “party instructions”. The referendum, initiated by Euroland for Euroland will be all

5. Following the example of the United States and the West Coast early last century. A railway company, the Southern Pacific took control of the California parliament, particularly by corrupting its members.

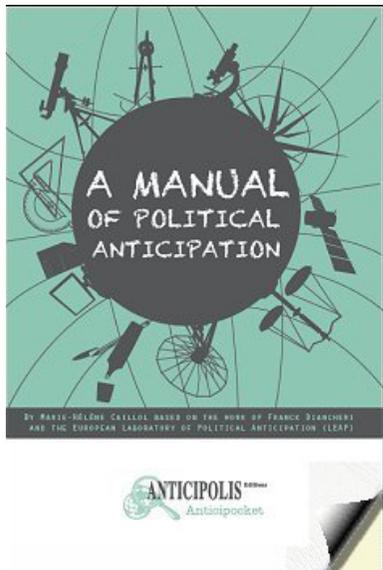
A prosecutor came to take proceedings against the president of the company and the California parliament; he became a folk hero and was elected governor. His name was Hiram Johnson. He decided to call for a vote on the reform of the California constitution using Switzerland as an example, so that citizens could initiate referenda against the laws passed by parliament and that citizens could put the proposed legislation to the vote: the latter is called popular initiative.

The reform was passed by California’s citizens around 1900. Since then, not only California but 27 US Federal States live under this system of direct democracy..

6. Source : Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union : right to petition, [European Parliament](#)

the better for not having been proposed by heads of state or governments, thus avoiding the hotchpotch with a plebiscite which often generates those “against” the person who submitted it, forgetting the reality and importance of the issue.

It now remains to solve the legal obstacles raised by such a referendum, especially in Belgium and Germany, two Member States whose respective constitutions do not recognize the referendum at national level.



### **A Manual of Political Anticipation**, by Marie-Hélène Caillol

On many occasions during the last 25 years, the sphere of influence focused around the personage of Franck Biancheri has, de facto, provided fertile ground for the correct anticipation of major historic events: the fall of the Iron Curtain, the crisis of the European Commission, the collapse of the Dollar and the global systemic crisis... are some of the most striking predictions in the story (which is still unfolding) of this sphere of influence whose very diverse features (European context, network organisation, political objectives, independent state of mind...) allows one to suppose that they play some role, without doubt, in this « ability ».

Indeed, if one's correct anticipation is the result of chance, the second can be good luck, but by a third, it becomes possible to hope that some rules and a rational approach are at play.

The work done within this sphere of influence has even forced the respect of academics, giving rise to a need for a contemporary approach, which is the purpose of this manual.

Editions Anticipolis ISBN : 978-2-919574-05-6 price : 10,00 €

# Evaluating the anticipation

An extract of [A Manual of Political Anticipation](#) by Marie-Hélène Caillol

**The GEAB is a rational analytical and understanding tool of the trends which shape our near future. So, unlike the ideological or mystic approach, its appraisal is, therefore, an integral part of its usefulness.**

This exercise is not only useful to evaluate the reliability of its forecasts, it is also a necessary intellectual exercise to put beliefs or evidence which have faded away over the course of a year into perspective. And, therefore, for the beneficiaries as well as for the researchers in anticipation, it is a salutary exercise to prepare themselves to anticipate the coming year. Indeed anticipation work leads to note on a daily basis how much everyone has a tendency to replace yesterday's beliefs by today's whilst completely forgetting that they could be the opposite.

Without doubt an essential feature of the functioning of the human being allows him to adapt himself to new situations but, when highlighted, this feature radically throws the light on the « value » of the « evidence » or the « beliefs » of a period or a community which often turns out to be very short-lived. In particular, it's one of the functions of political anticipation to reveal these trends, to anticipate future uncertainties behind the certainties of today. Finally, this exercise seems equally necessary for educational purposes, because one of the aims of political anticipation is to ultimately help its beneficiaries to be able to carry out political anticipation for themselves.

In practice, the assessment can take different forms but, with a view to replying to the criteria of clarity and readability, the simplest is the best. For example, the GEAB's preferred approach consists of committing itself to a planned series of structuring trends, a kind of photo of the coming year (GEAB's « up and down trends ») and evaluate their reality eleven months later. Since this system leaves important anticipations framed during the rest of the year to one side, it quickly appears essential to add to this « objective » list another series of anticipations chosen more subjectively, but justifiable all the same, by summing up what turned out to be the main successes and failures (seen by and known to all the recipients) of the year.

The question of the weighting of the issues has manifested itself but LEAP has opted against it, considering such an exercise inevitably subjective and a source of endless disagreement and controversy. All the items of the anticipation are scored in the same way : 1 point if the anticipation is fulfilled, 0 if it isn't, and 0.5 if it turns out to be correct for the better part of the year. That allows a single number to be arrived at, a percentage of successful anticipations over the past year.

This annual assessment must, moreover, be published in the same place as the analyses so that all the recipients of the anticipations should automatically have access to it.

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## ANTICIPATION

# The “Day After” (the 2012 US Presidential Election) Riots, clashes and social unrest will make headlines in mainstream media in the US

by Juan Vargas, Mexico



**By the end of the 2012 Presidential Election in the United States, the hopes and fears of a deeply polarized society will erupt in the form of clashes and riots in the streets.**

**Until then, the hopes and fears will be channeled through the political campaigns by the media, with the people expecting that their part of society (the progressives supporting Obama and the far right wingers supporting the GOP) will win the election and, in Hollywood style, that will mean the end of all the American problems.**

**But the Day After will be a tough reminder that all the problems continue there, and nothing has really changed, except that, from that moment on, the people will have no more faith in the political system, regardless of who wins the election.**

The signals are already there, unfolding before the eyes for everyone to see. From the massive protests in Madison, Wisconsin, to those on Wall Street, from students sit-ins inspired by Madison to Latino immigrants.

In Madison we saw the prologue of a social movement. More than 100,000 workers and their families camping in the State Capitol fighting for their rights to collectively bargain, while at the same time, the Koch brothers, some of the richer people in the world, created web pages imploring Wisconsinites to hit the streets in support of the governor<sup>1</sup>. This was the biggest demonstration in the US since the Vietnam War more than forty years ago<sup>2</sup>. And the fire is spreading to other states like Ohio, Iowa, Idaho, Indiana and Alaska. Even so, the vast majority of

Americans, 61% according to a USA Today/Gallup poll, would oppose a law in their states similar to such a proposal in Wisconsin<sup>3</sup>. The worst part is that the workers are fighting for survival, while the Republicans are just fighting to “cut the unions off at the knees, so they don’t have the resources to fight these battles”<sup>4</sup> trying to make it more difficult for the Obama campaign to find the money required for its second term bid.

There are several factors that took the US to the dead end where it is now. We will analyze them later. But maybe the most important one lies in the worst educational system of any developed (or industrialized) country. This dysfunctional educational system doesn’t just generate strong poverty, inequality and violence that are among the main causes of the riots, but inhibits a clear debate on what is going on in America,

1. “Class war in Wisconsin”, 22.02.2011, [The Guardian](#)

2 “US left finds its voice over Wisconsin attack on union rights”, 24.02.2011, [The Guardian](#)

3 “Poll : Americans favor union bargaining rights”, 23.02.2011, [USA Today](#)

4 “Tomgram : Andy Kroll, Union-Busting or Republican-Busting in Wisconsin?”, 31.03.2011, [TomDispatch](#)

the role of the state and the direction it wants to go from here.

To illustrate the situation of the educational system in the US, we just need to know that 50% of adults cannot read a book written at eight grade level and they are condemned to be the most affected part of society. To determine how many prison beds will be needed in future years, some states actually base part of their projection on how well current elementary students are performing in reading tests. Illiteracy is strongly related to poverty, crime and incarceration<sup>5</sup>. It's not surprising that the most affected big city in America, Detroit, has an illiteracy rate of 44%<sup>6</sup>.

The failure of the American educational system has lead society to miss the important points, and has lowered the level of the social, political and economic debate. Oversimplifications and conventional wisdom are the norm. We have several, and sometimes Kafkaesque, references in the media.

Having the root cause of polarization and dogmatic social, economic and political debate in the deficiencies of the educational system, there are some other trends in movement that, when combined with polarization, will lead the US to social unrest, clashes and riots. Most of those factors can be found also in the Arab Spring and the Spanish 15M movement :

- Rising food prices
- Unemployment
- Lack of opportunities for young people
- Poverty
- Inequality
- Loss of their homes

Greatest food price increase in 36 years, severely affecting large parts of the population<sup>7</sup>, Not just that, but Americans are now using their savings (however small they are) to pay for food and energy<sup>8</sup>.

Americans are losing hope, and no longer believe that the American Dream still exists for them. Now, 43% of Americans have lost the hope in the Dream<sup>9</sup>.

In the labor area, the situation is dramatic. Now, 35% of Americans (lucky to still have a job) work for less than in a previous job<sup>10</sup>. Even the official unemployment rate as reported by the US government is 9% in April 2011, the same figures show us that the

5. "Illiteracy : The Downfall of American Society", 13.06.2011, [Education-Portal](#)

6. "Nearly Half Of Detroit's Adults Are Functionally Illiterate, Report Finds", 05.07.2011, [The Huffington Post](#)

7. "Food prices increase most in 36 years", 16.03.2011, [CBS News](#)

8. "US consumers use savings to pay for basics", 28.03.2011, [The Telegraph](#)

9. "John Zogby : The American Dream redefined", 29.03.2011, [BBC](#)

10. "John Zogby : The American Dream redefined", 29.03.2011, [BBC](#)

percentage of the population in employment is just 58.4%<sup>11</sup>. When you are lucky enough to find a job, it's highly likely that it will be at a lower wage. While 23% of the jobs lost in the Great Recession were low wage, 49% of the new jobs added are in the same low wage industries. At the same time, it is hard to find a permanent job. In 2010 26% of the hires were temporary jobs, compared to 7% after the 2001 recession<sup>12</sup>.

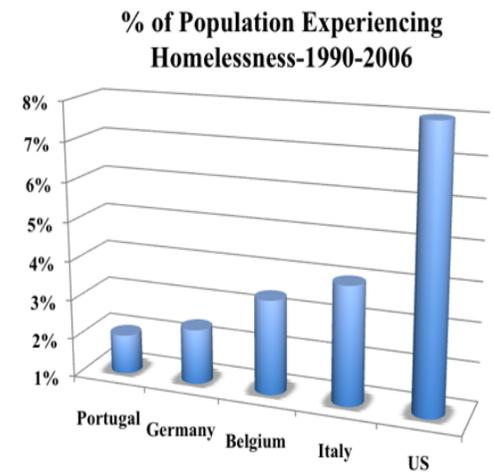
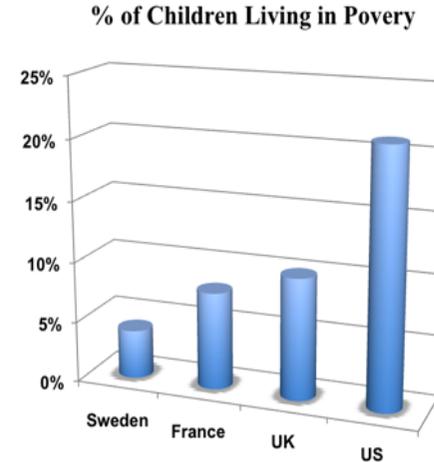
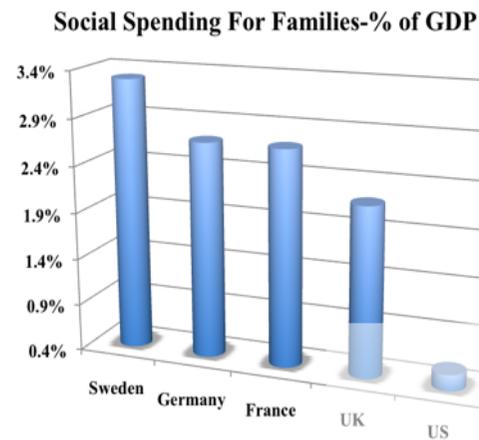
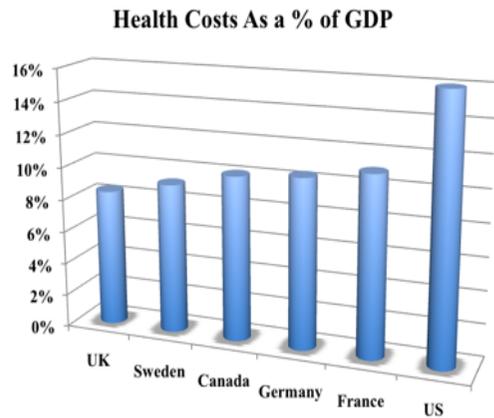
And still the conservatives are trying to destroy the unions; even so a unionized worker earns \$200 per week more than non -unionized workers. The unemployment rate among people aged 24 or younger, one of the main causes of the Arab revolt, is officially 17.6%<sup>13</sup>. Just a final figure here. 5.8 million workers have been jobless for more than six months.

11. Source : [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

12. "Tomgram : Andy Kroll, Welcome to the McJobs Recovery", 08.05.2011, [TomDispatch](#)

13. "The Jobs Numbers and the President's Job", 08.05.2011, [The Huffington Post](#)

14. "Of the 1%, by the 1%, for the 1%", 05.2011, [Vanity Fair](#)



"We're #1 : Ten Depressing Ways America is Exceptional", 20.04.2011, [AlterNet](#)

As we can see in the charts above, the US has the biggest poverty figures among the industrialized countries. And poverty in the US is just increasing with the economic and financial crisis. In the past decade, those people in the middle classes have seen their incomes fall. For those with only high school degrees, the decline is really strong (12% in the last quarter century alone)<sup>14</sup>.

There are already signs that things are worsening for the poor :

- Wal-Mart shoppers, many of whom live paycheck to paycheck, typically shop in bulk at the beginning of the month when their paychecks come in. Lately, they're "running out of money" at a faster clip.
- Purchases are really dropping off by the end of the month; even more than last year<sup>15</sup>
- 43 million Americans (1 out of every 7) use food stamps. This is an increase of 16% in the last 12 months<sup>16</sup>
- 6 million of these 43 million have no other income. No cash, no welfare, no unemployment insurance and no pensions, child support or disability pay<sup>17</sup>
- According to the [Census Bureau](#), One out of every 5 children in the US lives in poverty<sup>18</sup>
- 62% of US bankruptcies were a result of medical expenses in 2007. 75% of the people with a medical related bankruptcy had health insurance.

T.R. Reid, a Washington Post reporter, asked the President of the Swiss federation: "How many people in Switzerland go bankrupt because of medical bills?" Swiss president Pascal Couchepin answered : "Nobody. It doesn't happen. It would be a huge scandal if it happens."<sup>19</sup>

We could continue with statistics ad infinitum. The reality is that the American people are being impoverished at an accelerating rate.

It is not enough to be poor. The situation worsens dramatically when the population can see the vast amount of resources the country has and the inequality they experience.

The US has one of the highest levels of income inequality, as measured through the Gini Index, among high income countries, comparable to some middle income countries such as Russia and Turkey. In 1915 the richest 1% of Americans earned roughly 18% of all income. Today, the top 1% accounts for 24% of all income<sup>20</sup>.

15. "Wal-Mart's customers are running out of money", 28.04.2011, [Truthdig](#)

16. "1 in 7 Americans rely on food stamps", 21.12.2010, [CNN](#)

17. "Living on Nothing but Food Stamps", 02.01.2010, [The New York Times](#)

18. "Hunger in America : 2011 United States Hunger and Poverty Facts", 25.09.2011, [World Hunger Notes](#)

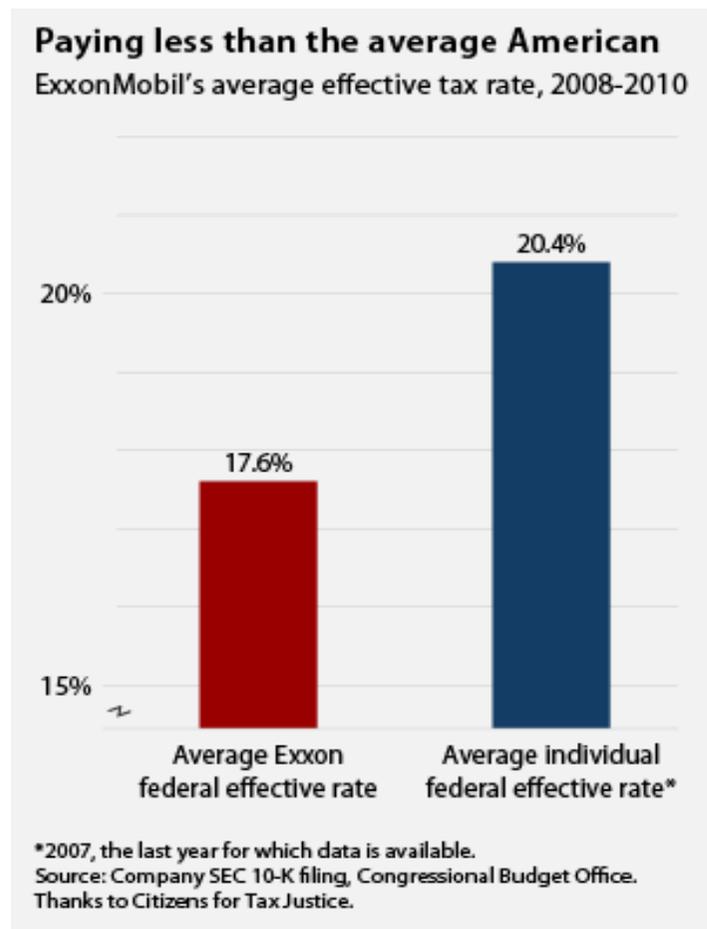
19. "We're #1 -- Ten Depressing Ways America Is Exceptional", 20.04.2011, [AlterNet](#)

20. Source : Income inequality in the United States, [Wikipedia](#)

To make bad things worse, as we can see in the chart, the average effective tax rate of Exxon Mobil is lower than the average individual tax rate. It's not only Exxon Mobil, but the richer Americans in general.

And the final factor that we will examine here is the lost of homes of the poorer Americans (there are other factors, like the economic and financial crisis, the end of QE2, the state and muni bond crisis, the budget cuts that will affect Americans).

- Sales of new single family homes were down more than 80% in February 2011 from the 2005 peak.
- New single family sales are now lower than at any point since data was first collected in 1963, when the US had 120 million fewer residents<sup>21</sup>
- In 2010, 2.9 million homeowners received foreclosure fillings, an increase of 2% versus 2009 and 23% versus 2008<sup>22</sup>



- Currently there are 5.5 million homeowners that are 90 days or later on their mortgage payments
- 20% of homeowners are late on their payment
- 3,5 million homeowners have been served with foreclosure papers
- 1,5 million homeowners are in the redemption period<sup>23</sup>
- And more than 15 million American homeowners currently owe more on their mortgages than their homes are worth
- 27% of homeowners are “underwater”<sup>24</sup>

21. “Builders of New Homes Seeing No Sign of Recovery”, 22.04.2011, [The New York Times](#)
22. “2010 Had Record 2.9 Million Foreclosures”, 13.01.2011, [ABC](#)
23. “Current Foreclosure Statistics in the U.S.”, 04.02.2011, [Twin Cities Real Estate](#)
24. “Homeowners Hit Brick Wall, With Many Owing More Than Homes Are Worth”, 09.02.2011, [Fox News](#)

The trends are already there. And a major trend change is already ahead of the US. After the end of QE2 and with the strong cuts needed in the government budgets ( at all 3 levels), people's anger will rise. They will find that what remains of an already weak and thin safety net is suddenly gone.

In the second half of 2011 and during 2012 the protests and demonstrations will dramatically increase. But they will be channeled to the political campaigns by the media. For the last time, the people will try to influence the political debate in a peaceful manner. But the debate will just increase the polarization, because we can expect (it has begun already) to see the dirtiest presidential campaign in history.

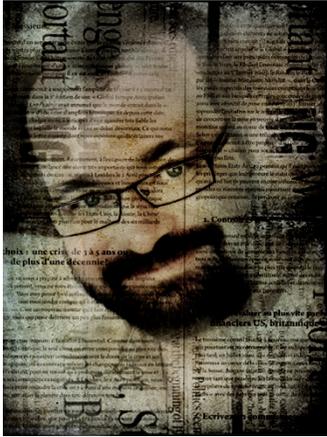
Once the presidential elections have passed, and independently of the results, the protests and demonstrations will transform into social unrest, clashes and riots. The first half of 2013 will be the time when those clashes and riots surface in the US.

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## SOCIAL STUDIES

# 2012 : Emergence of maternal governance

by **Luc Brunet**



The basic trends of the past, such as left-right opposition, which holds sway in our politics, are they really universal showpieces? Beyond the stereotype, it's perhaps the typical example of a paternalistic State becoming maternalistic which will be the new century's big issue.

“I don't agree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.”

Incorrectly attributed to Voltaire by Evelyn Hall in 1906

“What blasphemy! The devout cry, fur-robed doctors gather, alarm increases from college to college, from house to house; whole bodies are on the move and why? For five or six pages about which there is no further question after three months. If you don't like a book, refute it; if it annoys you, don't read it.”

Voltaire

The basic trends of the past seem so obvious that we forget they are not, in eternity, part of the world order. This is the principle of the Christian West post 1789 which is a bi-partisan opposition between a left that proposes a community and egalitarian project, and a right that offers an individual and meritocratic project.

In this system, the extremities as well as the centre are struggling to exist, the Condorcet paradox (such as Arrow's impossibility theorem<sup>1</sup>) showing that the vote in such a system rarely gives full representation. In turn, as for the Hare system of voting<sup>2</sup> by ranking the candidates would allow it, it must be noted that it's as effective as unused.

Our system, which could be called “dextrosinistre” (right-left in Latin), was born in August 1789. It led the two trends to a geographic division in the National Assembly overflowing in the West whilst it correlated to the same background<sup>3</sup>.

In 2002, Michel Schneider believed he had discerned a shift in the conduct of the State, from a paternalistic management of citizens' life, for which it wanted to be respected, to an emotional and a maternalistic one, for which it wanted to be loved<sup>4</sup>. The concept of Big Mother, the counterpart of Big Brother, was born.

1. “Arrow et l'impossibilité: une démonstration par l'absurde”, Benoît Lengaigne and Nicolas Postel, 2004/2 n°24, p.388-410, [Revue du MAUSS](#)

2. Source: Scrutin unique transférable, [aceproject.org](#)

3. Source: Left-right politics, [Wikipedia](#)

4. “L'Etat, Big Mother”, 30.03.2009, [Polémia](#)

The paternalistic State wanted to be formed by values, the maternalistic State does it by love, or at least the pretence of love. In the treatment of social crises, such as the 2005 riots, it highlights the words “respect, social cohesion ...”<sup>5</sup> when the principal characters would undoubtedly have preferred a job and an income<sup>6</sup>. But behind this development, what are the ideas that have changed ?

## Changing bipartisanship

Each transition is accompanied, preceded, tempered by a philosophical ally that gives politicians phraseology and purpose. The transition between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance was accompanied by Montaigne, Spinoza, Pascal, Francis Bacon. That between the Ancien Régime and modernity by Rousseau, Voltaire, Locke. The transition to the twentieth century was by Marx, Nietzsche, Le Bon...

What will accompany the transition to the world after the 2011 crisis in society ?

It's possible to make the bet that the dextrosinistral trend will remain in force but in a different form, taking into account the philosophical development of the West and the new concepts of the maternalistic State :

- The principle of precaution, sometimes used in an extreme and anxiety-producing fashion in order to reassure (then it becomes precaution by principle), is now included in the French constitution<sup>7</sup>.

- The right of humanitarian interference, a novelty that doesn't happen by itself, plays as much on the emotional aspect as the ethica<sup>8</sup>.

5. Read the news about the suburbs, [Le Nouvel Observateur](#)

6. “France’s Burning Issue : Understanding the Urban Riots of November 2005”, Canet & al. 18.11.2008, [Social Science Research Network](#)



Social transitions / Philosophical transitions

7. Source : [Legifrance.gouv.fr](#)

8. Source : Humanitarian intervention, [Wikipedia](#)

- The preservation of future generations, which inflects in a budgetary golden rule, but also underlies efforts on renewable energy and the preservation of the environment, is taking hold there for emotional reasons as much as ethical ones.
- It develops a more or less tacit rule of non-harassment: it is impossible to speak ill of visible or invisible minorities, it is impossible to caricature. The susceptibility is now taken into consideration, this trend potentially leading to self-censorship.
- In the field of science, taking into account feelings rather than facts leads to promoting the consensus<sup>9</sup>, and thus to regard the observer-observed as the object of the study, rather than the observed in the absolute.
- New messages appear, such as projects to “civilize the Internet”, going as far as installing cookies on computers or a national firewall which, undoubtedly, would make all the defenders of the freedom of the press turn in their grave<sup>10</sup>.

The maternalistic State also invites itself into almost moralistic areas : Proposed penalties for prostitutes’ clients in 2012<sup>11</sup>, Members of Parliament’s opinion on the content of textbooks on the gender theory<sup>12</sup>, increase in traffic controls on the basis of indiscriminate statistical analysis<sup>13</sup> and, more generally, seeking guilt by methods such as the carbon footprint, today being challenged in terms of methodology<sup>14</sup>.

On the other side, that of the individual and property, we see :

- a headlong rush to the defence of banking and financial system which matches an inability to question the legitimacy of certain types of wealth
- resistance to keeping multiple tax loopholes
- the development of technological intervention on living organisms (GMOs, ...) or the knowledge, under individual responsibility, of one’s’ own genome that’s to say ones’ own genetic defects and advantages (many companies offer reliable genetic decoding over the internet, including those in which Google has a shareholding)
- the development of private mega-companies (Apple, Google, Monsanto, Facebook, Exxon, GE...) some of which carry more weight than some States<sup>15</sup>
- the strong defence of intellectual property (HADOPI..), vital in a society where the trade in intangible assets has become preeminent
- The development of judicialisation leading to explanations in court rather than in newspapers or books, as should be done in a “Voltairean” democracy

9. “La tentation du consensus”, Chantal Delsol, 21.03.2011, [ASPM](#)

10. “Le Grand Firewall Français”, 12.06.2008, [Korben](#)

11. “Des députés veulent pénaliser les clients des prostituées”, 12.04.2011, [Le Monde](#)

12. “La théorie du genre: une lubie coûteuse”, 08.09.2011, [Le Nouvel Observateur](#)

13. Source : La Sécurité Routière, [Société de Calcul Mathématique](#)

14. “Le Bilan Carbone : erreurs méthodologiques fondamentales et incertitudes”, 09.2011, [Société de Calcul Mathématique](#)

15. “Des entreprises plus riches que des pays malgré la crise”, 18.01.2011, [ONG-Entreprises](#)

## Who thinks ?

What are the exemplary philosophical and ideological tools that emerge from this situation :

- Trend E: Ecoist: This philosophical direction puts, not ecology, but human society at the centre. According to Pierre Rabhi's eco-philosophy<sup>16</sup> it is, without doubt, a basic trend that begs the question of fair need compared to mass consumption. It is often presented as a "Copernican revolution" aiming to throw man off centre and give him no place in the ecosystem. However, in its social vision, it's really a question of the improvement of human society.

- Ethical trends : frugality, self-sufficiency in food, network communities

- Potential fundamentalism : refusal of progress (Luddism<sup>17</sup>), military intervention to protect the environment, economic imperialism; example: Theodore Kaczynski (Unabomber<sup>18</sup>, a killer against technological progress, that's to say, neo-Luddite)

- Possible political claw back: rather left or centre left

16. Source : [Le Blog de Pierre Rabhi](#)

17. Demory L., "Une révolte anti-moderne : le luddisme", Louise Demory, 28.08.2008, [Novopress](#)

18. "Unabomber, le terroriste qui a inspiré le tireur d'Oslo", 25.07.2011, [Le Figaro](#)

19. Prospective & stratégie, "Le transhumanisme, l'idée la plus dangereuse du monde ?", Luc Brunet, [Expertise & Prospective dans le monde réel](#)

20. Source : [Nick Bostrom's Home Page](#)

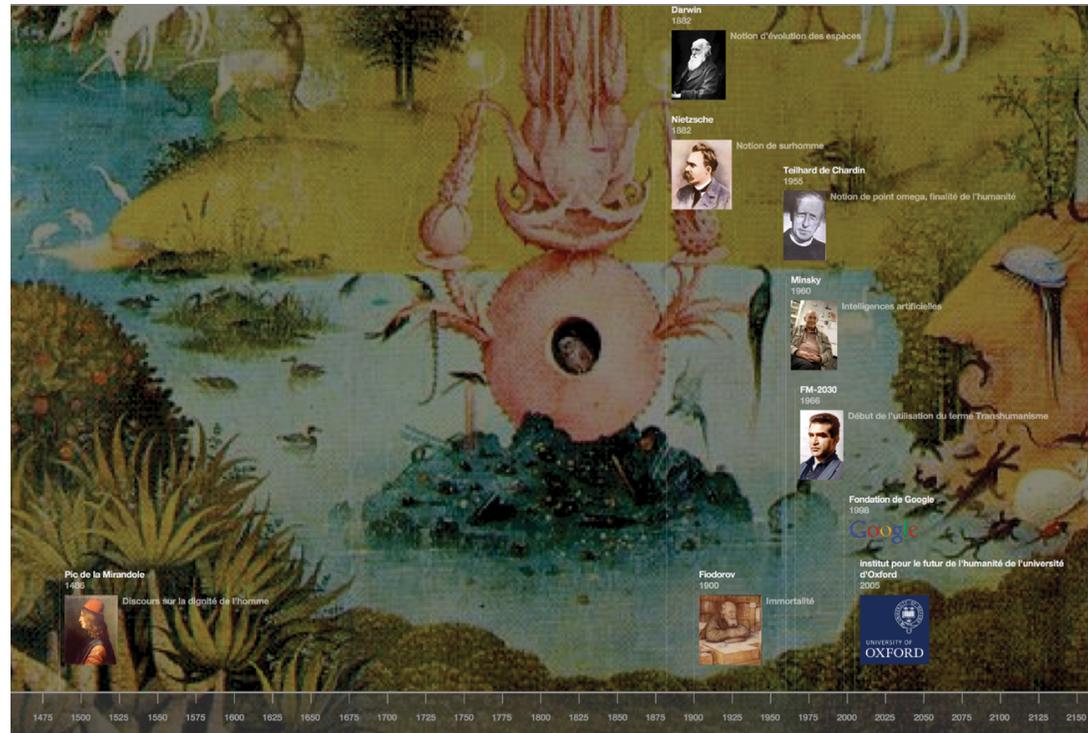
- H + trend : Transhumanism advocates the use of technology for man's improvement. It has its roots in Pic de la Mirandole and Teilhard de Chardin. Individualistic, libertarian<sup>19</sup> and materialistic, it tends to regard technical progress as the central value. Given visibility at Oxford (Nick Bostrom<sup>20</sup>), it is itself a Copernican approach as well, but believes that man



Development of the E concept

must not only be off-centre in the universe but also changed as a specie:

- Exemplary trends: individual responsibility, universal search for meaning (teleology), not favouring demographic growth
- Potential fundamentalism: Eugenics, elitist selection by access to technology (therefore through money)
- Possible political claw back : rather liberal



Development of H+ ideas

Pushed to the limit, these two trends lead to a sparking of conflict because a country has not fulfilled its commitments on CO2 emissions, or because another was engaged in human cloning. Of course, it would be very naive not to consider these two events, pollution or cloning, as certain in the near future.

In 2006, in this struggle for the primacy of rights for the individual or society, the Russian Orthodox Church issued an alternative declaration

of human rights, considering the original one to be too liberal, limiting the rights of the individual to take his own life<sup>21</sup>. Opposing assisted reproduction techniques, it is very clearly in direct opposition to the ideas on the evolution of the species.

The trend towards the emergence of the Big Mother State, maternalistic, only leads to reproduce, in other clothes, dextrosinistral bipartisanship. It corresponds to a very large deficit of common sense, that the political thinkers of the baby boom generation seem unable to fill, their only recipe too often consisting of warming up old dishes in new ways. If 83% of young Indians think that their country has a bright future, only 17% of young French people, 25% of young Germans and 34% of British think so<sup>22</sup>. Nepal's political and sociological takeoff, in five years going from a traditionalist monarchy to a democratic society counting three sexes, is emblematic not only of the economic but also the sociological development of Asia, while the West seems to lose itself in the discussion. The hardening of criticism towards ecology's authoritarian drift (Pascal Bruckner), towards human decline whose only remedy would be technology and individualism (Michel Houellebecq) or, in contrast, the doom-watch accountability of pro-ecology books and films (Al Gore, Yann Arthus-Bertrand), without doubt denotes a collective incapacity to think outside the box, to think otherwise than by opposition and emotion. What is remarkable is not that the debate takes place; it's the surprising and disturbing use of "you don't have the right to say that."

## The Middle Way

However, a third way, more central and perhaps more Asian is developing, taking into account society's undetected evolution towards the use of incorporeal property that leads to spending more and more on mobile 'phones and the internet, and increasingly less on food.

The noetic<sup>23</sup> promotes an interwoven individualism, valuing knowledge and achievement. Perhaps also because, for the first time, Asia and Europe are connected in real time, and also because problems and solutions are without doubt found around this axis, it is possible that in the next ten years, contingent on the realization, the Big Mother State stops wanting to dictate the lives of its children and that we take a new look at our finances and wants with a more responsible vision of our social evolution.

If this is to happen it's really from Europe, as the greatest geopolitical innovation of the last millennium, in an historic dialogue with Asia, that a new way of considering welfare and prosperity must come.

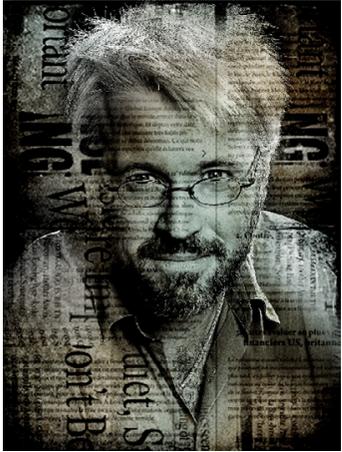
21. "Les déclarations des droits de l'homme", Chantal Delsol, 28.01.2011, [AES](#)

22. "2011 Word Youth", page 34, 2011, [Fondapol](#)

23. Source : [Expertise & Prospective dans le monde réel](#)

# 11/11/2061: We need you !

by Olivier Parent



During the second decade of the twenty-first century, the conservationist institutions had to reply to vigorous calls from a part of the planet's population, in search of the honest truth, all these calls emanating from consumer societies showing increasingly exasperated behavior.

These associations, coming from all countries, formed an association sharing the same zeal. This combination, the World Ecologist Federation (WEF) immediately launched a comprehensive acquisition plan: The WEF set itself the task of buying islands of various sizes, from just a rock to more impressive groups, spread over the whole of the planet. A major part of this new association's resources were brought together on these islands of Biodiversity. At the same time, countries such as France again raised the question of establishing a voluntary service. The all-new Islands of Biodiversity needed a helping hand. The young people were thirsty for a commitment, governments sought voluntary service teams not needing too much investment ... The Missions or the Islands were launched.

The Islands of Biodiversity's mascot replaced Uncle Sam, but the message is still the same: We need you, get involved! The 40th awareness campaign of the Islands of Biodiversity's Missions is an opportunity to look back on what has become, in a little less than half a century, a global institution: these became extra-national territories by UN decree, in which all means of preserving the species in danger were used... Islands on which [extinct life forms come back to life](#).

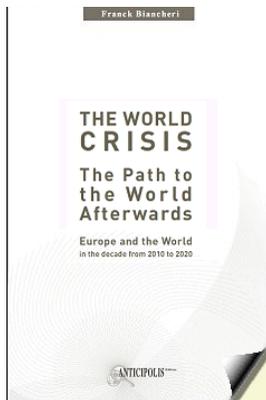
The UN, far from its usual wait-and-see attitude, was quick to note the effectiveness of work carried out on the Islands. The benefits to the entire global community are important and yet ... The state of the planet remains a concern. The UN's interest and recognition are thus crystallized through the establishment of this extra-territorial status, much to the chagrin of the "expropriated" countries and industrialists outraged by agreed benefits that they would have liked to enjoy !

Today there are no fewer than 30 islands of Biodiversity around the world. The WEF lawyers continue to negotiate what the Islands of Biodiversity's opponents call "annexation". The area managed by the WEF grows by about 15% annually, as much as their success: specialists' success but also the general public's success: each birth, each return of an animal which had disappeared is an opportunity for the WEF to talk about it.

**FuturHebdo**

The global genotype pool, the [Ark of Spitsbergen](#) too, has shown its relevance in the success of these wildlife sanctuaries. The Ark, known for its collection of seeds, has today become the largest library of genetic codes in digital format. It was decided, at the beginning, to “digitize” the DNA of all life on earth, until DNA’s artificial combinations have been mastered. This technique has now been finalized: one can now feasibly create an adult person. Paying candidates are not lacking ...

The WEF receives all kinds of donations, under the supervision of various financial audit and accounting agencies. Voluntary service by the young people throughout the world is the best of these gifts, without expectation of any return. So let us not mince words: “We need you”, get involved !



## **World crisis The Path to the World Afterwards Europe and the World in the decade from 2010 to 2020**

by Franck Biancheri

In this uncompromising book, Franck Biancheri (born 1961, Director of Studies at the Laboratoire Européen d'Anticipation Politique) attempts to address the lack of anticipation of European leaders and elites when it comes to the crisis and presents a concrete vision of the future in France, Europe and the world by 2020.

**Editions Anticipolis**  
ISBN : 978-2-919574-00-1  
price : 20,00 €

“Because this crisis we are experiencing is not only the end of the “world before”, it is also an unprecedented opportunity to rebuild a “world after”, provided not to be mistaken about the dangers, challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.”

## FICTION

# Isaac Asimov : Foundation et Psychohistory

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by Jean-Claude Monot, the [Isaac Asimov](#) website organizer

**The Foundation ! If the first pages were written beginning in 1942, this saga would see its final episode appear a half century later, in 1993. At least, from Asimov's pen. For the followers he left behind him are legion, and several have already taken on the task of writing new novels about the Foundation.**



If it took only a century to go from Jules Verne's dream to the reality of Neil Armstrong setting foot on the Moon, but let's stretch our imagination well beyond a century ... two hundred times further. About twenty thousand years hence.

Humanity has expanded across the billions of stars in our galaxy, colonizing millions of worlds capable of supporting life, its population increasing exponentially. Without ever meeting non-human intelligence.

Earth is now only a distant and vague legend, a mythical world lost amongst the numerous Prefectures of the Galactic Empire. This Empire which rules the Galaxy and its twenty-five million inhabited planets, controlled from the capital-planet, Trantor. Located at the centre of a cluster of sparkling stars, Trantor is the closest planet of the galactic core, and also the most populated with forty billion inhabitants, including the Emperor.

The Galactic Empire has never been as large and powerful.

## The Foundation

But Hari Seldon shows up, a young mathematician, just landed from his planet. He invents a new science called psychohistory, which enables the prediction of society's evolution with almost absolute certainty. And imagine his surprise when he realizes that, though the Empire is equally powerful and bound together, its decline is predicted in five centuries. An inevitable decline to be followed by thirty thousand years of barbarity... up to a Revival, a new Empire.

Just one solution: do everything possible to reduce this new Middle Ages to the thirtieth of its initial duration. Thus, with a great deal of caution, detours and plots and struggling with the nobility, Hari Seldon, either barracked or envied, goes on to establish a Foundation on the planet

Terminus. In full view of everyone, it will aim to create an Encyclopedia Galactica gathering all the knowledge of mankind. And, hidden from everyone, even its members, it will aim to save the Galaxy. By its very existence.

Thus began the history of the First Foundation.

## Psychohistory

After reading about the Foundation cycle, one has the impression that “to be able to predict the future” will soon be a reality. But it must be remembered that psychohistory is only viable if it is possible to not only follow humanity but also all in space, with all that implies.

Yet, the number of parameters to be considered is huge and one would quickly arrive at a paradox: the model would be as complex as the universe itself. Even by limiting it to a macroscopic approach, more tangible and closer, we should be able to analyze the weather (the impact on crops, natural disasters ...), resource development in each country worldwide, the progression of scientific knowledge (a few decades ago, who would have foreseen the rise of the Internet?), and particularly Mankind.

In fact, even though Asimov compares psychohistory applied to humanity, as a study of Brownian motion of gas particles in space, we are otherwise more complex than atoms. Humans have an importance in humanity, in a group, or even as a private individual: man's ideas, brilliant - Newton - or wicked - Hitler, can change the world, even if one can argue that had they not been there, others would have taken their place sooner or later. In the writer's works, doesn't the Mule itself just show the lack of certainty in the predictions?

## The Cycle of Foundation

Asimov began the Foundation cycle with a set of short stories, written between 1942 and 1953, and gradually gathered into three collections, novellas which complemented each other closely, like the chapters of a same work :

Foundation (1951)

Foundation and Empire (1952)

Second Foundation (1953)

Under pressure from his readers, he took up the torch again in the 80's with two novels that complete the initial cycle, and clearly reveals things (that were not originally intended) :

Foundation' Edge (1982)

Foundation and Earth (1986)

But, finding that the life of Hari Seldon and the implementation of the Plan hadn't been adequately addressed in his early works, Asimov decided to write two novels covering the period before the Foundation.

Prelude to Foundation (1988)

The Dawn of Foundation (1993)

To get the best enjoyment, I recommend reading this cycle in order of publication and underlining a change in style and period between the first three books and those which follow.

## After the good doctor

Others took on the task of writing what Isaac Asimov no longer had time to write. Admittedly, these three works are well written, enjoyable to read - the authors have already made a name for themselves - but their qualities at the heart of this cycle are mixed :

- Foundation in Peril by Gregory Benford (1997)
- Foundation and Chaos by Greg Bear (1998)
- Foundation's Triumph by David Brin (1999)

After reading these imitations, I take even greater pleasure in re-reading the original trilogy.

Now, all that being said on psychohistory, let's forget the analysis and keep the dream...

Hence the interest of an occult power given the responsibility of recovering from any possible deviation: a Second Foundation.

## The Rules

If psychohistory, despite everything, becomes a reality in the very distant future and mortgages the future, two axioms seem inevitable, highlighted by Isaac Asimov :

- the need to apply this knowledge to a large enough slice of humanity; one can certainly wonder how large, but there is no absolute limit below which psychohistory is no longer applicable, just a scale of reliability depending on the mass of people involved;
- the predictions would change mankind's behaviour if it got wind of it, hence the need to hide these predictions from the mass of humanity (hide the role of the First Foundation and, for the same reason, the Second Foundation from the First).

With two conclusions found indirectly in many works :

- the need to continually improve the predictions based on the new environment (role of the Second Foundation), otherwise prediction and reality diverge exponentially;
- one highlighted in the first axiom, in human terms; for if this term is used from the 40's by Asimov, it's only in the 80's and the works of the period that the writer imposes this word almost as a third axiom. Because robots and aliens are here perhaps...

## Isaac Asimov

Born in Russia in 1920, the young Isaac Asimov emigrated to the United States at a young age where he obtained US citizenship. He spent his childhood between the family store and his need to read all the books he could find. It's in [pulp fictions](#) that he discovered popular science fiction, an inspiration to write his own stories as a teenager.

After several attempts, the young writer managed to sell the novel [Marooned off Vesta](#) in 1939. After graduate studies, he became Doctor of Science in 1948, continuing to produce many stories. In 1958 he decided to devote himself exclusively to writing, and received many prizes and awards until his death in 1992.

Famous in France for his numerous science fiction stories, he's also known across the Atlantic for a multitude of educational science books.

To find out even more, take a look at [Jean-Claude Monot's website](#) on Isaac Asimov.

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Do not miss the next issue of the Political Anticipation Magazine (March 2012)

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Thanks for your comments which helped us create improvements you have seen in MAP 3 and MAP 4

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