

EUROPE: born of an idea.

Rethink how the idea of Europe was formed is now essential to look ahead, with foresight, as well as with courage and determination.

We have to rethink the history of this long historical process outside prejudices and nationalist visions, outside rhetorical representations and sweeteners, but also free from pessimism and defeatism. The millennial history of the idea of Europe helps us to take this path because it is made of rapid changes and long-term persistence's, great innovations and discoveries, new achievements and ideal strongholds, of inclusion, of commingling, of integration, but also of intolerance, of crisis, of war and subjugation. There is in this story, which is the history of individual characters, of populations and states, the path of ideas and there are concrete changes, religious reforms, political revolutions and economic crises; there is the language of art and philosophy, that of weapons and obscurantism of religious persecution.

There is a Europe built through the treaties but there is also a Europe of high ideals; there are, to define its vast geographical and cultural boundaries, the language of science and that of weapons, but, to prove its civilization, there is the defense of individual rights against arbitrary power and the struggle for the extension of social rights.

In the idea of Europe there is our past, but above all there is our future.

First traces of Europe

VIII Century B.C. The name of Europe

The name of Europe as land appears for the first time in Homer's Hymn to Apollo 7 sec. A.C.

Around 500 AD Hecataeus of Miletus speaks of two great divisions, Europe and Asia (with Libya which is part of the second). A generation later, Herodotus sets the habitable world in Europe and the barbarian world in Asia. So the old Europe is already identified in the basin of Mediterranean Sea.

IInd Century AD: heyday of the Roman Empire

At the peak of its power, the Roman Empire covers the entire Mediterranean basin, extending to Asia Minor.

Under the Pax Romana (Roman Peace) develops a culture inspired by Greek humanism and the Christian religion, which is the foundation of the "European civilization."

732 The Battle of Poitiers

The battle in 732 AD halted Islam has become a founding moment of European identity. Debut of the "*Europeenses*".

The Franks under the command of Charles Martel, grandfather of Charlemagne, defeated an Arab army under the command of the governor of the Arab Spain, Abd el-Rahman, who died on the battlefield.

The battle is from the sixteenth century, a symbol of the struggle of the Christian Europe and the Muslim, an event that marked a turning point in history with the beginning of the decline of Islam facing Christianity in Europe.

The Battle of Poitiers became one of the great myths of medieval history, is significant that the word "European" (*Europeenses*) appears for the first time in the eighth century text to indicate the winners of the clash with Arabs.

800: Charlemagne was crowned Emperor of the West.

The Christmas night of the 800 the Pope in Rome crowned Charlemagne as King. Three centuries after the fall of the Western Roman Empire, this event marks the reunification of Western Europe under a single crown.

During his lifetime, Charlemagne is even called *Pater Europae* (father of Europe). But this period of European unity was short-lived: a few years after the death of Charlemagne, the Carolingian space is divided into kingdoms, which are fast becoming rivals.

XI CENTURY

In 1130 the Bishop of Toledo created a school of Arab and Jews translation.

Westerners are rediscovering so many writings of antiquity, especially Greek, hitherto forgotten, as a part of the philosophy of Aristotle, review by Arab philosophers (Averroes...).

The "turn of the year 1000": towards the middle of the tenth century the European population begins to increase, due to climate improvement and some technical advances that have applications in agriculture, like the shoulder collar for horses. At the same time, "the white coat of the Church" covered the entire continent, and the pilgrimages to San Jaques and Jerusalem became the expression of the bright medieval piety "*qui, du monde extérieur à son lieu de vie, ne connaît que Dieu*".

The "renaissance" of the twelfth century is a key period of revival of the cultural world in the Middle Ages.

The intellectual disciplines are well nourished and revitalized by the momentum of translations from Greek and Arabic in Spain and Italy, which broadcasts new texts of Aristotle and his Muslim commentators.

From this stems a new taste for science subjects, for dialectics, the birth of dogmatic theology and the sketch of scholasticism and the development of law and medicine in Mediterranean regions.

Century of the rise of a true class "intellectuals" and the flourishing of a court culture and courtly literature, the twelfth century prepares the cultural maturity of the next century, which will be developed in the context of universities.

Origins of Europe's first universities.

Economic growth and political stabilization will improve roads, build bridges, and more secure infrastructure network maintenance (bridges, hospitals) and conduct the travelers. The cash economy is gradually replacing donation practices and gift-cons.

1492

Discovery of the New World and the period of Portuguese and Spanish colonial empires that followed.

The intolerance

1492 Granada: Inquisition, Islam and Jews.

An unforgettable year that signs the end of the Middle Age and the start of the Modern Age.

The modern State is born under the flag of intolerance, creating categories of "different people" on which they (who managed the power) practice the mechanisms of exclusion and exploitation.

1555 Carlo V the end of the United European Project

Emperor, between 1500 and 1700, of the possessions united under the crown of the Habsburg. The Monarchy included the Iberian Peninsula, most of the Italian country, Sicily, Sardinia, the Netherlands, the German empire, and even the West Indies: so that Charles V could utter the famous phrase "The Sun Never Sets In My Kingdom".
25th September 1555: The Peace of Augsburg marks the end of the religious unity of Europe. Collapses the dream that the Emperor Charles V embodied: the idea of a universal monarchy, desired by God, to preserve and defend the peace, order, religion and civilization in Europe. At the end of the rites of renunciation of power, the former emperor retreats to a remote monastery.

1807 height of the Napoleonic Empire

For some, Napoleon Bonaparte widespread in Europe the new ideas introduced by the French Revolution, the abolition of privileges, the Civil Code, individual liberty ...
For others, he merely establish the domination of France on other nations.
In 1815, the Congress of Vienna announces the form of cooperation developed until 1914: the "concert of nations", which sees the European states meet regularly to deal with war and trade.

1814: Saint-Simon proposes the creation of a European Parliament

At the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, the French philosopher Henri de Saint-Simon (precursor of sociology) has the intuition that new techniques will upset the relations between nations.

On the eve of the Congress of Vienna, he published a text entitled: "On the reorganization of European society or the need and means to bring together the peoples of Europe into a single political body retaining each national independence" .

August 21, 1849: the awakening of the nations inspires Victor Hugo's speech on the United States of Europe

In 1848, a wave of revolutions is spreading throughout Europe: in Italy, Austria, Germany, France, Hungary ... the people are rising up to demand more freedom. Within the Austrian Empire, these uprisings are accompanied by nationalist claims. The writer and MP Victor Hugo sees the awakening of nations the promise of European unification.

At the Peace Congress, held in Paris in 1849, he declared: "A day will come when you France, you Russia, you Italy, you England, you Germany, all you nations of the continent, without losing your distinctive qualities and your glorious individuality, will merge into a higher unity closely, and you will build the European brotherhood."

1918-1944: the European idea in the early 20th century

During both world wars, authoritarian regimes are set up in almost all of Europe. Pacifists and European ideas do not cease to flow, but with more and more difficulty. Altiero Spinelli, one of the founding fathers of Europe, was sentenced and deported under Mussolini's regime. Prisoner, he wrote a manifesto for a united Europe.

1941: The European movement “Resistance”

The European idea is very present in the Resistance, which focuses on the democratic character of the future united Europe. Two documents mark this revival of the European idea.

The Ventotene Manifesto, entitled to a free and united Europe, was written in 1941, mainly by the Italian Altiero Spinelli, a resistanant, assisted by his companion Ernesto Rossi. These authors believe that a European federation guarantee peace on the old continent, including the creation of a joint military force.

A long common history

The European idea has its roots in Greco-Roman antiquity and went through the entire history of the continent.

Early in the 20th century, the visionaries trying to warn their contemporaries on the need to unite to end the conflicts between nations. After 1945, various attempts at rapprochement between the states of Western Europe culminated in the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community CECA.

The construction of the European Union was then in its infancy ...

In the mid-20th century, the disastrous record of two world wars has prompted European nations to unite to prevent new conflicts and to face future challenges.

The Schuman Declaration of 9 May 1950 is considered the starting point of European integration. In 1957 the signing of the Treaties of Rome mark the will of the founding states to create a common economic space, in which people and goods circulate freely.

In 1993, the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, which gave birth to the European Union, marks a new stage in the construction of a political community across the continent.

Then, in 1999, member states made a step closer to a real monetary union by adopting the euro will enter into circulation three years later.

In 2005, the project of a European constitution is abandoned following the 'no' of the French and Dutch peoples. Signed in 2007, the Lisbon Treaty, which turns the institutional architecture of the Union, comes into force in 2009.