

TEN EUROPEAN PARAGRAPHS

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During the Middle Ages, Christianity prevented Europe from succumbing entirely to Islam. The Crusades, ultimately unsuccessful in the East, caused Islam to retreat in the West, allowing Europe to catch her breath and to develop. Without the Crusades, there would have been no Universities, no Renaissance, no Great Discoveries, no Scientific Revolution, and no Industrial Revolution.

Giovanni da Salara

Europe was created by History. America was created by Philosophy.

Margaret Thatcher



Casa de Serralves, Porto (Portugal)

1

Is Europe a continent? The answer to this question will depend on the perspective adopted. Europe is not a continent, in the sense that it is not an independent landmass, that is, contained in itself. Its approximate area of 10 million square kilometres makes the European landmass relatively small; its size is equivalent to about 1/4 of Asia, 1/3 of Africa and half of each of the two Americas. Modern Geography tends to consider Europe as a subcontinent of Eurasia (as is the case with India, for example), a peninsula of Asia or a kind of western extreme of the East. For this reason, it should not surprise anyone that the name “Europe” itself may have Asian, rather than European, origin.



London

2

The European perspective advocates a Greek derivation according to which *eurys* (“wide”) would have joined with *ops* (“face” or “eye”), resulting in a word designating the ability to “see broadly” – this being the exact impression that ancient Greek navigators must have had when, from their ships, they observed the length of the European coastline. Endowed with many gulfs and islands, Europe has a coastline of around 37 thousand kilometres, equivalent to the length of the Equatorial Line. Still from the Hellenic perspective, there are those who believe that “Europe” would descend from the name of one of the deities present in Greek mythology. The eastern perspective, on the other hand, makes “Europe” stem from the Akkadian term *erebu*, which means “sunset”, designating the lands located to the west of Mesopotamia, the heart of the Ancient World at the time when Akkad existed as an empire, that is, between c. 2334 and c. 2154 BC.



Tyrrhenian Sea, Italy

3

Akkad is perhaps the first empire recorded in History (despite some claims of Sumerian order); an interesting detail is that its founder, Sargon I, seems to have inaugurated the precept of “reigning over all”, setting a precedent to be followed by the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greco-Macedonians, the Hellenists, the Romans and countless others, which will easily lead us to Hitler, Stalin and the great leaders of the New World Order that increasingly globalize today’s world, causing its inhabitants to progressively lose their free will and become increasingly submissive subjects to the dictatorship of Her Majesty the Political Correctness.



The friend I had in Ireland

4

Let us return to Europe, the continent which is the focus of this article. In the words of the Polish British historian Norman Davies, “In the beginning, there was no ‘Europe’. All that existed was a nameless and unpopulated peninsula, long and winding, placed like the figurehead of a ship at the end of the largest landmass in the world.”. Despite these facts and circumstances, Europe does have a huge repertoire of individualizing traits, starting with its landscapes, its climates, its rivers, its geology, as well as its fauna and flora – all of which contributing to produce an environment favourable to human presence. From this second perspective, that initial question (“Is Europe a continent?”) will receive another answer, contrary to the previous one: Yes, Europe *is* a continent.



Sarajevo, in Bosnia

5

Geologically speaking, Europe was part of Laurasia, the northern part of the supercontinent Pangea, which began to separate from the southern part (Gondwana) around 200 million years ago, gradually giving rise to the emerging lands that we see today on world maps. It is estimated that the first human beings arrived in Europe at least 700,000 years ago. With its temperate climate and welcoming environment, the terrain was prepared for the emergence of agriculture and great civilizations. It is known, on the other hand, that Europe's prosperity was due more to trade than to agriculture. The sea was of central importance, allowing the emergence of a true "galaxy of maritime cultures: Greeks, Carthaginians, Venetians, Normans, the Hansa and, one after the other, the peoples of Western Europe", as described by the French geographer Aimé Vincent Perpillou. Anyway, "It is no coincidence that more than a third of the world's largest cities are seaports; as a rule, one may say that the greatness and ruin of trade routes is a direct reason for the rise and decline of cities. However, many other factors also act upon this subject. There are cities that, especially today, are much more identified with religion (Santiago de Compostela, Lourdes, Benares, Lhasa) and with art (Florence, Paris, Madrid, Cuzco, Cairo, Kyoto)." (João Vicente Ganzarolli de Oliveira (*História & geografia da arte*, Rio Bonito, Benedictus, 2024).



Trier, in today's Germany, ancient border marker of the Roman Empire

6

The history of Europe begins with the Greeks, and this should not surprise us at all, since they were the inventors of the very word “history” and of History as a science. After the Greco-Roman period ended in the 5th century AD, as a result of barbarian invasions, notably Germanic, Europe entered its Middle Ages, which were destined to last a millennium. This was the phase in which Catholicism, European languages and culture established their foundations. By the way, self-criticism, universities, hospitals, democracy... all of these are European inventions, created or perfected by the Catholic Church, despite the slanders that say otherwise.¹

¹ Cf. Thomas Woods. *How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization*, Washington, Regnery, 2012 and Giovanni da Salara. *Arab Winter. The Islam, the Crusades and the End of Times*.



Dijon, France

7

Between the 15th and 16th centuries, Europe expanded its cultural and commercial frontiers; European ships (initially Iberian, but later English, French and Dutch as well) sailed through seas “never sailed before”, exploring worlds and peoples unknown to the Old World. It was also the time of the invention of the printing press by Gutenberg, the Scientific Revolution (think of Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler...) and the Renaissance, inaugurated and led by the Italy of Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Raphael, which did not fail to spread throughout practically the entire European soil.



Ivan, a Ukrainian in St. Petersburg

8

The period we are talking about was also the time of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, when Europe experienced one of its darkest hours, the effects of which persist to this day. In 1618, the Thirty Years' War broke out in Central Europe, the causes of which could be traced back to the conflicts between Protestants and the Holy Roman Empire; in a short space of time, almost all of Europe was involved in what was one of the most destructive events to ever mark its history. In artistic and literary terms, the main style is the Baroque, which emerged in the 16th century (in Michelangelo's career, for example, it is easy to identify the Renaissance phase, the Mannerist phase [intermediate between the Greco-Roman balance and the *horror vacui* of the Baroque] and the Baroque phase, and one can also include another, the Medieval phase, which he never completely abandoned) and lasted until the beginning of the 18th century, when Neoclassicism was born, which, in that same century, was supplanted by Romanticism. The so-called Age of Enlightenment culminated in the darkness of the French Revolution, from which emerged Napoleon Bonaparte, considered one of the greatest military commanders in all of History.



Somewhere in Iceland

9

Between the 18th and 19th centuries, the Industrial Revolution took place on British soil, destined to have repercussions, directly and indirectly, throughout Europe and the rest of the world. In the arts, styles followed one another at an increasing speed: Romanticism, Impressionism, Expressionism...; all this foreshadowed the multiplicity of artistic styles and trends of the 20th century and this first quarter of the 21st century, a period during which the cliché was coined according to which “everything is art” – an unmistakable sign of artistic, cultural and moral decline. In politics, names such as Lenin, Mussolini, Stalin and Hitler brought years of destruction to Europe on all levels, starting with the loss of more than one hundred and fifty million European lives. After the end of the Second World War, in 1945, Europe found itself divided by the Iron Curtain: on one side, the democratic bloc; on the other, the totalitarian-communist bloc. Squeezed between the only two superpowers emerging in the post-war period, namely the USA and the USSR, Europe opted for an European Union whose cons have often outweighed the pros.



Somewhere in Stockholm, Sweden

10

Increasingly invaded and disfigured by “radical” Islam, today’s Europe is experiencing its own decline. As Giovanni da Salara rightly states, “Unless there is a complete turnaround in the Western mentality, as well as in human geography and statistics, today’s Islam will complete the invasion that began in the first decades of its history (7th and 8th centuries), when ‘radical’ Muslims usurped more than half of the lands of the Byzantine Empire, reaching the gates of Constantinople, and took almost the entire Iberian Peninsula from the Visigoths – to be stopped, already on French soil, on the outskirts of the city of Poitiers (732), by the Franks led by Charles

Martel, grandfather of Charlemagne. Defeated in Western Europe by the Franks in the 8th century and in Central-Eastern Europe by the Iberians, Italians, Austrians, Hungarians and Poles in the 17th century, the ‘radical’ Muslims of the 21st century will have conquered through parasitism, terrorism and demography what their ancestors could not conquer through war: the whole of Europe. Only a miracle will save the Europeans.” (Arab Winter. *The Islam, the Crusades and the End of Times*). Miracles, as we know, come from God and are rare, because they require merit. The question is: are today’s Europeans deserving the miracle that may save them from extermination?



Steinhof, Luzern (Switzerland)