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CONTENTS

Original Manuscripts

- | | PAGE |
|---|------|
| » Scientists Encounter Difficulties in Long TV Debate on Covid-19 - Europe Failed to Meet the Needs of the Old-Old
<i>Natale G. De Santo, Naples, Italy</i> | 96 |
| » A French Retired Professor Develops New Treatments for Motor Disabilities: The Brain-Machine Interface
<i>Raymond Ardaillou, Paris, France</i> | 98 |
| » Retired Professors as Cultural Memory and Reservoirs of Knowledge in the Era of Covi19 and Knowledge-Based Economies
<i>Hilda L. Mokgolodi, Michael Gaotlhobogwe, Gaborone, Botswana</i> | 100 |
| » Our Unstable Present and Future: 3. Instability
<i>Tibor Szabó, Szeged, Hungary</i> | 101 |
| » Phase Transitions: Visions of the Future
<i>Massimo Pica Ciamarra, Naples, Italy</i> | 103 |
| » The Past - Building Material for the Future
<i>Lucija Čok, Koper-Capodistria, Slovenia</i> | 105 |
| » Start of the Genomic Modification Era
Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer A. Doudna
2020 Awarded Nobel Prize for Chemistry
<i>Luigi Campanella, Rome, Italy</i> | 106 |

Review of Books

- | | |
|---|-----|
| » Scritti Pubblicistici di Alessandro Ghigi. Volumes I-III
<i>Franco Pedrotti, Camerino, Italy</i> | 107 |
|---|-----|

News

- | | |
|--|-----|
| » Report from the Emeritus College, University of British Columbia
<i>Dianne Newell, Vancouver, Canada</i> | 108 |
| » Slovenia Professors Emeriti
<i>Jože Gričar, Maribor, Slovenia</i> | 109 |
| » Summary of the Regulations for the Recognition of the Title of Emeritus Professor Issued by the Federico II University of Naples - October 2020
<i>Giancarlo Bracale, Naples, Italy</i> | 110 |
| » Minutes of EAPE Council Meetings
<i>Luigi Campanella, Rome, Italy</i> | 110 |

Forthcoming Congresses

- | | |
|--|-----|
| » The Centenary Congress of the International Society for the History of Medicine (1921-2021)
<i>Dana Baran, Jassy, Romania</i> | 112 |
|--|-----|

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Scientists Encounter Difficulties in Long TV Debate on Covid-19 Europe Failed to Meet the Needs of the Old-Old

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Natale G. De Santo

Communicating science at a time of pandemics is a science and an art

Jacques Le Goff (1924-2014) in "Intervista sulla storia/interview on history" (1982) pointed out that university professors shouldn't be afraid of mass media, that is to say that they should love media. They should abandon their peculiar arrogance when

asked to give their opinion. They must learn to participate in the debate. Le Goff added "Mass media are destined to be turned into means of political and scientific reaction. So, scientists should learn to make full use of media to serve their science." In his opinion, university professors, to serve the achievements and the goal of their discipline, had to be capable to say, in 20-30 seconds, what they want to say and forget about the timing of their lectures and seminars (1). It is not without meaning that Goethe wrote "God bless those who say well what they want to say".

Tomás Maldonado (Buenos Aires 1922 - Milan 2018), Professor of Environmental Design at the University of Bologna, at the Polytechnic of Milan, at the Ulm School of Design (1954-1966) supported the idea that intellectuals should not remain "fenced in", but learn to withstand the pressure of mass media. He called intellectuals "anime belle" (beautiful souls) and asked them to get rid of the attitude of acting as dreamers, unable to influence the world and determine its paths (Hegelian concept).

During pandemics mass media have enrolled thousands of experts who talk for hours about something that is unknown and sometimes even generate fake news (for example one expert credited a pandemic as just a little more serious than flu). They have forgotten the golden rule to use short messages based on evidence from their science. To debate in mass media, one should be a real scientist, having something to say in a short time and then disappear, coming again, as necessary, with a short message. In the course of 2020, the experts have not benefitted their disciplines since they are driven by the need to appear intelligent, original and "know-it-all". Professor Shaul Massry, who we celebrated in the previous

issue of this Bulletin, starting his Presidency of the American Kidney Foundation, organised, for his councillors, a course given by media specialists, in order to learn how to be short and precise when speaking in the media about the Foundation. Now the specialists of pandemics are on TV screens for hours and their messages become unclear and sometimes wrong.

Europe Failed to meet the needs of the Old-Old

The Swedish journalist and writer, Carl-Henning Wijkmark (1934-2020) published, in 1978, a provocative book about older people, entitled "*Den moderna döden*" (2) which, in 2001, was translated into English as "*Modern Death - The end of humanity*" (3).

Wijkmark often analysed ethical themes of his contemporary society. The novel, a modern tragedy, centred on a closed-door meeting organised by a committee of the Swedish Ministry for Health, the agenda being a discussion on the need to reduce access to national health services, at a time of a) a prolonged economic crisis lasting 12 years b) longer lifespans and c) early retirement (4).

The problem related to the fact that "one out of four Swedish people is pensioned because of age, one out of eight productive persons are allowed to retire in advance and 75% of health expenditure is utilised for chronic disease and patients without hope" (3).

"Participants in the debate include physicians, economists and theologians, *maître à penser*, and politicians. All aim to protect the nation's social welfare by convincing old people to die because of their social non-utility. Aging persons, in a democratic country which grants lifelong political rights (voting), are thus classified taking into consideration their productivity and their relevance in the society (Nobel prize recipients are in the highest rank). Old people may be given the unique chance to contribute to public utility by dying and allowing use of their bodies, not yet destroyed by diseases, as spare parts for organ and tissue transplantation". Of course, families "should be convinced not to oppose the social use of the bodies of relatives, which might be used up to 100% by the drug

1. Le Goff J. (1924-2014) Intervista sulla storia. Bari: Laterza, 1982.

2. Wijkmark C-H. Den moderna döden. Stockholm, Norstedts, 1978.

3. Wijkmark C-H. Modern Death – The End of Humanity. Dublin: Caryfort Press, 2001.

4. De Santo NG. What death is. A literary approach between fears and hope Ann Ist Super Sanità 2014;50 (3): 249-265 DOI: 10.4415/ANN_14_03_08

industry, as chemical fertilizing compounds". There is just one single voice against the committee, which is that of Rönning, who is no longer present when the moderator concludes with the chilly menace "you will receive news from us soon". The book is provocative and "is a precursor of our times" (Hans Magnus Enzensberger) especially if one takes into consideration that it was written at a time of great economic growth throughout Europe and when Sweden was the symbol of the most perfect and workable social welfare system-a role model. The book anticipates the modern debate about the dignity of life and euthanasia". Wijkmark's book anticipates the debate on the quality of life and the impossibility to satisfy all needs. Its central idea is that when quality of life cannot be kept at the maximum level, we have to sacrifice ourselves to benefit the community of which we are part" (4) .

Narratives from 2020 Covid-19 pandemic. Cure well cure all.

Note No.1 - "The patient had won national swimming championships in his youth but now had a lot going against him. As he waited for a kidney transplant, doctors in the northern Italian town of Brescia discovered he had heart disease and had contracted the coronavirus. But what ultimately killed him, this month, was the decision to give his ventilator to a younger coronavirus patient who had a better chance of survival. He died the next day," (Horowitz J and Kirkpatrick DD, *New York Times*, March 23, 2020).

Note No.2 - In one hospital, in Bergamo, 70 percent of intensive care unit beds were reserved for coronavirus patients who had "a reasonable chance to survive". "The situation here is dismal as we operate well below our normal standard of care. Wait times for an intensive care bed are hours long. Older patients are not being resuscitated and die alone without appropriate palliative care, while the family is notified over the phone, often by a well-intentioned, exhausted, and emotionally-depleted physician with no prior contact" (5).

5. Nacoti M, Ciocca A, Giupponi A, Brambillasca P, Lussana F, Pisano M, et al. At the Epicenter of the Covid-19 Pandemic and Humanitarian Crises in Italy: Changing Perspectives on Preparation and Mitigation. *NEJM Catalist* 2020, March 21 DOI: 10.1056/CAT.20.0080

Note No.3 - "When 81-year-old Jan Andersson fell ill with Covid-19 at a nursing home in the Swedish town of Märsta, a doctor, consulted by phone, ordered palliative care, including morphine, instead of trying to help him fend off the infection. Mr. Andersson's son, Thomas Andersson, says he was told his father was too frail for other treatment. The younger man disagreed and, after arguing with the physician, summoned journalists and insisted his father be given life-saving care. Mr. Andersson has since recovered" (Pancevski B, *The Wall Street Journal* June 18, 2020 11:19 am ET).

Note No.4 - In Switzerland a *Tages Anzeiger* survey found that 53% of all people who died as a result of coronavirus infection were care home residents. (swissinfo.ch/mga May 19, 2020 - 12:29) Indeed, in Switzerland, resuscitation is denied to elderly people with coronavirus according to guidelines of the Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences and the Swiss Society of Intensive Medicine, published in *Swiss Medical Weekly* (6).

Note No.5 - In the whole of Italy, including the Campania Region Naples and the city of Naples, heart failure patients, patients with acute myocardial infarction, patients needing heart surgery, patients with cancer and patients with many other diseases have not received the treatment they needed. There was a reduced number of admissions because of the fear of corona virus infection and because hospitals have been turned into Covid-19 hospitals. This has had a serious impact on appropriateness and timeliness of care and cure. "Cure well, cure all"- this should be the program in our continent (Conference at Fraternity of Pilgrims November 30, 2020, "Cure well, cure all.")



6. Special article| Covid-19 pandemic: triage for intensive-care treatment under resource scarcity. *Swiss Medical Weekly* Published 24 March 2020|doi:10.4414/smww.2020.20229



A French Retired Professor Develops New Treatments for Motor Disabilities: The Brain-Machine Interface

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The analysis and control of nervous system activity are at the centre of considerable technological excitement. One area is especially topical, that of the brain-machine interface (BMI). This multidisciplinary field opens up therapeutic avenues for neurological or psychiatric conditions that are often left to themselves. The BMI is a means of communication, collecting brain activity for the control of motor or sensory activity. This approach is independent from the brain's usual peripherals, the nerves. It implies a box with software, transforming brain activity into the control of movement. Among the fields of application, the medical field naturally comes to mind where BMIs allow people with motor disabilities (amputation, hemiplegia, paraplegia, stroke, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis...) to control a prosthesis, an exoskeleton and various devices. Alternatively, BMIs offer therapeutic perspectives for sensory deficits, for example vision with retinal implants. In this case, the implants do not involve, as a first step, a desired cortical activity, but the cortical response to a stimulus. BMIs are also used, via neurofeedback, in the treatment of pathologies such as attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder in children, and certain types of depression.

A BMI is a loop system including six main steps (Fig. 1):

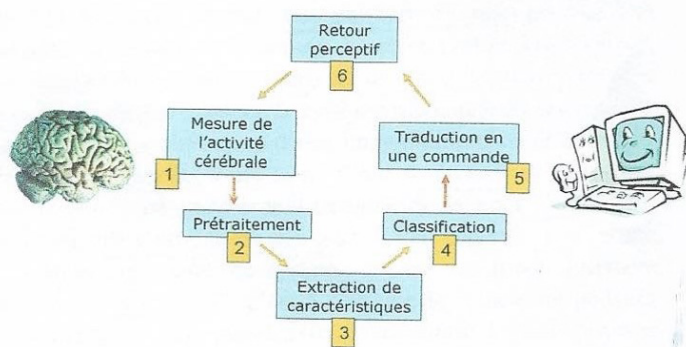


FIGURE 1. The six successive steps of BMI (with permission of Bernard Bioulac): (1) Cortex activity collection, (2) Pretreatment, (3) Feature extraction, (4) Classification, (5) Translation into a command, (6) Perception return.

1. Collection and measurement of brain activity. The recording methods can be invasive or non-invasive. The first use different types of electrode grids directly implanted in areas of the cortex with motor, visual or auditory functions and in contact with the neurons, so that they capture the codes forming the central messages (intention, ideas, etc.). Among the non-invasive methods are neuroimaging techniques: functional magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and mega-electroencephalography (MEG), but electroencephalography (EEG) with electrodes measuring the microcurrents present on the surface of the scalp remains the most widely used.

2. Pre-treatment. The parasitic activities are eliminated using space-time filters.

3. Extraction of characteristics. Desiring a movement triggers an activity in the motor areas, but the characteristics (or patterns) of the desired motor activity are of lower intensity than those of the real motor activity.

4. Classification. This step consists of defining, using an algorithm, the characteristics that represent the type of mental task performed by the BMI user.

5. Translation into a command. The information is translated into a command according to the desired application.

6. Perceptual feedback. This corresponds to the closing of the feedback loop allowing the subject to learn to control his brain activity. Without this feedback he is unable to do so. This is the basis of the principle of neurofeedback.

Among the numerous examples of utilisation of BMI in the treatment of disabled patients, I will comment on the treatment of tetraplegia, that is the loss of mobility of all four limbs, (1). This example will also show what a retired professor is able to realise.

Recently, a BMI has been developed by a French, retired professor of neurosurgery, Louis Alim Benabid, born in 1942. He is a member of the Academy of Sciences and the Academy of Medicine and was a Lasker award winner in 2014. The purpose of this technique is to compensate for the lack of movement and locomotion in tetraplegic

1. Wagner FB, Bloch J and Courtine G. Targeted neurotechnology restores walking in humans with spinal cord injury. *Nature* 2018, 563: 65-71.

patients (2). This BMI includes a system comprising two brain implants positioned in the epidural space above the somatotopic representation of the upper limb. The signals recorded by this epidural electrocorticography are processed online using an appropriate decoding algorithm. They are then sent, by wireless transmission, to an exoskeleton that fits the patient. These electrical signals are similar to the subject's intention or willingness to act and provide command and control of the effector. The latter is mainly the exoskeleton used in the laboratory but it can also be a virtual avatar used at home. During the 24 months of experimentation, the patients included in this study practised numerous mental tasks to increase the number of degrees of freedom (movements independent of each other), in terms of movement and locomotion.

To date, the patients are "cortically" controlling a program that simulates walking and allows bi-manual and polyarticular movements of the upper limb. These movements, that go up to eight degrees of freedom, involve reaching and touching objects or pronation/supination and rotation of the wrist.

More specifically, for locomotion, the part of the exoskeleton corresponding to the lower limbs is robotised and functions almost autonomously. The patient controls, in a cerebral way, a "I walk or I stop" order by triggering a switch which is an automated humanised walking software.

BMI raises ethical issues that I will consider briefly (3). The first is the collection of neuronal activity that has a



FIGURE 1: Ret. Professor Louis-Alim Benabid

personal character. It can therefore allow a third party to use it for purposes other than the patient's interest if the interface black box is connected to an external server or the recorded data stolen by a "hacker". Another problem is that of coercion. The goal of every doctor is to transform his/her patient into a "normal" human being, i.e. with the abilities that a healthy person has. However, some patients do not want to change their situation either because of personal inertia, which is often the case of elderly people, or because they fear that the proposed improvements will complicate their lives rather than

improve them. Autonomy should always be respected and patients should not be offered what they do not want. Finally, how are we going to optimise the devices so that they are at the service of people and do not make them even more dependent? It is certain that, when the mobility of a patient is improved, it is often in experimental conditions and not in everyday life. We must avoid a situation in which the patient's initiatives would depend solely on the goodwill of his or her doctor. Moreover, the algorithms used are improved on the basis of previously recorded data ("machine learning") and thus impose options that are no longer the responsibility of the user. Who decides-the machine or the patient?

The approach I chose as an example opens the prospect of rehabilitation for tetraplegic patients. Many other examples could have been shown. What I have selected demonstrates that a retired professor can, not only fulfil teaching duties, but also create new devices allowing progress in the treatment of disabled patients.

2. Benabid AL et al. An exoskeleton controlled by an epidural, wireless, brain-machine interface in a tetraplegic patient: a proof of concept demonstration. *Lancet Neurology* 2019, 18, 12: 1112-22.

3. Drew L. The ethics of brain-computer interfaces. *Nature*. 2019;571: S19-S21



Retired Professors as Cultural Memory and Reservoirs of Knowledge in the Era of Covid-19 and Knowledge-Based Economies

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Mokgolodi H.L.

The outbreak of Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has opened our eyes to a new reality. The reality that our historical and cultural heritages are knowledge resources that are available for use during times when methods, processes, technologies, and knowledge are tested for solutions to human problems. Geseew (1) observed that “to manage the

Covid -19 crisis, Africa must learn from the history of HIV, TB and other diseases. A delayed introduction of treatments and vaccines should not be repeated. And countries should first do all they can to prevent the crisis”. Examples of these historical and cultural heritage knowledge resources include: Frantz Fanon; Steve Biko; Bob Marley; Nelson Mandela; Aristotle; Shakespeare; Kwame Nkrumah; Ratsie Setlhako; and many more.

We view retired professors in a similar way, as knowledge resources available for use in the era of Covid - 19 and the knowledge economy. Ehrich, Nwaneri, and De Santo (2) in “Falling back to experience: retired paediatric professors as a solution to Europe’s child health care crisis?”, highlight how retired professors’ experience has seen them through all stages of research during their careers, hence becoming instrumental in assisting young professionals to come up with solutions to crisis situations. They indicated how retired professors acquired “basic research during their early years in medicine, then a longer phase of translational research and clinical research during their most active years, and public health care research at the end of their career”. This sequential, ‘over time’, acquisition of skills and knowledge by retired professors has been instrumental in advancing and capacitating young professionals to deal with emerging human needs. The skills and knowledge that

retired professors have acquired over time are needed to close the economic gap of trying to get trained personnel with the same skills. This then ensures that “the human capital of age” which has been an under-utilised resource is put to good use. The era of Covid -19 has highlighted the need for countries to be self-sufficient and self-sustaining, thus making use of human experts, as resources, available for economic sustainability an imperative.

Current young professionals may not necessarily cope with emerging challenges without tapping into the historical and cultural memory of retired professors. For instance, Ellapen et al (2020), described how, even in his retirement, Professor Gert Lukas Strydom (the father of bio-kinetics in South Africa) continued to conduct research in that field (3). The retired professor’s contribution to the profession was considered priceless. The contributions made by retired professors to paediatrics and bio-kinetics in the examples given above, resulting from research undertaken over years, forms a reservoir of knowledge that young professionals can tap into.

According to De Santo (4), “Recent data have shown that emeriti or retired clinical professors of 99 universities in 20 countries of high, low and intermediate GDP, continue to be very productive and their creativity is marked by a constant scientific output” as can be seen from their many publications, teaching, supervision and, most importantly, their ability in sourcing out- funding. De Santo, concerned with the fact that senior professors seemed to attract more funding and grants than their junior counterparts, suggested that senior and retired professors can mentor young lecturers and reduce the workload of teaching for retired professors. A case in point here at the University of Botswana is that of Professor Bagele Chilisa. Professor Chilisa is one of the few renowned and widely-cited scholars from the African continent and is nearing retirement. The knowledge and skills she has developed over time, and the amount of funding she attracts into the University of

1. Geseew, H. Africa waited for solutions to past health crises: will it be different for Covid-19? The Conversation, July 1.2020 Available at: <https://theconversation.com/africa-waited-for-solutions-to-past-health-crises-will-it-be-different-for-covid-19-140984>

2. Ehrich, J., Nwaneri, N., & De Santo, N.G. (2017). Falling back to experience: retired paediatric professors as a solution to Europe’s child health care crisis. Review. JGG 2017; 65:318-324

3. Ellapen, T.J., Paul, Y., Swanepoel, M. & Hammill, H.V. (2020). Professor Gert Lukas Strydom: the father of the biokinetics profession in South Africa. African Journal for Physical Activity and Health Sciences 26 (1), p. 71 – 80. <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC-1d0b874d4b>; DOI 10.37597/ajphes.2020.26.1.5

4. De Santo, N.G. The Human Capital of Age. Review. JGG. 2017; 65:311-317

Botswana, make her an indispensable knowledge reservoir that should be utilised even in her retirement. A group of aspirant evaluators in space development, working as public servants in the Community Development Workers Programme in Gauteng Province, South Africa, were cited as having expressed the following about Professor Chilisa: "Your initiatives must be celebrated by all Africans who seek sustainable solutions to the problems facing our continent" (UB, News online).

We note that retirement age and post-retirement contracts are creatures of statute and therefore, subject to the full force of the law and attendant instruments. However, our view is that post the outbreak of the corona virus, which caused a huge stress on economies, retirement policies and instruments need to respond accordingly. Anti-retired or ageism by young professionals, which may have been a result of these state policies, will not help nations move towards knowledge-based economies simply because of the underutilisation of "the human capital of age" resource. Different governments and universities decide when their professors can retire. In the USA age is not a retirement factor alone, therefore, retired professors in the USA benefit from tenure. The USA legislature is against discrimination of any kind, including that of age. It recognises that retired professors deserve a treatment

equal to that of young professionals as the skills of both are needed for an improved knowledge economy. Germany allows its emeritus professors to offer courses of their choice. In the UK, while retirement is at age 65, this can be stretched three more years. All players, retired professors themselves, the young professionals and government need mind-set change to ensure that all human resources have equal opportunities. The demystification may already be in progress as observed from countries and universities increasingly being relaxed about retirement age of professors. (5, 6) Our hope is that Africa will have learnt, from the outbreak of corona virus, that answers to human problems may lie in the past, in this case in our retired professors.



5. De Santo, N.G., Altucci, P., Heidland, A., Stein, G., Cameron, J.S., & Rutkowski, B. (2014). The role of emeriti and retired professors in medicine. *Q J Med* 2014; 107:405–407 doi:10.1093/qjmed/hcu026 Advance Access Publication 3 February 2014

6. Santos ACS, Ribeiro BGA, Martins JT, Galdino MJQ, Robazzi MLCC, Ribeiro RP (2016). Motivations of retired professors to return to work activities at a public university. *Rev Rene*, 17(4), 561-568.DOI: 10.15253/2175-6783.2016000400017

Our Unstable Present and Future: 3. Instability

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Tibor Szabó

than in past decades. People are slowly realising that we are living on a planet: earth with its oceans, continents,

Instability is a state of affairs which is relatively widespread in our world. We are living on a planet that is basically unstable. Nowadays to be knowledgeable about contemporary existence necessitates a degree of planetary consciousness; in the present pandemic situation it is true more so

volcanoes, earthquakes, tornadoes and pandemy etc. (1) Preservation of the ecological ambiance could help assure some stability. Sometimes even discrete geographical or planetary changes, especially the present pandemic, can influence human history's and human society's network of being. Their consequences can produce not only a sense of insecurity but real instability.

Troubles in society

Society has experienced many economic crises, some associated with wars destructive of countries and peoples. Even present-day economic instability (the periodic collapse of economies and financial markets, bankruptcies of investors, major unemployment, etc., made more

1. Szabó T. *Global World Instability*, Budapest, CEPoliti, 2018.

grave because of Covid-19) is one of the biggest causes of turmoil and trouble in society. A major consequence of today's Western economy is the existence of considerable inequality between social strata. The post-modern era's unstable economy has generated a wide stratum of part-time jobs, and, at the same time, a huge number of people who are apparently 'superfluous'. Another characteristic feature of the present unstable world is the development of modern communication technology. The mass media today display, and have promised many times over, a life of freedom and success in the search for happiness and pleasure, sometimes troubles, too (2). Associated sensual desire is creating, for individuals, an unstable existence and a sense of uncertainty. Thus in present-day society we see individualism and the scale of alienation growing. The same situation applies in most fields of culture. Consequently instability is pervasive in sanitary, social, economic, cultural and political areas. Furthermore, insecurity can interact with and contribute to instability.

Instability or insecurity?

There is a fundamental difference between instability and insecurity. On the one hand insecurity is always modifying (when it is not amplifying) our sense of reality; on the other hand instability is a permanent feature of the network of being. So, by our interpretation, democracy could not be "uncertain" or "insecure"; it could only be "unstable".

A prime feature of instability is irreversibility. An insecure situation or perception of reality could change from one day to the next, but, overall, instability is a definitive state of the world and of the human condition. For the unstable being there is no possibility of return to stable, historic periods either of mankind or of nature. The decline of biodiversity, for example, is irreversible, even though people are making efforts to preserve it. Again, were illegal mass migration into Europe to continue, it would affect the whole European network of being (and to some extent also that of the world). It would mean that there could be no return to the previously stable situation. At present we cannot know how the pandemic could influence our imminent future (3).

Liquid modernity

"Liquid modernity" (Bauman) (2) defines Europe and the world today. Accordingly before the stabilising of processes, structures, and situations can be attempted, new phenomena come into existence which create new social, economic, political or cultural forms. What Bauman means is that previously stable institutions, determining individual choices, which were once models of acceptable

behaviour, were unable to remain coherent, and showed signs of falling apart, as it were 'liquefying', before being able to reconstitute themselves in new stable forms. Such entities – institutions, structures, and models – are incapable of taking on a new aspect, and thus of being guides to human actions and life strategies. Former past guarantors of collective action are now fracturing the bases of social solidarity for so much necessity. In effect politics and morality are compromised within modern and post-modern societies. Politics is, today, in process of being transferred to the global arena, with the result that the nation state is unable to comprehend the working of politics, further increasing instability. When the state proves incapable, capricious, and unpredictable, market forces will take over producing large scale inflation.

What kind of future awaits us?

According to Richard Sennett (4) "instability since Marx's day may seem capitalism's only constant". Our free market's economic and liberal political system may be regarded as the highest point of mankind's history, yet it is producing problems for the future. It is very difficult to answer the question "what kind of future awaits us?" without falling prey to fantastic, even surreal, suppositions. The answer of the Belgian scholar David Engels (5) is along these lines. Looking back to Ancient Rome, he claims to find there signs and causes of decline paralleling our global world's present crisis. According to his analysis, Europe is facing a "downward spiral" which will end in a civil war within the next 20-30 years. Terrorist attacks (as in Nizza, Paris and Vienna) and violent actions of anti-fascist groups in different EU countries will initiate the process as Engels explained it.

What are the causes, and consequences, of this dangerous situation? According to Engels the causes are short-term, unfair competition, so-called casino-capitalism, and naive, optimistic, 'politically correct' thinking. The consequences of these attitudes are disappointment, ever-present crisis, fundamentalism, terrorism and populism, likely to give rise to the inevitable police-state and bring about the slow regression of democracy. On the matter of migration, Engels regards the possibility of Muslim migrants' integration in European society as problematic. It is apparent to many observers that socio-politically and ethnically the European Union is irresistibly in decline, in accordance with Oswald Spengler's (6) view, namely, the

2. Bauman Z. *La società dell'incertezza*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2012.

3. De Santo N.G. *The Impact of Covid-19 on Education and Science*, in: EAPE Bulletin, n. 1. (2.), 2020. pp. 19-20.

4. Sennett R. *The culture of new capitalism*, New Haven-London, Yale University Press 2006

5. Engels D. *Le déclin. La crise de l'Union Européenne et la chute de la République Romaine*. Paris, Éditions du Toucan, 2013.

6. Spengler O. *The Decline of the West: Outlines of a Morphology of World History*, (auth. trans. Charles Francis Atkinson), New York, Alfred A. Knopf edition, 1927.

white European populations are diminishing, and generally the demographic samples are not propitious. In this way "Europe is coming more and more to resemble a hospital", in contrast with migrant formations where the fertility rate is higher.

Thus, instability is a common feature of our everyday life. At present the unprecedented damage caused by Covid-19 requires a new and effective policy response

to the everywhere-present and surviving instability. The pandemic increases, and apparently expands, the already-existing unstable and vulnerable world existence.

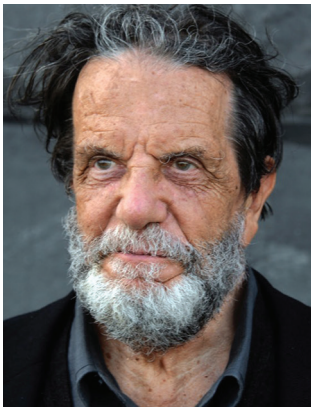


Phase Transitions: Visions of the Future

Massimo Pica Ciamarra

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Massimo Pica Ciamarra

This article is a follow up of "Phase transitions during the second half of the twentieth century" that appeared in Bull Eur Assoc Prof Emer 2020; 1(5)

Two centuries ago, living environments appeared as "*second nature aimed at civilian uses*", a famous phrase that almost anticipates

that of the late 1800s: "*if nature had been comfortable, humanity would never have invented architecture*". The Vitruvian triad for many centuries has conveyed building principles suitable for a society that was evolving with some discontinuity, but with substantial continuity, at least until the start of the industrial revolution. Since then, the sediments of human activities have become increasingly important; there is a reduction of biodiversity with progressive homogenisation of many factors; there is an impetuous and unprecedented demographic acceleration: compared to that time the world population has almost increased tenfold. This time - now identified as "Anthropocene": of long duration, though very short on a geological scale; it is characterised, however, by growing inattentions and it is responsible for the strong environmental degradation and the spread of the current pandemic that the world of science does not see as an isolated phenomenon, but considers replicable.

The need therefore emerges for a "phase change" and mental changes that push towards a substantially different

action in view of a fairer, more ecological, social structure. As for the transformations of the territory and living environments, a substantial question is to abandon the era of separation in view of that of integration: Buckminster Fuller considered it impossible to change things by fighting against existing reality: he therefore suggested making reality obsolete through the introduction of new models. (1)

An increasingly essential mutation informs the manifest- issue (2) which starts the current phase of "Le Carré Bleu". For centuries, the autonomy of individual projects has been supported by the triad *Utilitas / Firmitas / Venustas* (Utility, Strength, Beauty). Today every aspect and every component of any construction is regulated by pleonastic and cumbersome regulatory systems, a legacy of the functionalist approach. Whatever the scale - a neighbourhood or a built complex or even an individual building - it is essential to consider each project as part of a whole, no longer autonomous. Any project is only a fragment of the Environment (emergency and planetary question) and of the Landscape (no matter whether natural or artificial. It identifies the culture of the community that inhabits it; and the specific context in which it is included, which - especially in our realities - is a set of physical stratifications and an intertwining of collective or individual memories).

Environment / Landscape / Memory is a triad substantially different from the previous one: it frees

1. Sieden S, *A Fuller View - Buckminster Fuller's Vision of Hope and Abundance for all*, p.358, Divine Arts Media. 2011.

2. "*Fragments / Symbiose*", *Le Carré Bleu*, *feuille internationale d'architecture*, n°0/2006 www.lecarrebleu.eu

the individual projects of any misunderstood autonomy, expresses the prevalence of relationships and immersion logics with respect to internal rules. It has a substantial role in the three basic moments of each transformation: programming (the delicate formation of demand, often underestimated); conception (in which it is essential to distinguish the "armour of form" from specific expressive languages); and evaluation (in which the project proposal is evaluated: judging a competition; authorising the project; finally validating it).

In other words, giving priority to relationships means making sure that the sector no longer prevails; it means opposing both the platitudes of the "terrible simplifiers", and self-referential projects, expressions of the selfishness of the clients and / or the narcissism of the designers. Prioritising relationships also tends to avoid urban planning tools whose rules favour isolated interventions and encourage land use; they are expressed through volumetric and useless surface indices; they point to density and social relationships. A new, virtuous model requires that the basic choices of a design -which leave ample room for individual expressive languages- derive from participatory processes: the "real designer" cannot but be a widespread being. All this summarises the principles of a change, of a mutation capable of producing substantial benefits if translated into practice. It will be a long process: it requires actions on training, performance standards, and decision criteria and so on.

The current pandemic will produce a new "phase change". It is necessary to scrutinise its signals, even if weak and without clearly distinguishing what will be suggested by it. The city of the future must privilege again the non-built, spaces of relationship, public spaces available for everyone: spaces interpreting morphology and natural conditions, which strategically use the plant world intertwining its life with that of the inhabitants, bringing agricultural activity back to the urban environment, not only on a larger scale, but also through "urban gardens" and systematic green

coverage of the buildings. At the same time and in the future, every citizen must be guaranteed to be able to easily reach at least one point of the network of "places of social condensation" usefully supported by newly designed schools. Perennial ambitions: for Aristotle – quoted by Bertrand Russell (3) - the ideal city is one that can be looked at from the top of a hill; while for archaeologists (4) cities were born when the space between buildings took on meaning, or rather when this meaning began to prevail over that of the individual buildings that surround it.

Public space is the essence of the Mediterranean and European city: today, in addition to being invaded by parked cars, it is still not infrequently designed with the primary purpose of circulation. Berlin's message from *Internationale Bau Ausstellung* (IBA 1978-87), which among its objectives also had to erase these signs and redefine public space by favouring other factors, seems to be ignored. Of course, the "city of five minutes" is no longer a mere slogan, it is starting to materialise even in large urban realities. Therefore, alongside the theme of the public space - with its ability to promote identity and places of social condensation - there is a need to experiment with new requirements for the built environment which, moreover, under the strictly economic profile, determine significant added values. Even for housing - over 80% of the global build - spaces without constraints in the internal organisation are to be hoped for, highly modifiable perhaps even in the facades or in the position of the, now indispensable, loggias. Maybe making it possible for

the car to reach the floor, even if not with the futuristic hypotheses launched by Edward Grinberg in the 80s / 90s. (5)



Magazine Cover: *Fragments / Symbiose*, n°0/2006
www.lecarrébleu.eu



Magazine Cover: *Criteria for Urban Spaces*, n°1/2015
www.lecarrébleu.eu

3. Russell B, *Wisdom of the West: A Historical Survey of Western Philosophy in Its Social and Political Setting*, ed. Foulkes P, London Macdonald.
4. Whitehouse R, *The First Cities*, Phaidon Press Ltd; 1st ed. 1977
5. Grinberg E, *Le projet voiture-ville* in *Le Carré Bleu*, feuille internationale d'architecture, n°3/1988, pp.42-53 www.lecarrébleu.eu

A "phase change" will concern the very idea of periphery, synonymous with something different, not a geometric question. What is a suburb if not something that has been thought of as a separate part, often characterised by mono-functional enclosures and the absence of monumentality, sometimes equipped with superabundant equipment and services compared to other parts of the city - deprived, however, of the ones rare on an urban or metropolitan scale - in any case, an area which in the end, in its entirety and in its components, presents itself as the sum of monads without relations between them and with the system as a whole. The current issue is to regenerate them, ensuring densities such as to guarantee intensity of social relationships, co-presence and an acute mix of different activities, expressive diversity of the built, space for stratifications, multiple identities of the parts and giving characters to places, to the non-built, avoiding the boring alignment of building units and homogeneous typologies.

The suburbs are inconveniences to overcome, they need profound transformations, that is, a specific "phase change" capable of bringing them back to new centralities or integrating them into the urban and metropolitan system. In this climate, it is no longer possible to consider the peripheries as stable realities. The suburbs deny the "right to the city", they are a pathology of the territory, a product of the "culture of separation", as are the blocks at a building scale, as is any transformation of the territory that aims at direct answers to complex problems, independently of overall assessments and of a systemic vision.

The new "phase change" requires a profound change in the way of approaching the theme of the formation or transformation of living environments. It must undermine stale and outdated beliefs, such as the one that there is a distinction between architecture and construction, dangerous because it leads to justify differentiated interests. Any physical transformation of the space affects its quality and it makes no sense - above all it has little interest - to be pleased with the expressive values of a building if they do not affect the relationships that an individual project establishes with its surroundings.

A substantial "phase change" will therefore occur when, having abandoned the pathologies of contemporary building, living environments will no longer transform on the basis of buildings and objects, but will transform using immaterial rather than material relationships. For the historians of the future, we could also be the ones who started an epoch-making turning point: changing mentality, abandoning sectoral views, spreading the systemic vision. Acupuncture is not enough to transform what exists and what continues to be generated improperly: archaeologists, interpreting fragments, try to understand the meaning of what existed; the designers of the future will have the almost impossible task of making sense of sets of fragments that have never had a meaning.



The Past - Building Material for the Future

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Prof. Emer. Lucija Čok

As the first rector of the young university in the Slovenian border area and former minister in the Slovenian government, who has been recognised at national and international levels for the development of standards in higher education and one who is committed to the

preservation of linguistic and cultural diversity in the wider region, I was entrusted with responsibilities that cannot be limited either by age or by my actual position. Dynamic interventions in social life, heuristic approaches in research and mentoring young colleagues, provided a positive input and attitude towards the current situation in the world, particularly in Europe. The democratic systems in Europe are currently facing new challenges. Innovation and scientific progress are accelerating and offer great opportunities for economic and social development. Decision-making is therefore becoming increasingly difficult and requires

a high level of expertise. Competences, knowledge, and skills acquired by education have to meet international standards. Society has to become open, accepting new values and acknowledge diversity, collaboration in working and daily-life processes, rising tolerance, coexistence and multiculturalism, multilingualism, partnership.

The pandemic situation in the world, the divergences between EU members in managing immigration flows, the resistance of some members in pursuing a common policy, the division of apparent unity on the pretext of preserving diversity - all this poses an enormous challenge to democracy. What I would like to stress in this context is that the problems and challenges facing Europe in the coming years are social in nature. History, and what it teaches, is a great help to decision-making strategies. Conflicts and instabilities could be very dangerous for the stability of the whole continent. Europe, and the EU in particular, should continue to do its best to improve the security of the situation in the region, and everyone who has at least some influence on public opinion must play their part. I am challenged to write down some words, written to me in private correspondence by Jean Louis Schefer, French

writer, art history critic and philosopher, who referred to my country saying:

"Memory, the past (history), is a building material and a set of irreplaceable interplays of tools not intended for the museum but for life. Slovenia has, in Europe, at the crossroads of several civilisations, an extremely rich history; the solution is not to forget it in order to become modern or more European, it is to write it down. And to write it is not to shut yourself up in particularisms, nor in national pride, it is to ensure a considerable symbolic and intellectual force. We are all lucky to have had a European past, and only if it was conflictual, it will be now of a different nature" (1).

The adoption of this vision, not only by Slovenians, can be a driving force for all of us. We, the seniors, are the first to proclaim this vision and follow it.



1. Schefer J. L. Letter to Lucija Cok. written on 8 May 2003

Start of the Genomic Modification Era Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer A. Doudna 2020 Awarded Nobel Prize for Chemistry

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Luigi Campanella

Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer A. Doudna are the winners of the 2020 Nobel Prize for Chemistry for their development of an editing genomic method, commonly named CRISPR (clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats). It allows scientists to cut any segment of DNA. By their method the two women scientists have changed the DNA of many animal and vegetal organisms such as butterflies, mushrooms, tomatoes and even human beings.

The method represents a great advance for biologists who use the "molecular scissors" in life codes within fundamental scientific experiments. But researchers have

not lost time to apply it to agriculture and human health. Different groups all over the world are using CRISPR to change the DNA of cattle and crops. Others are applying the method to therapies to protect against genetic pathologies such as sickle cell anaemia and muscular dystrophy and even to the diagnosis of Covid-19. Fyodor Umov of Berkeley California University, expert in genetic editing says: "The number of discoveries in the field of biomedicine, which have had the same impact as the discovery by the Nobel Prize 2020 winners, can be counted with the fingers of a hand: recombining DNA, sequencing DNA, PCR and now CRISPR. We never had in the past so powerful and versatile technology as the editing of genome by CRISPR and to work with it is a really a great emotion".

The two winners-Charpentier now at the Max Planck Institute for infection biology, and Doudna at UC Berkeley -began to work together from 2011. Inspired by a peculiar Immunological bacterial system they discovered that

bacteria can suffer viral infections just as people can and that some bacteria use an enzyme called Cas9 to crumble the invading viruses and have the capacity to store, in their memory, the molecular images of the virus so being able to attack any residual invading cells.

The two researchers began to think of a way to reorganise this immune system into something able to be easily programmed for genetic editing. So, they synthesised a new molecule called single guide RNA which combines the two bacterial RNAs to address Cas9 toward a specific site of DNA to perform the cutting.

The method is cheaper, faster and easier to use compared with the previously known methods of genetic modification. Many companies began to transfer the method to market applications against very dangerous and diffuse pathologies such as cancer and rare genetic diseases.

The president of the American Chemical Society has observed that even if the discovery falls in the field of biology, it was categorised as Chemistry because it requires

very sophisticated and complex chemistry. The Nobel Prize Committee has not included, among the winners, Feng Zhang, who worked on the development of CRISPR because his original paper, based on the two bacterial RNAs rather than on the single guide RNA, was developed by the two winners.

Another researcher strongly involved with CRISPR is Virginijus Siksnys of Vilnius University who independently described the potential strength of the method for genomic editing, but that was some months after the two prize winners. To the winners is ensured a prize of \$1.1 million. The final ceremony will be celebrated, only virtually due to the pandemic; medals and diplomas will be delivered in the respective countries of the two winners. To conclude we can say that the era of genomic modification started.



BOOK REVIEWS

Scritti Pubblicistici di Alessandro Ghigi \ Volumes I-III

Authors: Spagnesi M. and Zambotti L. Padua, 2020, under the Auspices of the Unione Bolognese Naturalisti

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Franco Pedrotti

This review has been submitted by Professor Emeritus Franco Pedrotti, botanist and cartographer, of the University of Camerino, Marche, Eastern Italy. The book relates to the writings of Alessandro Ghigi, Professor of Zoology of the University of Bologna, published in journals and other media devoted to current affairs (Scritti pubblicistici).

Alessandro Ghigi (Bologna 1875-1970), was a Zoology professor at the University of Bologna. His scientific work

encompassed 370 publications on general and systematic zoology, and his lasting contributions include the 1933 establishment at the University of the Laboratory of Zoology applied to hunting, which in 1992 became the National Institute for Wild Fauna.

In 1951 he promoted the creation of a Commission for Nature Conservation at Italy's National Research Council, carrying out intense activity in Italy and establishing many contacts with international associations for nature protection. In fact, in addition to his scientific work, Alessandro Ghigi was very active in working to meet the need for nature protection.

He published 294 articles on zoology applied to hunting, agriculture, aviculture, fish farming, the teaching of Natural Sciences, protection of nature, and protected areas. The

first article, in 1896, dealt with protection of birds, and the last, in 1969, was on the protection of the wetlands of the Po delta. On the 50th anniversary of his death, his last two pupils, Mario Spagnesi and Liliana Zambotti, dedicated to his memory this three volume work of over 1500 pages collecting his 294 articles of "current affairs journalism," a vast production that covers over seventy years from the end of the 19th century well into the second half of the 20th. It offers a cross section of what happened in Italy and other nations in nature protection and conservation. Ghigi knew well the situation of the environment on a global level, having literally travelled around the world in the 1920's and 60's not once but twice, for purposes of nature protection. Reading Ghigi's writings today, we have a summary of the history of Italian nature protectionism, unique because of his longevity and his desire and ability to communicate news, facts and events about which he cared deeply. Ghigi participated in the proposals for the establishment of the first national parks in Italy in the years preceding the First World War, and saw the birth of the national parks of Abruzzo and Gran Paradiso in 1922 and 1923. He witnessed the rebirth of Italy after the

Second World War, and was involved in facing the new and grave environmental problems that began to emerge in the 1960s.

From reading his works, one understands very well the evolution of his thoughts. In the more recent articles his style, tone and way of approaching problems were no longer those of an academic-a university professor who also served as Rector of the University of Bologna-but those of an environmentalist and promoter of nature conservation concerned for the future of his nation and of humanity. His works, always grounded in scientific knowledge, were illuminated by a new light and inspired by the higher values of a naturalistic conscience.

This collection of the works of Alessandro Ghigi, produced with love and precision by Mario Spagnesi and Liliana Zambotti, provides a great service to the history of nature protection in Italy and the world.



NEWS



Report from the Emeritus College, University of British Columbia

Dianne Newell

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The campuses of the University of British Columbia (UBC) are closed, although learning and meetings will continue online for the near future. As with the rest of the world, during this global pandemic, the UBC Emeritus College has converted its face-to-face programs and events to online activities. Thus far, these online program efforts have been successful, especially because emeriti who are unable to come to campus can attend (or be featured), as can other interested members of the broader public. We use the *Zoom* platform for our smaller activities and the *Webinar* platform for large audience talks. Audience participation occurs during all our events, but of course the social and intellectual effectiveness of the interchanges have necessarily been diminished by the new technological constraints.

The summaries of our public programs are posted on

the UBC Emeritus College website; the events themselves are open to registration for access to the *Zoom* version in the weeks prior to the event. In the case of our entirely new monthly online program, "UBC Emeritus College Conversations," three UBC emeriti presenters, each of them having different specializations from one another, make brief, moderated presentations on a single, broad topic of contemporary interest. The presenters have also provided a separate, extended, moderated discussion of their topic for the "One Hour at UBC" video series developed by UBC Extended Learning, and these longer talks are available for viewing at any time on *You Tube*. Suggested reading and internet lists on the topic of each talk, as well as a link with which to register for individual Conversations, are available on the UBC Emeritus College website (ubcemerituscollege.ubc.ca).

September: Pandemics: A Conversation, by UBC emeriti professors, Chris Friedrichs (Medieval History), on a comparison of the social and economic impacts of Covid-19 today and the Bubonic Plague of the past; Claire Young (Law), on the Income Tax Act as a tool during the current pandemic; and Marc Levine (Pharmaceutical Sciences), on why it takes so long to develop treatments and vaccines.

October: Inter-generational Trauma: A Conversation, with UBC emeriti professor panelists Marvin Westwood (Counselling Psychology), speaking on the intergenerational effects of war-related traumas on the descendants of veterans; Richard Vedan (School of Social Work), on the traumatic legacy of descendants of Canadian Indian Residential Schools; and Judith Hall (Pediatrics), an epigeneticist who spoke on the ways in which chemical marks left on people's genes by trauma can be passed down to future generations.

December: Writing Lives: A Conversation. The event included contributions from 1. a specialist in biographies of Canadian artists and writers, Sherrill Grace (English), who

will speak about her recent biography of the distinguished Canadian actor, novelist, essayist, and playwright, Timothy Findley; 2. Sneja Gunew (English and the Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice), on the ways in which immigrants have rewritten the approaches to the "traumascape" that constitute their lives, with reference to the works of a Kurdish-Iranian journalist and human-rights defender, writer, and film producer who now lives in New Zealand, Behrouz Boochani, as well as the Australian, Soviet-born cultural historian, essayist (Traumascape: The Power and Fate of Places Transformed by Tragedy, 2005), and novelist, Maria Tumarkin; and 3. the political scientist and poet, Philip Resnick, about his venture into autobiography with *Itineraries: An Intellectual Odyssey* (2019). The moderator is UBC Professor Emeritus, Ira Nadel (English).



Slovenia Professors Emeriti

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Slovenia Professors Emeriti is a network created on October 5, 2020. It is closely linked with the European Association of Professors Emeriti. Participants in the network include professors emeriti in Slovenia and the neighbouring countries Austria, Croatia, Hungary, and Italy. The network is open and is expected to expand.

The fields of activities of professors emeriti in the network depend on their scientific field and requirements as they find them in work. They will collaborate by e mail according to problems observed and will focus on actions needed and desired. The network is highly interdisciplinary.

We are asking for interests in the collaboration of professors emeriti in Central Europe, and the initiation of joint actions. We are inviting organisations sharing interest to join the group preparing the Seniors 55+ e-Services Guide, Edition 2020. *e Inclusion in Active Aging. For adults 55+ taking care of parents 75+*.

All countries need such a guide at country, regional, and local (city, municipality) levels. According to our knowledge, Canada is the most advanced country in this regard. Institutions at all three levels have been publishing

an annual *Seniors Guide* for two decades already.

A common structure and design can apply for the *Seniors Guide* in the countries of Central Europe. The *Guide* can be available on the Internet in English and the relevant national language, and printed in the national language in each of the participating countries. To view the Slovenia experience in 2019, you are welcome to visit *Seniors Services Guide (55+)* in Slovenia, <http://eregion.eu/seniors-eservices-guide-55-slovenia/>.

The idea of publishing *e Services for Seniors Guide* emerged during the course of numerous actions related to *eInclusion in Active Aging & Silver Economy* in Slovenia, over a period of three years. The links to the actions are published at Slovenia Professors Emeriti.

Professors emeriti can play an important role by disseminating the idea and engaging according to their interests.





Summary of the Regulations for the Recognition of the Title of Emeritus Professor Issued by the Federico II University of Naples - October 2020

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Objective Requirements

Recognition of the title for Professors who have carried out at least 20 years of activity as First Level Professors.

Subjective Requirements

1. Professors who have achieved particularly high-quality standards in carrying out research activities and of scientific production.
2.
 - a) Professors who have held roles of responsibility in the structures and organisation of the University.
 - b) scientific assignments of significant importance.
 - c) prestigious national and international awards or recognitions relating to scientific and research activities.
3. The recognition can only be given to teachers who:
 - a) have not received criminal convictions
 - b) have not been subject to disciplinary measures
 - c) have not been subject to measures by the University for scientific and didactic failures
 - d) have not violated the code of ethics
 - e) have been retired for no more than 12 months.

Benefits

- 1 - Professors Emeriti can continue to carry out research activities, not as scientific managers but within groups, projects, research centres.
- 2 - Within the framework of the current regulations, the teaching contracts.
- 3 - They have the right to access the computer network, University mail and the library system.
- 4 - By invitation they can participate, without voting rights, in the meetings of the department to which he belonged at the time of retirement.
- 5 - The Department can make available, to the Professor Emeritus, space so that he can continue to frequent departmental facilities, use documentary resources and continue to carry out teaching and research activities.



Minutes of EAPE Council Meetings

Luigi Campanella

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EAPE Teleconference, September 15, 2020

All the Members of the Board are present.

The President reads the day order mailed to all the present by the General Secretary.

During communications of the Secretary George Christodoulou announced that he represented the Association and spoke at the funeral of Emeritus Professor of Cardiology of Athens University E. Vorides, a very distinguished colleague.

Georgia Drosatou reported that she has received the acceptance of membership of Professor Emeritus Michel Botbol, from the University of Best, France.

George Christodoulou enquired whether Academician Professor D. Lecic-Tosevski, from Belgrade University had officially

accepted our invitation and Luigi reported that he will look into this matter and inform Georgia accordingly.

The first point discussed refers to the discrepancy between registered members and the number of those who paid the subscription fee: it is agreed that the president will write a letter of reminder about the dead line for renewal on September 30 leaving more drastic behaviour to be considered for the future. It is also hypothesized that the not paying members can be considered for a short time as inactive members.

In the second point of the order Les reported about his activity as our representative on the European Active Ageing Network: there had been communications in the fields of adult education, cultural heritage and of the home working economy. He will

circulate these and also circulate our Bulletin to the Network

About Slovenian Emeriti Association it is decided that any collaboration must be processed by EAPE and not by single members of it.

Dennis Cokkinos reports about his efforts as Chair of the Advocacy Committee to increase the number of members of EAPE: unfortunately many requests and very few answers. On the contrary some successful contacts with Europeana (it is agreed to be present at their virtual conference with a presentation of our activities) and with European Cornell Association. Dennis recognizes the great help obtained in this advocacy action from Georgia Drosatou.

Luigi Campanella as Chair of the Ethics Committee refers about adhering members with very positive perspectives. On request of president an involvement of the Ethics Committee in the field of the Protection of Nature (in progress) is strongly auspicated.

About the institution of new Committees is agreed that the least number of members already established as 7 can be covered also with not European members (as associate members).

A new Committee expressly dedicated to covid19 is unanimously suggested.

George Christodoulou and Natale G. De Santo have suggested to activate a Committee on Brain Health. It was decided that George continues his search and will find enthusiastic person and will write an outline for the Council at proper time.

Finally the President reports about the collected contributions for the next issue of the EAPE Bulletin that every councilor had already received.

Next teleconference is scheduled on 15th October according to the official calendar approved in a past meeting of the Board.

Council Meeting, October 15, 2020

Participants: Natale De Santo, Les Ebdon, Patrick Berche, Maria Ochsenukuehn-Petropolou, George Christodoulou, Liv Mjelde, Nikos Markatos, and Luigi Campanella.

Absent: Dennis Cokkinos, Georgia Drosatou.

At the beginning Patrick Berche on request of the President recalls all the other members the dramatic time we are living with particular attention to the decision of President Macron to establish in France the status of curfew from 9pm to 6am, clear mark of the increasing number of deaths following the increase of number of people with Covid19 (more than 20,000/day).

The General Secretary confirms that the final version of the minute of the last teleconference which has taken into account all the observations from the members of the Board must be considered definitely approved

As Georgia Drosatou was unable to take part at the teleconference she mailed all the members the last data about new members and last paid fees.

Les Ebdon dealt with the issue of Central Europe where possible programs dedicated to older part of population are in progress, even with a dedicated specific day in UK. Having as target

well mental health especially in old age "George Christodoulou reported on the findings of research conducted by him and his collaborators (Society of Preventive Psychiatry) concerning the mental health effects of the coronavirus infection in Greece during the first wave of the infection. Older people were particularly vulnerable concerning deterioration of their quality of life. The studied population reported stress, depression, anxiety, phobic symptoms and obsessional preoccupations. People suffering from physical or mental illness were particularly vulnerable". EAPE cannot be disinterested to such precious activities so important to social ethics

Concerning next EAPE's General Assembly it should be scheduled on next December and performed on line from remote. Nikos Markatos could be out of Greece for 6 months so unable to manage the organisation of the conference, if not -he will let us know-he is well available to do it. He will advise us during the next 8-10 days.

Concerning Committees it is decided that the birth of new ones proceeds through a list of potential interested members, the assumption from one of them of the role of starter, the election of the official Chair and Secretary. Concerning the existing Committees their Chairs are requested to communicate to the General Secretary Composition and chair/secretary members. Liv Mjede decided to take actively part to the Committee on Mental Health.

About the new Committees President and part of the Council communicate to have had preliminary contacts for constituting Committees for Mental Health, Nature Protection. Nature Protection has attracted the interest of 8 EAPE Members – so as suggested by Luigi Campanella Natale will invite them to proceed to activate it following the usual procedure.

In addition it was felt important to adequate the participants of the Committee for Culture that is presently composed by three Members. The President asked Les Ebdon to consider the possibility to take on the Chair. Les however he explained that he does not feel comfortable with this task, so Natale will further explore new possibilities till next Council meeting. He also informs that Lucija Cock, Dana Baran, Massimo Pica Ciamarra, Dianne Newell have declared their willingness for this to be part of culture committee. Also Maria Carla Galavotti declared her willingness to participate but not before next spring. So there is a need to complete the list with active members.

Finally Natale De Santo asks that all the members of the Board write a 400 word text to tell about their transition time from professor to retired/emeritus professor. All the contributions will be inserted in a Supplement of EAPE Bulletin related to The World Day of Older Persons. For this supplement relevant material has been collected with the help of Raymond Ardaillou, Dianne Newell, Malcolm Phillips, Jože Gričar.



FORTHCOMING CONGRESSES

The Centenary Congress of the International Society for the History of Medicine (1921-2021)

Riga, August 2021

Dana Baran

ISHM General Secretary

Email: ishmsecretariat@gmail.com

The 47th Congress of the International Society for the History of Medicine (ISHM) was initially scheduled to take place in Riga (Latvia), in August 2020. This pre-centenary Congress of the ISHM has been postponed to **August 21st-23rd, 2021** due to the ongoing SARS-CoV-2 pandemic and in the hope of a classic "face to face" meeting. Nevertheless, the Congress has been formally opened virtually on August 24th, 2020. The 47th ISHM Congress will be held in August 2021 as the *Centenary ISHM Congress* either in an online version, or in a physical form, if possible. In one way or another, there will be a chance to meet each other again, analysing and better understanding the history of medicine and medical ethics, as well.

Under these particular circumstances, *the call for papers has been renewed* and the deadline for abstract submission is now **March 8th, 2021**. The limit for one presenting author is of three abstracts (English language), as specified on the

site of this scientific event (<http://ishm2020.rsu.lv/>; [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com/ishm2020); [twitter.com > ishm2020](https://twitter.com/ishm2020); [> frontend](http://express.converia.de)).

Celebrating one hundred years of uninterrupted activity – except for WWII time-lapse – is a unique moment. Globalised pathologies and fight against various life threatening conditions redimension the necessity of international cooperation in the attempt of drawing useful lessons from the past intended to improve present and future history of humanity.

EAPE members are kindly invited to visit the Congress website and participate in the 47th ISHM Congress.



■ INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

The Bull Eur Assoc Profs Emer is a multidisciplinary journal fostering the idea that the vocation for research and teaching is for life and protecting full use of the human capital of professors emeriti.

The Bulletin adopts the Vancouver style. Authors are invited to visit the website of the Association and read the last issue.

Manuscripts shall be in good English in Word, font 12, with good illustrations and shall be emailed to the editor in Chief, Natale Gaspare De Santo MD.

• Email: nataleg.desanto@unicampania.it

Original manuscripts (Word file) around 900-1100 words shall include affiliation(s), email and phone numbers of the authors. A portrait of the 1st author is required. 1 Figure and 1 Table (emailed on separate sheets) and a maximum of 6 references and a minimum of 3 are allowed. References must be numbered and ordered sequentially as they appear in the text. When cited in the text, reference numbers are to be in round brackets.

Manuscripts related to news about emeriti and their associations shall be limited to a maximum of 500 words, and up to 3 references; no portrait of the author is required, but 1 Figure or 1 Table can be added.

All manuscripts undergo editing.

At the end of the article number references consecutively in the order in which they are first mentioned in the text. For articles with more than 6 authors, list the first 3 authors before using "et al."; For articles with 6 authors, or fewer, list all authors.

JOURNALS

1. *Journal article published electronically ahead of print*: Authors may add to a reference, the DOI ("digital object identifier") number unique to the publication for articles in press. It should be included immediately after the citation in the References.

Bergholdt HKM, Nordestgaard BG, Ellervik C. Milk intake is not associated with low risk of diabetes or overweight-obesity: a Mendelian randomization study in 97,811 Danish individuals. *Am J Clin Nutr* 2015 Jul 8 (Epub ahead of print; DOI: [doi:10.3945/ajcn.114.105049](https://doi.org/10.3945/ajcn.114.105049)).

2. *Standard journal article*. List all authors when 6 or fewer; when 6 or more, list only the first 3 and add "et al." Abbreviate journal titles according to *Index Medicus* style, which is used in MEDLINE citations.

De Santo NG, Altucci P, Heidland A et al. The role of emeriti and retired professors in medicine. *Q J Med* 2014;107: 407-410

3. Committee on Infectious Diseases, American Academy of Pediatrics. Measles: reassessment of the current immunization policy. *Pediatrics* 1989; 84:1110-1113.

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2. Committee report or corporate author

World Health Organisation. Good Health Adds Life to Years. Geneva, WHO, 2012.

3. Chapter in book

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4. Agency publication

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