

# THE DUAL DIPLOMA TIMES

WRITTEN BY STUDENTS AROUND THE WORLD

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## On a Mission, Fighting Extinction

by Teresa Pereira Fernández

**How the success of the DART mission lights the future of humanity and what other measures are being taken against our abundant threats.**

The DART mission is a NASA project that began in 2016, the first one with the intention of diverting the trajectory of an asteroid through kinetic impact. The chosen asteroid was Dimorphous with a 160m diameter and reachable from the Earth. On September 26, 2022, the spacecraft was launched and it successfully impacted the asteroid. After analyzing all the new data, it has been reported that this little man-made object did change the trajectory of the targeted asteroid, more precisely it reduced its orbit by 32 minutes!

This is one of the most important victories of the human species in the 21st century because it is the first time that we are able to impact the motion of an object in outer space, and the first proof that we can defend ourselves against asteroids, which the dinosaurs paid for very dearly. This mission symbolizes hope and increases our defense against space threats. As NASA Administrator Bill Nelson said, "This mission shows that NASA is trying to be ready for whatever the universe throws at us."



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NASA and other special agencies like ESA are taking their new objective, Planetary Defense, very seriously, developing other missions like Parker Solar Probe. This mission studies the Sun like never before, being the closest spacecraft ever. This is important to understand life on Earth, but also to protect our electric systems and satellites by predicting Sun winds, ionized gasses from the Sun which could affect satellites or interfere with our electronics causing a catastrophe.

Before going into the other risks regarding human existence, let's go further and consider why are these measures being taken, and why do we so intensely want to survive as a species, even when we are not going to be there to see it? Well, it is basic biology; it is in our DNA. In other words, we are still existing on Earth because life was programmed to survive at some point in evolution. No matter what your beliefs are or how you think that we were created, this is a true miracle; the capability of developing the type of intelligence that discovers how to adapt to our environment and protect ourselves from things as big as asteroids. I think it should be preserved, to see which "impossible" things could we achieve.

The first field of danger that we face is natural disasters on Earth. We have already seen a pandemic in the 21st century that was able to stop our society. Currently, investigations into more contagious diseases are being conducted. These measures against new viruses, The WHO Director marks, gives science a priority over politics, and highlights the importance of a globally-coordinated response.

Volcanic eruptions are another thing to pay attention to, with no solutions until now. NASA developed a huge geoengineering idea project to neutralize the possibility of an eruption in Yellowstone. They would drill an 8km borehole in the hydrothermal system and then pump loads of water, which would cool down the magma and make it less active. The water returned to the surface could be used for generating electricity. This would cost millions of dollars and hundreds of years, but we know there is a possibility to stop what once was unstoppable.

But above all, the worst threat to life on Earth in the near future will be climate change. We already have heard about it and how to avoid it, but I want to look into what affects it the most. According to U.S. Global Change Research Program 2017, humans have caused 95% of the changes in climate since the 1950s. Day-to-day life only causes 6% of the gas emissions to the atmosphere. The ones who really pollute are the Heat and Electricity producing industries, the industry in general, and agriculture, casting a total of 75% of greenhouse gasses. This is what all the politicians around the world should reach an agreement on regulating if we want to actually change anything.

New solutions for this might be utilizing ocean waves for energy, which have the potential necessary to power 64% of the United States, or solar roads, which absorb energy and could charge electric cars.

Finally, we arrive at Artemis I and its partner Space-X, people working on the permanent solution, life outside of earth. Artemis I is the first in a series of missions that will take us to the Moon and later to Mars, which is also the objective of SpaceX. These missions will develop technology to get further and further in space, search for other suitable planets, and power our spaceships to get out of the solar system and expand humanity throughout the galaxy. Physics Professor Michio Kaku's book *The Future of Humanity* gives a glimpse into this interstellar future.

Despite knowing that so many bad things could happen with a wrong use of technology, with bad treatment of our planet, or with a new formation of bases to colonize planets, I have faith. I believe that if we prioritize the funding of sciences and investigation, we will have a clean future. I see humanity united with the objective of expanding, surviving, and discovering more about the universe, given that most of our physics and engineers are people who have a hopeful and open view. You could even take part in investigating these solutions. As Roosevelt once said, the only thing we have to fear is fear itself, in this case, fear of the future.

# The Rise of Extremes in Europe

By Margaux Peillet

While Europe has been aspiring for lasting political peace since the end of World War II, the growth of extreme right-wing rhetoric makes the European community fear the worst. The rise of the extreme right does not date from yesterday, but it has never been as strong as during this last decade.

If you follow world politics, you may be aware that this trend is not limited to a few countries.

For example, Sweden and Italy show that the far right is becoming commonplace in Europe. This is a global structural evolution.

If we take Italy as an example, the election of Giorgia Meloni, the leader of the ultraconservative party *Fratelli d'Italia*, or Brothers of Italy, owes its success as much to the broken promises of its opponents as to the aura of its leader.

As of October 22, 2022, Giorgia Meloni became the Prime Minister of Italy. Meloni, a 45-year-old woman who, as a young activist, said she admired Mussolini, has succeeded in de-demonizing her image and rallying around her name the fears and anger of millions of Italians faced with the significant problems of daily life. Demonization is at the center of the strategy of the extremes.

This rise of the extreme right is not especially surprising. While the many far-right parties and movements on the European continent have some differences, they all share common traits, including their strong social conservatism, rejection of immigration, and nationalism. The rise of the far-right vote in Europe is linked to multiple factors, including several crises that have affected the continent in recent years.

The feeling of decline and economic insecurity of Europeans, amplified by the energy crisis, is likely to strengthen it a little more in the ballot box: other elections are expected to be contested in the coming weeks and months, in Slovenia, Finland, or Denmark. This phenomenon is likely to continue for a while.



Giorgia Meloni presents a speech to parliament in Rome.

# The Rebirth of the Dragon

By Héctor Montejano García

China is undoubtedly one of the countries with the longest, deepest, and richest history in our world. Its foundation dates back to 221 BC, when the Qin dynasty inaugurated Imperial China. Although there were civilizations before the Qin state, it was with them that China started its quest to be a great power.

China had had relevant kingdoms since 2100 BC, with the Xia Dynasty. In 1368 AD, a new dynasty arose in China, the Ming, which changed its history after defeating the Yuan Dynasty, heirs of Genghis Khan's conquests. China got a name for herself internationally with this dynasty, and even Europeans established a regular trade with them (for example, the Spanish with the Manilla Galleon). However, because of many factors, they were overthrown in 1644 by the Qing Dynasty, the last of Imperial China.

The Qing Dynasty ruled until 1912, a year after the Xinhai Revolution exploded, and Puyi, the last Emperor of China, stood down, leading to the foundation of the Republic of China. However, the fall of Imperial China did not happen in just a day. Instead, it was caused by almost a century of humiliation and internal turmoil, known by the Chinese as the "Century of Humiliation".

This period is crucial for the Chinese people nowadays, and it has been the moral base of China's rise in the last 40 years. It started with the Chinese defeat in the First Opium War (1839-1842) against the British, which made the Qing cede Hong Kong to the British Empire as a trading port. Many more defeats came from this war. For example, the loss of what nowadays is part of the Far Eastern Federal District of Russia (Outer Manchuria), with the vital city of Vladivostok, in 1858 and 1860 (Treaties of Aignun and Peking); or the loss of Manchuria (origin region of the Qing Dynasty) and Formosa (Taiwan) to the Japanese (among other things) in the first Sino-Japanese war and the invasion of 1931.

Right now, the "Century of Humiliation" is one of the main pillars of the CCP (Chinese Communist Party), the only party in the PRC (People's Republic of China), and its leaders to justify many of their policies, both internal and external. As I have explained, this century is seen as an epoch of Chinese subjugation to the Western powers. It was the quest for independence and reunification that gave the CCP of Mao so much power during the Chinese Civil War (1927-1937 & 1945-1949).

Since then, the Chinese people have tried to learn from the mistakes they committed during those hundred years. They experienced in a century what other countries had to deal with for hundreds of years: the abuses of the powerful West. However, China did not feel ashamed of herself. The opposite, as if she were a Phoenix, she came back from her ashes and is now the second most powerful country in the world.

China's rebirth has also been a laborious and tortuous process. Since the fall of the Qing Dynasty, it took China several decades to unify, and, technically, it has not been unified yet, as Taiwan's problem remains unsolved. The first years of the PRC were really tough, having tensions with the USSR (Mao had his own opinion about how communism had to work), the war in Korea and even the invasion of Tibet. They also faced some internal problems, as Chairman Mao was scared of internal opposition, remembering the "civil war" that resulted in the USSR between Stalin and Trotsky when Lenin died.

This fear led to Mao starting actions such as the Hundred Flowers Campaign (1956-1957), which encouraged people to be critical of the CCP regime. However, it was just a "purge" against the so-called "Rightists" among the CCP and the PRC with the Anti-Rightist Campaign (1957-1959). During these two years, around two million people were assassinated.

As a Marxist-Leninist, Mao thought that only by following the right communist precepts could China be a great industrial power, even more significant than the USSR. This way, he launched the Great Leap Forward, the best example of a purely planned economy. People were relocated in order to maximize efficiency and boost production. However, it did not go as planned, resulting in the Great Chinese Famine (1959-1961), with between 15 and 55 million deaths.

Mao even tried to fight a "cultural war" against the anti-communist elements in China, with tools such as the book Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung, the second most printed book in history; and his Cultural Revolution.

Although many of these measures made Mao a controversial character, they also led to his deification, similar to what happened with Stalin in the USSR. Mao Zedong was the creator of the PRC, but China's success can be attributed elsewhere.

Many people had a part in China's rise to power. For example, Jiang Zemin, President between 1993 and 2003, and responsible for Hong Kong's recovery. However, Xi Jinping, the current General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party and seventh President of the PRC, is arguably one of the world's most significant people, and his work has been vital for China's rise as the second world power. He is also the first person to be President for more than ten years (two terms) since Mao.

He lived through Mao's Cultural Revolution as a teenager, and he learned many lessons from that experience. Since he got to the presidency in 2013, China's policy has changed drastically, from a nationalistic and internal focus to an external one. He entered office with China being the third biggest economy (behind Japan) and is now the second, getting closer to the USA. He has also been fighting corruption and is leading the New Silk Road, which aims to become the biggest commercial circuit in modern history.

In a nutshell, a century ago, China was a fragmented and almost destroyed country. However, nowadays, it is fighting to be the first world power, competing with the United States in all terms (economy, military and space program). Alone, China has made clear that The West is no longer the center of power in the world and that Asia might be the home to the next world leaders and the new order.



A united and powerful China under Xi, heir of Mao's efforts



# Let's Talk of Palestine!

By Margarida Vaz

*"His Majesty's Government views with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use its best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status of Jews in any other country."*

~Arthur James Balfour, The Balfour Declaration

Most of us would find it scarcely credible that sixty-seven words in the English vocabulary were the root cause for thousands of lives lost, and so much bloodshed. Palestine has been under Israeli occupation for 75 years, and it doesn't seem that in the near future it will be any different. So instead, we're going to dig deep and try to find the source of this ongoing conflict.

The First-World War was, in reality, a blessing in disguise for Zionists (someone who strives for an independent Jewish state). When Palestine was under control of the Ottoman Empire it was impossible for Zionists to "claim their promised land," but when Palestine shifted to British hands, a new door was opened. David Lloyd George, Britain's prime minister had a sympathetic ear for Zionist organizations, so this enabled the Balfour Declaration to be approved, in 1917. The Balfour Declaration stated that Britain was in favor and available to help Jews to build a state in Palestine.

Until 1917, Palestine was inhabited by an Arab majority and a Jewish minority, but from this date forward the Jewish population started to grow like never before. Also, Jews began purchasing lands from Palestinians, eventually building an Israeli monopoly. Throughout the 1920s and 1940s, violent confrontations between Jews and Arabs took place in Palestine, costing thousands of lives. This large influx of Jewish settlers, (partly because of Adolf Hitler's rise to power in Germany), and many other factors, weakened Arab society.

The bad press surrounding Israeli-Palestinian conflicts made Britain terminate the mandate in Palestine and hand it over to the United Nations. The UN proposed to divide Palestine into two different states, one Palestinian Arab and the other Jewish. This is known as the Partition Plan of 1947.

On May 14, 1948, Israel was founded, laying the bed for the first Arab-Israeli War. The war ended in 1949 with Israel's victory over Arab forces from Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon who aided the Palestinians. In this war, 750,000 Palestinians were displaced or expelled from their homes, and the territory was divided into 3 parts: the State of Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. This is also commonly referred to by Palestinians as *Al-Nakba* (catastrophe).

Over the course of the following years, tensions rose, particularly between Israel and Jordan, Egypt, and Syria. After the 1956 Suez Crisis and Israel's invasion of the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt, Syria and Jordan signed defense pacts, expecting another war.

In 1967, Arab and Israeli powers clashed for the third time, in the Six-Day War. Israel has an overwhelming victory on the ground. Israel takes control of the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula, which were under Egypt's protection, drives Jordanian forces from the West Bank, and kicks out Syrian forces from the Golan Heights. Above all, Israelis finally total control of Jerusalem. Palestine is left behind, without protection from other Arab countries anymore.

In 1987, the first *intifada* ("shaking off") occurred, and it consisted of a rebellion against Israeli forces. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians that inhabited the West Bank and Gaza Strip rose against the Israeli government.

In 1993, came the Oslo I Accords that intended to mediate the conflict, preparing the foundation for Palestinians to govern themselves in the West Bank and Gaza. The 1995 Oslo II accords expanded on the previous agreement, adding provisions that forced the complete withdrawal of Israel from 6 cities and 450 towns in the West Bank.

Due to grievances over Israel's control over the West Bank and a stagnating peace process, Palestinians launched the second *intifada*, in September of 2000, which lasted until 2005. In response to this, Israel approved the construction of a barrier wall surrounding the West Bank in 2002, even though various international organizations were against it.

Now let's talk about what has been happening in Palestine lately. In May, the Biden administration criticized rocket attacks by Palestinian armed groups, but did not say a word about Israel's conduct, and proceeded with the sale of \$735 million in arms to Israel, plus the 3.7 billion dollars annually given. Although some countries continue to support Israel, many large companies have come forward and expressed their opinion, like the American company Ben & Jerry's. They declared in June that they will stop ice cream sales in Israeli settlements, explaining that "it is inconsistent with our values for our product to be present within an internationally recognized illegal occupation."

Palestine is not without its critics. For example, some detractors of Palestine note that Palestine's support of some groups, such as Hezbollah or Hamas, should be condemned.

We can quickly conclude that this 75-year conflict isn't going to solve itself on its own and surely not easily. There is a concern that a third *intifada* may break out and that renewed tensions will escalate into large-scale violence. All we can do is call out for our countries' help, spread awareness about Palestine's occupation and make people hear about the atrocities committed by Israeli soldiers against Palestinians. Palestinians need help. Let's talk of Palestine!



# What Rules our Current World?

By Irene Higuera Gómez

Industries surround us in all areas of our lives: the food industry, the commercial industry, or the energy industry... Although we may not think so, politics, commerce, and entrepreneurs are closely interrelated. Have you ever wondered if politicians are *really* the people who run countries? Or what lobbies are? These questions have to be analyzed to get an answer.



Mundi Photograph

Politicians are the representation of the citizens, the ones that the population elects to lead their country and make the decisions that will make them prosper or their economies will be truncated. An entrepreneur is a person who sets up a business, taking on financial risks in the hope of profit. Ultimately, these two people have the same goals.

On one hand, the entrepreneur seeks to accumulate monetary profits at the expense of the consumer, and on the other hand, the politician pursues the noblest objectives to improve the living conditions of the citizen. While politicians and entrepreneurs have the same objective, the difference lies in the methods and ways each one uses to achieve it. The common goal is the vote. Being elected by the citizens allows the businessman to get his hands on their money, and the politician the opportunity to set taxes, quotas, and tariffs.

In addition, economics plays an important role in international politics since for a country to obtain services and goods from another country, payment must be made. Therefore, countries need to have money to trade.

Advancing on the initial theme of the article, we should know what is a lobby. According to the Oxford Dictionary, a lobby is a pressure group formed by people with the ability to put pressure on a government or a company, especially about political and economic decisions.

In other words, they are groups of people, usually people who make up a company, who give money to a government to pressure it to make decisions that favor the company. The term "lobby" is created because in 1830, in the halls of the British House of Commons, groups of entrepreneurs could come to discuss with members of Parliament.

In the case of the European Union, lobbies seek to influence policy-making processes. The groups that form lobbies are divided into three branches: professional consultancies and law firms; lobbyists for companies and trade associations; and NGOs.

Lobbying can take many different forms, from a small religious institution to one of the largest international corporations. In the European Parliament at least 2,000 lobbies are known to exist.

Lobbyists in the United States are dedicated to promoting common interests that have a beneficial impact on the population and legislation. Some of these groups are Sierra Club, Citizens' Climate Lobby, and Represent.us.

American lobbies play a key role in public policy and, over the past 20 years, their influence in foreign countries has grown exponentially, seeing in them new opportunities to promote the international growth of their businesses.

The American Anti-Corruption Act of 2011 promotes freedom from conflict of interest and influence peddling by limiting lobbying and regulating lobbyist-sponsored campaign financing.

Lobbying in the U.S. is a system in which it is thoroughly regulated and in Europe, it is a much laxer system. Recently, lobbies have asked that their activities be brought to light and that they do not remain in the shadows.

Some of the negative consequences of the relationship between politicians and businessmen are that they may put their preferences before the needs of society. It would be very dangerous for a government to make decisions without listening to the arguments of the affected citizens.

One of the most important and powerful lobbies in the United States is the gun lobby. The NRA (National Rifle Association) has an estimated 4 million members.

According to Open Secrets, in 2016, the NRA donated about \$50 million to presidential election campaigns and candidates. This is why the gun lobby is so powerful because it controls a large amount of money and some politicians do not find it profitable to eliminate it as it helps them financially in campaigns.

In conclusion, entrepreneurs and politicians have a great relationship with each other as they both pursue the same goals, which are to gain the attention and election of society. They are the people who run our country.

Although we believe that politicians are the people who write the laws and make decisions, entrepreneurs have a great influence on everything they do and say. This can be seen with lobbies, which are the businessmen who give money to institutions to make decisions that benefit industry and thus make trade easier or profits larger. Lobbying benefits both groups, politicians, and businessmen, some get money and others get support, so it is beneficial for them both to work together.

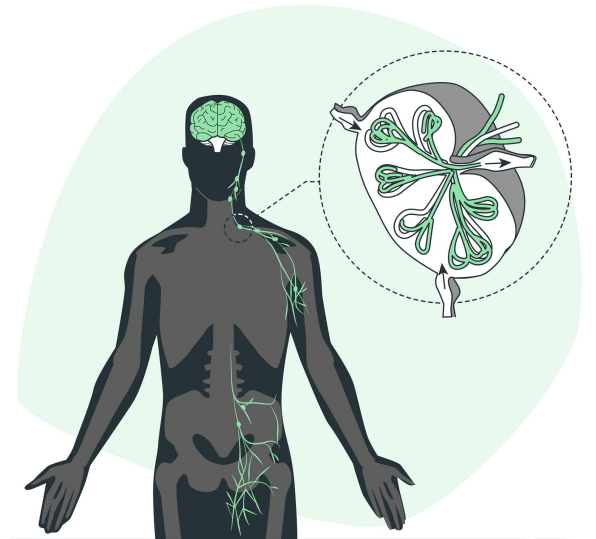
# Quick Guide for the Curious Scientist: The Overlooked Lymphatic System

By María Miró Sitges

Have you ever heard of the lymphatic system? Many people have, but don't actually understand how it works or what its function is. This system is somewhat similar to the circulatory system and as importantly, however, instead of blood, it carries lymph. It is likely that you know what a vein is or what your heart does, but do you really know what is the function of the spleen or the bone marrow? Here is a brief explanation of the lesser-known, but essential Lymphatic system.

## What is it made of:

In your body, you have lymphatic vessels that carry lymph, which is a liquid similar to plasma but made mostly of white blood cells. In the middle of these vessels, we have lymph nodes, more or less 450 lymph nodes. These structures are no larger than a bean and they filter substances that are in the lymph. Inside them, there are lymphocytes (white blood cells) that help the body fight diseases or infections.



*Lymphatic vessels and at the top left, a lymph node; Freepik*

## It's functions:

One function of the lymphatic system is fat transport. Nutrients are absorbed into our blood, then transported to the cells, which use them to carry out their functions, like producing energy, but that is another story. The fat you have eaten is in your small intestine and it is supposed to go to your bloodstream so that cells can use it, but when it diffuses into the walls of your intestine, it transforms into chylomicrons. The problem is, these structures are too big and can not diffuse into the capillaries. That is no problem for us because they can diffuse into the lymphatic vessels, the ones that are in the small intestine are called lacteals, and chylomicrons are transported through there until they are emptied into the blood circulation. This system does not only carry fats that are too big to diffuse into the capillaries but also proteins or hormones that are meant to be in the blood because they have to be expelled from the body or their destination is our cells and cannot diffuse into the capillaries either.

Secondly, the lymphatic system is a very important assistant that helps its crazy boss, the circulatory system, stay organized. As the assistant to the circulatory system, the lymphatic system has to clean up, by draining liquid. Our blood is pushed by our heart through our blood vessels and sometimes, some liquid (plasma) might leak out into the tissues when exchanging O<sub>2</sub> and nutrients for CO<sub>2</sub>. This plasma may get "stuck" in the interstitial space, which is the gaps that there are between cells and that is filled out by this liquid, plasma, that has come out of the blood vessels. Subsequently, the lymphatic system catches the plasma and returns it to the circulatory system so that the circulatory system can put it to good use.

To better understand these two functions, you can imagine the circulatory system as one subway track and the lymphatic system as another. These two tracks meet at some point to exchange passengers who have not been able to get on the circulatory system or who have been getting off the track at the wrong time.

The third function of the lymphatic system is providing immunity: This would probably be the Messi or the Ronaldo of its functions. If the lymphatic system is known for something, that is this function. This system does not only consist of vessels we have throughout our body, it also has organs that produce lymphocytes, like the bone marrow (which makes B-lymphocytes) or the thymus (which makes T-lymphocytes). This is fairly easy to remember since T-lymphocytes are made in the thymus and B-lymphocytes are made in the bone marrow. The lymphatic system also has organs to which lymphocytes travel to or stay there prepared to attack any foreign invader, such as the lymph nodes, spleen, or tonsils.

Inside our circulatory vessels, we have amongst other things, macrophages, which are immune cells that wander around looking for organisms that could be hazardous. These macrophages create a nonspecific immune response, as they phagocytose any cell, virus... that is unknown and possibly malign to your body. Once they have destroyed this microorganism, they kind of show the proteins (antigens) of it in their membrane and alert there is an intruder to be eliminated. They alert the B and T lymphocytes so that they can eliminate the microorganism more effectively and focusing on them.

Remember when we talked about how the lymphatic vessels gathered plasma that was in this interstitial space? Well, this system also gathers viruses, bacteria, fungi and macrophages that might be here too. It brings them to the nearest lymph node, where T and B lymphocytes are ready to attack these organisms. Lymphocytes are now activated and ready to start the war against the microorganism that is possibly causing us an infection. This is a specific immune response because T and B lymphocytes attack certain cells that they "know" are malign. On the other hand, what the macrophages do is a nonspecific immune response, as the phagocyte engulfs every unknown and foreign microorganism.

Our body is bewildering! It has these little structures that do so much for us every day without us even realizing it! Over the last few years, medicine has advanced a lot, and it would not have been possible if we had not discovered what we are made of. We are not able to see these little cells that protect us. Only a microscope can. However, it is true that we are the only ones capable of interpreting them and putting them to good use so that we can help humankind through research. Thanks to knowing more about this system, we have been able to understand the spread of cancer, and how the lymphatic system helps kill cancerous cells. The aims of this article were to give visibility to the possibilities of the human body and to motivate everyone to know more about it.

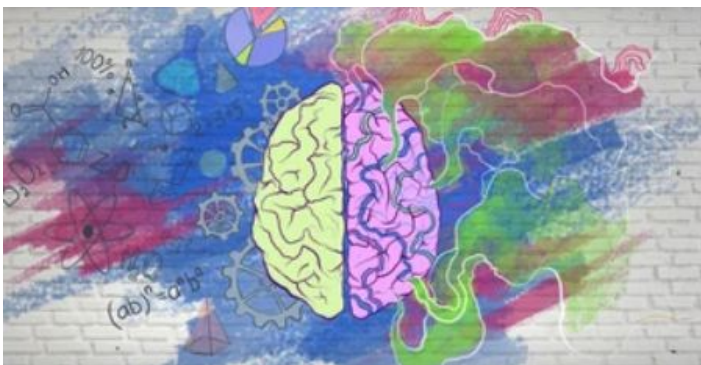


# How to Conquer Test Anxiety

By Sara Canales Marín

Have you ever felt short of breath when you are going to take an exam? More and more teenagers suffer from anxiety when taking exams. Anxiety is a natural emotion present in all human beings, which is very adaptive since it puts us on alert, authorizing us to respond when we anticipate danger. Test anxiety presents as an irrational and uncontrollable feeling of fear, dread, and restlessness experienced before, during, or after exam time.

Anxiety can be manifested in three different aspects. The cognitive component that reflects the debilitating thoughts and worries that are had before, during, or after the test, is called organic alterations and can appear, among others, sleep disturbances, stomach pains, dizziness, palpitations, and sweating. The second aspect is related to emotions and feelings, it is called pisco-emotional, and we can suffer from negative thoughts, mental blockage, and underestimation of ourselves. Finally, we have the behavioral aspect, such as spending hours watching television. The background of this aspect may be the avoidance or escape from the experience that produces so much discomfort.



*Anxiety while studying can cause a conflict of ideas; Shutterstock Image*

To avoid any of the symptoms of stress or anxiety, we can follow a series of guidelines, both in the studio and in our daily lives. The first and most important thing is to have positive thoughts. We can repeat phrases such as I feel safe, I have done it before, or I am going to do it well. Remember that you need to care also about your body, so it's very influential to rest properly, sleep between eight and nine hours a day and not stay up until dawn reading notes. Having a balanced diet is one of the crucial factors, this makes you feel much better, more active, with more energy, and above all more receptive.

When performing an exam it is normal to be nervous, our body tenses up and goes into alert avoid. But if the nerves increase more and more, we suffer various symptoms, and it becomes a task impossible to continue with the daily routine. We must recognize that we are suffering from anxiety and ask for help if necessary.

## Social Media Doesn't Let Us Fly

By Meritxell Falqués Cusidó

As teenagers, we spend a lot of our time scrolling through social media. On average, teenagers between 12 and 18 years old consume five hours a day of social media! And the worst thing is that we do not even know all the other better things we could be doing instead of just scrolling on TikTok, Instagram, or Snapchat. I can explain to you better than most adults how hard it is to leave your phone by the side because I am also a teenager and I also spend a lot of time on social media.

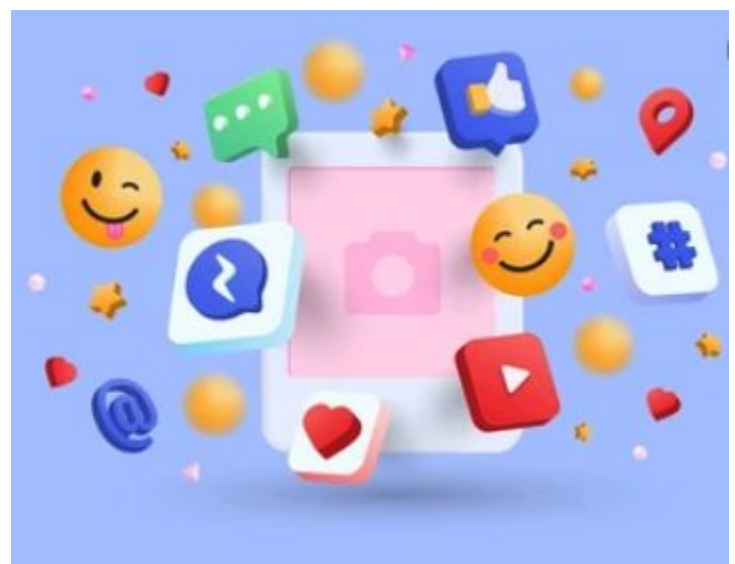
Furthermore, don't we know how to live outdoors? Imagine what we could do with these extra five hours a day? Why don't we see that social media is devouring our brains? In my opinion, we are wasting our valuable time looking at other people's falsely perfect lives. I suspect that we invest this time in social media because we crave vicarious experience. We believe, or our brains believe, that we are living or going to live that person's life. So, the problem is we do not like our lives as they are, and we try to avoid thinking about our 'imperfect' lives.

So, by what method can we love our lives? It is simple, but it takes time. You only need to take yourself to a peaceful location and ask yourself these three simple questions:

1. What is the difference between the life you want and the life you have?
2. What is between these two lives?
3. How could you take out of your life the things that are not letting you fly?

Once you have answered these questions honestly, make sure to start putting your real life first, your second or fictional life after, because one is accurate, and the other is not.

If you can't understand why you should quit all your social media, you must read *1984*, by George Orwell. I love this novel because it made me see that we cannot know if we are being controlled. It is one of the best novels I have ever read. If you don't think you have time to read, think about how much time you will have if you turn away from your social media accounts. Your real life awaits you.



*Shutterstock Image*

# How Many “Idioms” Do You Speak?

## *The confusion of languages*

By Josephine Sarsam

"Hi! How are you?"

“Très bien, merci!”

“What?”

Have you ever been in a similar situation? You meet someone new, and you can’t communicate with him? I have, and I can assure you it isn’t pleasant.

If you have ever asked yourself what the origin of languages is, it may be because you are annoyed by the confusion they cause in our lives. The truth is that this has been a problem throughout history. Imagine how many wars started because people did not understand each other! Imagine how many future wars could be avoided if we had just one language! One possible solution is to learn different languages, but the problem is that we will never be able to know the 7000 languages that exist in the world. So in consequence, we will not be able to communicate with everybody. The evolution of language is a fascinating topic. In this article, we will explore linguistics, the origin of languages, and discuss new languages that have been recently invented.

One example of the diversity of languages is in the Bible. In the Old Testament Book of Genesis, it is explained that the Tower of Babel was a construction that the descendants of Noah began to build on the plain of Senar (o Babel) years after the great flood. The objective of this construction was to defy God and take revenge on him for the death of those who died in the Universal Flood, getting the highest part of the building to ascend to heaven. Yahweh (the God of Noah) asked his angels to go down to Earth and confuse the language of the Babylonians so that they could not understand each other and would be forced to abandon the building. Finally, this tower adopted the name “Babel” which means “to confuse” in Hebrew.

Some years ago, an ophthalmologist called L.L. Zamenhof wanted to solve the problems caused by people not understanding one another. He thought that “A communication-based in a neutral language-a language which everybody understands- will, at least, eliminate the majority of the brutalities and the crimes that are not caused by ill will, but because of misunderstanding.” Zamenhof decided to create a new and universal language called “Esperanto,” which is a mix of different languages. Esperanto is a language with a phonetic alphabet-every word is pronounced one way- and it is said that it is very simple to learn since it is ten times easier than learning English! Although it may seem like a good solution, there are less than two million speakers of Esperanto. Language is part of our identity, as is our country and our family. Adopting a new language that makes us refuse our own is a rejection of our identity and culture. This may be why Esperanto has failed to prosper.

But Zamenhof is not the only one who invented languages. Numerous authors like Anthony Burgess, Patrick Rothfuss, J. K. Rowling, and Tolkien also created languages. Tolkien could speak 16 languages. Some of them are Latin, Old English, Finnish, Medieval Welsh, Greek, Spanish, German, Primitive Norse, and Scandinavian dialects. So he took his favorite parts from each language and joined them together for Middle Earth, creating 15 languages. The most famous ones are Sindarin and Quenya.

It is necessary that when we refer to language, we do not forget that there are other types of communication that are not oral, such as sign language. The expression of our body is essential when communicating. A clear example of this happened some years before, on March 19, 2003, when the United States initiated war on Iraq. When the United States declared war, Saddam Hussein did not believe it. Do you know why? Because he was used to receiving declarations of war not just with simple phrases, but also with blows and shouting (sign language), which the United States did not do!

As we have seen, languages are not something from the past, since we can create them now. Let’s do a test: pick up your computer, open Skype, and contact a friend. Both of you mute yourselves. How would you communicate with him? You and your friend will probably start making signs for each other. At first, it will seem a bit confusing, but finally, you will agree on the meaning of some signs to understand each other. When this moment arrives, you will have invented a new language, a sign language.



Tengwar language, by J. R. R. Tolkien



# Being a Polyglot, A New Lifestyle

By Paula Piña González

Speaking more than one language is difficult but necessary nowadays. We can define polyglotism as a way of thinking and also a way to show the world your qualities and abilities. However, what we need to know is that this term, its main meaning, is that a person can speak several languages fluently.

First, being a polyglot is such a great ability because it can help people improve their mental abilities. This ability can make a part of your brain more developed than that of a person's brain who only speaks one language. Being a polyglot also requires some qualities such as being motivated. As we all know here, it can be difficult to learn a new language without self-motivation to practicing that new language every day.

There are many advantages of speaking multiple languages such as the ability to adapt to new circumstances. In addition, polyglots can respond more quickly to a task or work! One of the best advantages of speaking multiple languages is that people can improve their memory capacity. Another thing we should take into consideration is the effort that is needed to achieve the term “being polyglot”. The Foreign Service Institute says, people who find it easier to learn new languages need a minimum of 480 to reach basic fluency in a new language. However, if people can not learn new knowledge easily, they would need at least 720 hours. Nevertheless, if someone has a lot of free time and can dedicate 10 hours per day to studying a language, he or she will just need 48 days if the language is easy and if it is a difficult one it would be 72 days.

The following is an important fact about polyglotism: it is not only people who can be polyglots, but also texts and writings if they are written in more than one language.

A person who speaks two languages fluently is bilingual and if an individual can speak three languages, he or she is considered trilingual. However, if someone is able to speak *more* than three languages they are considered a polyglot. If you speak more than 6 languages fluently, you can even join the International Association of Hyperpolyglots!

As the “EF” organization says, in the brain of a polyglot, lots of things happen; for example, the ability to use a specific language depending on the situation and context, leaving the other ones inactive.

To conclude, being a polyglot gives people a lot of working opportunities like being a translator in big business or working as a guide for foreign people that do not know the language of the country they are visiting. Becoming a polyglot is difficult to achieve, but it has lots of advantages. Experts nowadays recommend studying all the languages we can because we know that the international language is English but in the future who knows, maybe it would be Chinese, Spanish, or maybe even French!



Everybody is welcome to learn new languages and become a polyglot.

# The First Circumnavigation of the Earth

By Candela Sainz Sacristán

Five hundred years have passed since Magellan carried out what is called in his honor, the Magellan-Elcano Expedition. The idea started when King Carlos I of Spain realized that the Moluccas, an archipelago in Indonesia, were a Spanish territory according to the Treaty of Tordesillas (in this treaty, Spain and Portugal divided the world and appropriated one half each). King Carlos I wanted to go there and get control of the market of expensive spices. So the original idea wasn't to circumnavigate the world, it was to reach an economically interesting territory and find a pass to the Pacific through America to avoid crossing the Portuguese coast. But as we all know, this mission finished as is known today as the First Circumnavigation of the Earth, a crucial event in History.

It all started with the Portuguese sailor, Fernando de Magallanes, or Ferdinand Magellan, who knew the exact location of the Moluccas. He went to Spain to offer his knowledge to Carlos I, because he didn't feel valued in Portugal. Carlos I, without doubting it, gave Magallanes five ships: *Victoria*, *Concepción*, *San Antonio*, *Trinidad* and *Santiago*, and almost 300 men as crew.

The five ships started their travel in Seville on August 10, 1519 and went to Sanlúcar de Barrameda (Cádiz, Spain) to stock up on food and other necessary apparel; then the real travel began on September 20th. By the beginning of 1520, they were exploring River Plate and River Uruguay to look for the strait they were seeking. However, they found nothing and continued their travel, staying in Port of San Julián during winter, where there were rebellions that resulted in the execution of some crew members. After winter, they resumed their journey and according to the *Memorial* written by Magellan, by October, they found what we know today as the Strait of Magellan in modern Chile. It was the pass to the Pacific that they were searching for.

During the following year, they reached the Philippines and the roundness of the Earth was confirmed. The indigenous people had told the crew the Moluccas were close, and that would be impossible if the Earth were flat, due to the fact that they had only moved west. Also in this area, one of the most important events took place: the King of Mactan challenged Magellan and the captain died in battle with many more men. Lopes Carvalho became the new captain, but he wasn't qualified and because of him, one of the ships beached, so the crew removed him and appointed Gonzalo Gómez de Espinosa as new captain. With his experience, they reached the Moluccas in a matter of days.

When they got to the Moluccas, they loaded up tons of spices but when the ships were ready to go, they noticed the *Trinidad* was damaged and had to stay. Here is when Juan Sebastián Elcano appears and becomes one of the heroes of this voyage: while Espinosa stayed in the Moluccas, Elcano led the *Victoria*, the only ship that could sail, and decided to cross the Indian Ocean, an unknown territory, to return to Spain. Thanks this decision, they avoided the monsoon and arrived in Seville (Spain) on September 8, 1522, safe and sound and as heroes. According to the letter Elcano wrote to the King as soon as he arrived, they were the first to journey successfully around the world.



The ship *Victoria*, the only one of the five ships that completed the circumnavigation

Subsequently, the *Trinidad* was repaired and continued her journey in April, 1522. Then, a storm shipwrecked it. No crew members survived.

The first circumnavigation is one of the most important events in the History of Humanity, and it had many consequences that are still present today. According to History professor of the Complutense University of Madrid, Enrique Martínez Ruíz, the first circumnavigation provided lots of information in areas like astronomy, geography, cartography and, especially, it was the cause of the first globalization, because that expedition meant the starting point of a global system of economic exchanges controlled by the Spanish Monarchy.

During the voyage, the roundness of the Earth was confirmed, and when Elcano returned to Spain, all the maps had to be redone in order to add the Pacific (named this way because it felt more peaceful than the Atlantic) and its islands and the south part of America. Also, the crew realized that when they passed the Equator, the constellations changed and the Polar Star stopped being a reference, and was replaced by what today is known as the Southern Cross. A curious fact related to this topic is that the crew thought they had arrived on September 7, because they didn't know that there are time zones!

In the scientific area, the most important data was collected by Antonio Pigafetta, who described the newly discovered species of animals and plants, and the society and customs of the indigenous people who lived in these regions.

Finally, the first translation dictionaries appeared, in order to understand the languages of the indigenous people during the following expeditions.

In conclusion, we can say that thanks to an expedition that took place 500 years ago, we acquired so much of the Earth's knowledge, and that's why it's important for everyone to know the huge feat the crew of those five ships completed, and how it contributed to our reality today.

# After All the Pain, Is There Really Enough Gain?

By Valentina Perdrix Firpo



Margarita Mamun, Eurosport, Shutterstock

With no pain, there is no gain. But where is the line that separates sacrifice from torture?

Margarita Mamun is a Russian gymnast who knows exactly the connection between pain and gain, thanks to her gymnastics career and all the abuse from her trainers. However, thanks to all that she suffered, she won the gold medal in the 2016 Olympic games.

But where is the limit? Was it worth it? Today we will find out about her career and all the sacrifices and tortures she had to get through in order to become a champion.

A 2017 documentary called *Over the Limit* features her life before and after the 2016 Olympic games.

Since she was little, Margarita was separated from her family and lived in a sports center for Russian gymnasts. There she trained for 9 hours a day, 6 days a week. Athletes were and still are removed from school in order to focus on training, making them totally dependent on the Russian Federation, which pays all their expenses. These young girls eventually retire without a way to support themselves, and some rely on marriages to maintain them. They emerge from their athletic training without an education or skills that would allow them to earn their own wages.

When Margarita started competing at the maximum level, she started noticing all the pressure on her shoulders and how many people depended on what she did in 2 minutes on stage. Every day during the training, she had to put up with her coaches insulting and shouting at her every time she did something wrong. If she could not do her choreography perfectly, she had to stay training for 13 hours without stopping.

When the Olympic games of 2016 in Rio approached, they wanted Mamun to be totally focused on the training, so they hid the fact that her father was dying from cancer. She did an excellent job. She won the gold medal, which was her reward for all the work she had done in the last few years. However, only 3 days after she won the gold medal her father died from cancer, and she did not even know he was sick. After that, she left gymnastics forever.

So, is it worth it? Would you do all just to win a gold medal? In some interviews, she says that she regrets having spent half of her life away from her family, and she wonders how her life would have been if she was not a gymnast. She said, “I regret not having enjoyed all these years with my father. After all, the only thing I have after all of what I have done is a medal.”

She is a world champion in an elite sport. But she will never know what else she could have been.



# FIFA World Cup in Qatar: Football, but at What Cost?

By Amaury Lemau de Talancé

In 2022, the Fifa Football World Cup took place in Qatar, a small country in the Arabian Peninsula. It ran from November 21st to December 18th. In this article, we will not speak about the competition, but about all the work and consequences behind this work. So, let's go!

To organize the Fifa World Cup, Qatar spent nearly \$200 billion. All this money resulted in highly developed technologies, worthy of the best engineers. The first notable technology was the offside detection system, called system automated offside technology (SAOT). To calculate the exact position of the players, 12 cameras recorded 29 points on each player 50 times per second. In addition, a sensor in the middle of the ball sent data 500 times per second! All this data was calculated automatically and then transmitted to a specialized center, which verified the information. The final decision was transmitted to the referee, with visual support for the viewers. This technology, therefore, improved the efficiency of refereeing (there are normally fewer errors) while being fast; indeed, the whole process takes only 20 seconds, which is fast compared to the 80 seconds on average of the current technology (the VAR).

Qatar has ingeniously designed these stadiums, building seven of the eight stadiums that hosted the players. All the stadiums are aesthetically impressive and have a capacity of at least 40,000 people. While some are ergonomically designed against the wind, one is a first in the history of the sport! It is made from 974 containers (hence the name Stadium 974) and is fully demountable. So, it can travel all over the world. In addition to being practical, this stadium also cost less to construct. So, it could be the start of a new way of building in the world. The future will tell.

Qatar and FIFA boast the eco-responsibility of the 2022 World Cup, especially with the creation of Stadium 974. But the reality is different.

Indeed, the organizers have stated that the 2022 World Cup would be "carbon neutral." But according to an analysis by Carbon Market Watch (CMW), an NGO, this claim is completely false, as the organizers calculated the carbon footprint over the entire lifespan of the stadiums, not for the duration of the World Cup.



Photo of Stadium 974



Photo representing the fictitious points of the SAOT

After Fifa, these stadiums will be abandoned, as Qatar is a small country that does not attract many people to sporting events. Gilles Dufrasne, the author of this analysis, and member of CMW says, "These stadiums have been constructed specifically for the World Cup. Future extensive use of so many stadiums in such a small geographical space is uncertain, especially when considering the fact that Doha had only one major stadium before it was awarded the World Cup." Monoliths cannot be evaluated for their efficiency, if they serve no purpose.

Eco-friendly measures helped reduce carbon emissions. Nevertheless, constructing the stadiums and transporting materials and spectators to them polluted the environment, as did the associated travel and consumption at nearby hotels, shops and restaurants. This can be considered as "normal" pollution for an event of this magnitude, as we have no other ecological alternatives. But they cannot be underplayed or disguised. The geographical location of these stadiums adds a unique need to consume electricity. Indeed, Qatar is in a deserted and arid area, where the temperature is very high, even at night. In November, the average temperature is 27° celsius or 80° Fahrenheit. To counter the heat, the eight stadiums used for the World Cup have been equipped with huge air-conditioning units.

Finally, the World Cup in Qatar also caused a controversy concerning the respect of human rights. In fact, to organize the World Cup, Qatar hired migrant workers, mainly from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. More than 6,500 migrants worked in deplorable conditions for a very low salary. Some died from overwork or dangerous conditions, according to The Guardian newspaper. Mohammad Shahid Miah is an example of a victim of this World Cup. The 29-year-old from Bangladesh died after a flood in his room came into contact with an electric cable. These deaths could have been avoided with more precautions and care given to these migrants.

In conclusion, the Qatar World Cup is the subject of much discussion, both because of the many technological innovations and because of the negative consequences to workers and the environment. Nevertheless, it will not be the last event of its kind, as the Winter Olympics planned for 2029 in Saudi Arabia, a desert country, are already stirring up debate!

# The Park At The End Of The Neighborhood

By Irene Fraga Martín

I wish someone had told me what was going on in that house at the end of the street before what I am about to tell you happened. My name is Conrad, and I am the second son of an English couple. We used to live in London. Our life was certainly somewhat monotonous, which is why I believe my dad agreed to the move to Arkansas when he was approached. And that's where the story begins.

Arkansas was fine, but it didn't take long for me to think it was just as drab and boring as London. My least favorite thing of all was our house. Shallow wood and a rather tacky gaudy white. The previous owner had only one warning before giving us the key: "Don't even think of playing in the park at the end of the street." It wasn't far from my house, and my brother and I were dying of curiosity to go see it, but it wasn't long before my mother threatened what would happen if she saw us even thinking about it. The thought didn't last long in our heads. The only child apart from us living there was Leah, so we became friends immediately. Leah's parents were hardly home, and she used to stay with her grandmother. We became close friends. Maybe partly because there were so few other children in the neighborhood.



iStock Photo

The first winter we spent there didn't vary much from the one in London. And the months flew by. It was summer when something interesting finally happened. My brother had gone to a friend's house. We didn't have a swimming pool, and it looked like it was going to be a very long summer. But to my surprise, the summer didn't turn out to be as boring as it forebode.

One morning the news came to my house that Leah was missing. It didn't take long for reporters to come and our street was filled with curious onlookers with a lot of time on their hands. And that's when I learned that it wasn't the first time a child had gone missing in the neighborhood and that's why families had stopped coming to live there. My parents were quite worried, but my father's company was downsizing, and moving was not an option. I had a hard time, I'm not going to lie to you. Despite the short time I had known her, I had grown fond of her.

One morning I was bored out of my mind and decided to turn on the TV. It was a documentary that talked about a boy who had disappeared, and months later they found out that he was kidnapped in the same building. And then I remembered the park and decided to go there.

The park was at the end of the street. The houses on either side of it were abandoned, but there was one next to the park that looked inhabited. I walked into the park, it was gloomy and old. I sat down to think when I noticed that in the window of the house someone was watching me. I jumped up and decided to go outside. That's when I saw the window of the house open. And yes, I decided to go inside. I admit that once inside I realized what a crazy thing I was doing. The house was normal, but there was one aspect that made my skin crawl. It had a lot of pictures of animals. Rabbits, birds, elephants... I reached out to touch one of the dogs, which by the color looked new when I heard footsteps behind me and saw the figure of an older man. I ran to the window and did not stop running for a second until I was sitting in my room.

I spent the next few days thinking about that old man. I saw him in dreams, in the shadows, on TV... Until one morning I got up the courage to go outside and approach the house again. I beg your patience for my thoughtlessness. I was far from the house when a bony hand touched my shoulder. It was an old lady. I didn't know where she had come from.

"It's a nice house. Too bad no children are playing in that park," she said in a sweeter voice than I expected.

She smiled again and looked me in the eye.

"If you want to see your friend, you'll have to go to the house and tell the man that Eve says not to make anyone else suffer. It's time to forgive."

She winked at me and vanished. If I was already unable to sleep, that night I didn't sleep a wink. And in the morning I decided to go and talk to the old man. I had no choice. I wanted to be able to sleep at some point.

I knocked on the door and waited. I knocked again. And this time the man opened the door. I looked at him for two seconds and said. "Eve sent me." His eyes widened, and he gestured for me to come in. He led me into the living room and told me to sit on the green couch. Then he went out to get something, and I thought he would come back with the knife, but he simply brought me a cup of tea.

"Young man," he told me, "I guess you already know about those children." I shook my head nervously. I did not want him to know that I suspected he had something to do with it. "Don't lie to me... I'm sure she told you about it, or you read about it in some newspaper."

"But... is it true?" I asked, trembling.

"I see that Eve hasn't told you anything... Let's go back to the beginning, just when I started dating her. It was my first year at the university and I didn't know anyone. I fell madly in love and after we graduated we got married. Those were the best years of our lives until she was told she had only a short time to live... With that not only her life was gone, but also her chance to be a mother. It broke her heart to see children. For the last few months, she locked herself in the house and cried almost every day. And then that evil mayor wanted to put a park right next to our house. I went to complain wherever I could. I talked to all the neighbors. But there the kids were when the park opened. Every afternoon. For Eve the last months of her life were especially sad... and I was deeply hurt by it. When she died I felt rage and wanted revenge, so I looked for someone who knew how to do magic. And I asked him to help me hurt those who had caused her so much suffering."

I felt like I had stopped breathing. I didn't know if I should ask... how do you ask a murderer how he killed his victims?

"Do you see the pictures? The animals are the children that have come close to this house in the last fifty years," he said.

My brain felt like it exploded. He had completely lost his mind? I looked at him, and he realized I didn't believe him.

"Look, kid, you don't believe me and I don't plan for you to believe me either..."

"She told me that you had to stop causing harm... That she wasn't suffering anymore."

His eyes widened. I didn't know if he would believe me, but I got the feeling that he did recognize his wife in that sentence. He stood up. I did the same because I had the feeling that the talk was over. I left the house, but just outside the door he stopped me and said:

"I'm going to let all the children go."

I didn't know what to say. Was I thanking him? Was I leaving? Was I asking him if he would do it again?

"They're coming for you," was all I could say.

"Kid, don't worry about me."

"If you take your things you can still run away..."

He smiled at me and closed the door. And I started to walk home. Just when I started to stop looking at the house I saw how in the park were appearing adults and some teenagers who, like me, were also going home.

We had television, reporters from all over the world, and some mystery fans, but as with everything, another problem came along, and they forgot about the existence of this man. I don't know what happened to Philip, but he no longer lived at his home. None of the children (or adults) remembered what had happened, and I never tried to talk to Leah about it, but I always wondered if she remembered the time she was an animal inside a painting.



# New Era

By Daniel Pino

Krenok sat next to his pet, a giant black wolf called Dorghar, and sharpened his axe with a huge rock. They were far away from the crowd, but at a distance that he could hear Harald, the emperor, speaking:

*Originally the ancient founders came to these lands in search of peace and a place where they could live in harmony, fleeing from the wars in which their ancient people had been involved and because of that bloody history, many people label us as barbarians without even trying to mediate a word with us, although there are always exceptions, such as the village of Rügen, a neighboring village that has always remained neutral and has allowed us to exchange resources with them since time immemorial.*

He paused, then he turned his head up and continued, this time talking to the bright sun above them:

*But times change, you know? Recently, new nations have appeared in the area, breaking into the peace and harmony that we sought and achieved, they may still see us as barbarians and may indoctrinate their people in that thinking. Still, we will only give them the war they want as a last resort, as a last resort we will release the rage that we have repressed and hidden for generations.*

After hearing those last words, Krenok stood up and mounted on Dorghar. After this, everyone raised their battle axes in the air and shouted in unison:

*LONG LIVE TO THE EMPEROR! LONG LIVE SKJÖLDUNG!*

After that, Krenok set off for Rügen, following a path he knew well, as it was not the first time he had been to Rügen. But this time he was not going there to trade or have to fun. This time he went to gather information about the neighbors who had recently arrived.

When he arrived there, he found many unfamiliar faces roaming around the village. In this situation Dorghar showed some aggressiveness, showing his teeth and looking at the strangers in a threatening manner. Krenok stopped him, although he did not like what he saw and could not hide his discomfort. Intent to discover more, he continued his way to the main house, to talk with Akam Fett, the head of Rügen, a curmudgeon old man. He had been there for a long time and had always been a very trustworthy informer and trader.

At the door of the main house, Fett was looking at those strangers that came to the lands.

“Greetings Akam,” Krenok said. He dismounted Dorghar and tied him to a pillar.

“Greetings Krenok,” Fett said. “What brings you here?”

“I need some information. And I don’t know any living man that could bring me some information better than you.”

“Fine, but let’s be fast. As you can see, I have much work to do, and much to profit from these new people.”

“Who are they?”

“They are from two different nations. Lyon and Ravensthorpe. They aren’t the same. Lyon settled at the northeast, passing the Beast River on top of the Hawk-Peak, one of the tallest mountains around here. However, Ravensthorpe built their town at the southeast at the Chalk Hills.

“Can you tell me about their leaders?”

“Lyon, I’ve heard that they came from another island called Sljasvig, where their leader sent an important military leader called Sven I. Von. They had some casualties during the trip, but they finally arrived on our island where they found us. They seem to be a peaceful community that call themselves Christians and believe in a God. I don’t know much more about them but they offered us a trade pact that we accepted.”

“What about Ravensthorpe?”

“Ravensthorpe came from a place unknown to me. They came running from the desolation of their citizens seeking a peaceful place to live. They remind me of your beloved Skjöldung.”

“How?”

“They believe in a flaming bird that appeared after the sacrifice of one of their first lords. Also, also they have something called The Round Table, and those who are part of that round table, rule the kingdom with something that they call democracy. And that’s all I know about them. I hope you are satisfied.”

Krenok took a pause to analyze and synthesize all that he heard.

“I thank you. I will inform Harald about all of this.”

“Well, do what you think it’s necessary. But please, don’t bring any conflict to Rügen.”

“We will try not to do so,” Krenok said, while mounting Dorghar.

He set out on his return journey to Skjöldung with information instead of goods. Then he thought about Haralds speech. *Times change, you know?* He remembered the origins of his nation, knew he needed to get ready to fight for their peace in this new era. In the middle of the forest where he was trespassing, he yelled with fury in his voice “*LONG LIVE SKJÖLDÜNG!*”



Skjöldung flag



# Three Exceptional Women in the Music Industry

By Laia Véliz

For most of its history, the music industry has been run by men. Men who choose the artists. Men who control the image and sound of female voices. Almost every time a woman succeeded there was a man who tried to take her credit away. But as the years have gone by, we have been able to see how women have created their own spaces. They have also helped to improve the situation in the music industry and let other new female artists become successful.

One woman who has impacted the music industry is Aretha Franklin. She started singing Gospel music when she was young and ended up winning 18 Grammys as a soul singer. Aretha made history 30 years ago with her 1967 song “Respect,” (R-E-S-P-E-C-T), which talks about how she wanted to stop being oppressed, and became an anthem for the civil rights movement.

She was an advocate for the many African-American activists who benefited from her financial support and public endorsements. She has been called the Queen of Soul. Aretha has been an inspiration to many musical artists. She helped many other female singers to find their places in the music industry, such as Lady Gaga, and Taylor Swift.



*Aretha Franklin*

When she started, Lady Gaga was accused of being a copy of Madonna. But she could demonstrate that she was capable of being a fabulous artist and not a copy of anyone. When she was starting her musical career, her manager told her to operate her nose to change her image, but she didn't want to do it, as she didn't feel like herself. That's an example of no matter how good a singer you are, how you present yourself to the public will always be very important to the music industry. But the artist Lady Gaga, insists on controlling her own image. It is apropos to mention here that one of her biggest hits is called “Born this way.”

Also, Taylor Swift has broken multiple records in her musical career since 2006. She's also the first woman to occupy the top 10 positions of the Billboard hot 100 rankings. Now, she's one of the most sold artists in the world, thanks to her new album “Midnights,” which has sold more than 1.2 million copies. She had to overcome many obstacles when she was younger, like the catastrophic VMA event in 2009, when Kanye West stole her prize and said that Beyonce's video clip was better than Taylor's. Years later, she could prove to West that all of the many prizes that she won were well-deserved.

Overall, the music industry is accepting the fact that women are equally as talented as men. Of course, there are a lot of behaviors and situations that have to change immediately, but at least the music industry is better than it was in the 1900s. These 2 female artists I talked about still have a long way to go, but we all can agree that they are very talented and deserve all the good things that happen in their musical careers.



*Lady Gaga*

# Enrico Mattei: Eni now and then

By Camilla Osculati

On October 27, 2022 in Italy we remembered the 60th anniversary of Enrico Mattei's death, one of the most important entrepreneurs in Italian history. Since he was young he wanted to contribute to the family's finances, so he started working at 17 and soon made his way into the industrial environment. Unfortunately, soon everything was made more difficult because of the economic crisis, and he had to move to Milan, where he founded with his siblings an industry for the textile field in 1934.

To better understand the character, it is important to understand that he was also politically active, taking part in anti-fascism and partisan groups, so he started to rise as an important figure in our economic and political environment.

When the war finished, under pressure from the allies, he was asked to clear "Agip" (Italian state-owned oil agency), established by the Italian Government in 1926. Yet he decided not to follow this request, concerned about the fact that the state should have had a company seeing to the national energetic matter, to provide what was needed for the people and, mainly for the industrial development of Italy. In Mattei's view the primary aim of Agip should be to provide hydrocarbon to his country at the minor possible price.



*Mattei and Abderahim Bouabid, minister for economics in Morocco, signing the oil deal in 1958.*

He started to make exploration in Italy, mainly in the Po valley, and after the first encouraging results, he decided to found Eni (1953) which is now the most important company in the energetic and natural sciences research in Italy, in his first idea it was meant to be an holding to give more power to Agip and expand the activity abroad.

At that time hydrocarbon production was controlled by an international oligopoly, composed of American and northern European companies. He started enhancing the production of the existing assets, for example with the perforation of more wells to take advantage of our natural situation as much as he could.

From the beginning, Mattei created other companies in the frame of Eni such as Saipem (drilling and facilities construction), Nuovo Pignone (machines for the energetic industry), Snam for gas marketing, and Anic (chemical company). He was able to create a "system" for supporting the main activity of exploration and Production of hydrocarbons carried out by Agip.

He had a very wide and innovative vision of the business, he immediately understood that an energy state company also played an important political role, domestically and internationally. In Italy, he created a very strong consensus for Eni in the political environment and, mainly, had big attention to the social aspect of the business. He always paid attention to the employee both during working time and for their social and family life. He built entire villages for the employees, but also locations for them and their children during holidays at the mountain and the sea.

One of the important and innovative contributions Enrico Mattei brought to the economy and society was the approach that he had with the production countries, at the beginning in North Africa (Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, and Libya), the middle east (Iran), and Africa (Somalia, Nigeria). The approach followed by the international oligopoly mainly from the UK and US was aimed to manage directly all the operations and not involve and not develop local knowledge of the complex hydrocarbon exploration and production activity. In addition, the usual partitioning of the incomes was 50-50 between International Companies and States.

Mattei understood that the growth of Eni was possible along with the one of the host Countries. He started to train the local people as Italian employees through an oil business academy. In addition, he started a new type of contract with Iran in which 75% of the income was dedicated to the host Countries. His way to the business was disrupted in the status quo both in Italy and abroad. His plane was destroyed by a bomb when approaching the Milan Linate airport on October, 26th 1962.

Mattei made Eni very strong and with a very hard background and his death was not sufficient to disrupt it. After his founder, the Company continued with the same approach toward hosting Countries and developing themselves becoming one of the major oil companies in the world.

In the last years, climate change imposed an energy transition aimed to abandon fossil fuels in favor of renewable energy sources. Eni started to modify his approach to reduce CO2 production. In the last years, the acceleration of climate change requested to accelerate the transition, and Eni, as the first oil company, established a target of carbon neutrality by 2050. This will be achieved through several actions aimed at the beginning to reduce the CO2 emission giving priority to gas instead of oil (lower emissions) and at the same time developing the renewable sources already available such as the sun and the wind and launching ambitious technological and scientific programs to create new energy clean source such as the nuclear fusion.

The change in mentality and their business was not an original choice of Eni, and the same for the other companies, but was the result of a new understanding of governments and people about the relationship with nature and the environment. Public opinion plays an important and unique role in forcing the industry toward real sustainable development, also changing the behavior of every single human being every day reducing the use of natural resources when and where non-strictly necessary.

To sum up, I believe that his importance in the Italian culture and economy is to be remembered and I hope that we new generations have a great role in remembering and keeping alive these personalities that with their actions have had an impact on our country (and, in this case, also in the climate change matter).



*Enrico Mattei was president of Italian energy giant ENI from 1953 to 1962. Credit: Ovo Video*



# Double Standards in the Music Industry

By Camille Reinteau

In the music industry, misogyny and double standards are omnipresent. The expectations are different for male and female artists, and many women have felt more pressure to look or act a certain way for their fans and managers. Indeed, women always have to outshine themselves to be seen as valid when men are not held to such high expectations. Women are scrutinized and judged by whatever decisions they make way more harshly than their male colleagues. They need to be perfect: everything they do whether it be how they look, their image, their music, or their relationships is analyzed and criticized.

Let's begin at the performance level. You probably already have seen videos of Beyoncé, Dua Lipa, Britney Spears, or Shakira performing. They offer the most elaborate shows of all time. Complex choreographies, extreme lighting, staging, showy outfits, outstanding performances, etc. Now, think about male artists performing on stage. Most of the time, they barely move. For example, Ed Sheeran is alone with his mic and his guitar. The 2022 edition of the Coachella festival illustrates this phenomenon too. Indeed, if you watch women's performances like those of Doja Cat or Megan Thee Stallion, you will see that they execute choreographies while singing and have backup dancers whereas male performers like The Weeknd or Lil Baby only sing and are alone on stage.

Awards shows like The Grammys also demonstrate the huge gap between the investment expected from a female artist and from a male performer. Men's voices or instruments are enough while women, and especially women of color, need to always do more to prove that they belong. In the podcast *At your Service*, Dua Lipa and Megan Thee Stallion discussed the double standard in the music industry. Dua Lipa explained, "I think we're used to working double as hard in some ways. I feel like it's instilled in us that we have to work really hard to be taken seriously."

Moreover, have you ever noticed how women are expected to always look put together? While performing, female artists always wear gorgeous and sensational outfits, flawless makeup, and perfect hair. When they don't, they are criticized. Billie Eilish is an example of that concept. Indeed, she was denigrated because of her baggy clothes that didn't fit the expectation of women in the music industry. But it's funny to see that as soon as she chose to put on more revealing clothes, she faced criticism too. So, basically, as you can observe, whatever a woman does, she will be judged and discredited. However, on the other hand, there are men. They are praised, even when they only do the bare minimum. Did you ever notice how men performers are dressed for their concert? Most of the time, they wear different types of jeans and T-shirts and everybody is okay with it because why do they need to look extra? People go to their concerts for their talent and that's it. Male performers are accepted as what they are while female performers need to surpass themselves every time with every show. As Taylor Swift explained it, "the female artists have reinvented themselves 20 times more than the male artists. They have to or else you're out of a job. Constantly having to reinvent, constantly finding new facets of yourself that people find to be shiny".

We can also see these flagrant double standards in the treatment female versus male artists gets in the same genre of music. For example, Taylor Swift and Ed Sheeran are two songwriters in the same genre that write love songs about their current or ex-girlfriends/boyfriends. But guess what? One is considered one of the best songwriters while "Taylor Swift just writes songs about her ex-boyfriends and need to get over it". As Nicky Minaj said, "In any field, women must work TWICE as hard to even get HALF the respect her male counterparts get."

We need to recognize that we put too much pressure on women in the music industry and that it's unfair to expect as much from them when male artists are not held to the same standard.



*Beyoncé and Ed Sheeran performing together illustrate the double standard in music industry*



# Taylor Swift: Her Impact on Music and Beyond

By Beatriz Isidoro



*Taylor Swift, Instagram*

Taylor Swift as we all know, is one of the greatest pop singers of all time, arguably the greatest pop icon of my generation. We all know about her music, but she uses her voice and her influence to support human rights and what she defends.

She is an American singer, that has suffered from eating disorders, and cyberbullying that made her “disappear” for a whole year, there was no sign of her for that year, and she came back with an album called Reputation marking a massive shift in her music career and her fame. Reputation is the album that says and is mainly about what made her disappear and all the stuff that she has suffered since she started to be a singer.

She is the best example that because she is a woman people think to have the right to talk badly about her, she has one of the best quotes about how it is to be a woman in the music industry “There’s a different vocabulary for men and women in the music industry right?” she continued. “A man does something, it’s strategic. A woman does the same thing, it’s calculated. A man is allowed to react. A woman can only overreact.”

She has been known to support the Democratic Party since 2018 with the midterm election in Tennessee, her hometown when the Republican Party had a female candidate against gay and women's rights. In 2019, she made a petition to bring awareness to the White House about supporting the Equality Acts, this petition had to have at least 100,000 people sign in and she at the Time brought more than 800,000 signatures.

In 2020, she supported the Biden-Harris campaign and encouraged many young people to register to vote in the United States.

In music, Taylor Swift has won 3 albums of the year Grammys, with fearless, 1989, and folklore, and also received the artist of the Decade in the AMA as well as 505 awards and a total of 1023 nominations. She has also broken more than 90 Guinness world records, with her music. She is the woman with the most awards in the whole world.

Right now she is also inspiring young musicians that are dealing with the rights of their songs. In 2019, big machine records sold the rights to her first 6 albums to Scooter Braun, the clause that she had signed in 2006, said after 5 years of the album being released she could re-record it, so that is what she is doing right now, she had to re-record it 2 of the 6 albums. They have broken every single record that you could think of, in 2021.

In 2022, Taylor released her 10th studio album called Midnights selling almost 2 million copies in the first week alone, one of the biggest makings of her with this album was making in the first week 10 songs of the album making the top 10 of the billboard, being the first artist to make this.

To summarise, Taylor Swift has marked the history in music as well as politics and how women are treated in the music industry.

# Musicals : a Geopolitical Instrument

By Eva Nahon

The dictionary describes musicals as a form of entertainment that presents the audience with fiction in which the characters usually move from realistic expression to a dreamlike universe where everything becomes possible through dancing and singing. However, in a less naive way, we can consider musicals as the theater of social and geopolitical phenomena; vectors of competitiveness between the great world powers since the creation of this new musical genre in the twentieth century, revolutionizing the classical genres of theater and opera.

The Effect of Musicals on an Audience :

Let's break the codes and set the record straight: no, musicals are not only for children and teenagers, quite the contrary! Even if some musicals seem childish, being adapted from Disney productions like *The Lion King* or *Aladdin*, or judged too idealistic when the characters end up "living happily ever after," this is not the goal of all productions. In fact, some musicals deal with new societal issues such as the injustices and inequalities of our modern world which can affect everyone and prove that not all endings are happy. Moreover, we can note three effects that musicals can have on an audience. Indeed, the discourse in musicals can have several ranges.

First, it has an instructive scope, aiming to create a story that makes the reader think. This is the case, for example, in *Hairspray* and *West Side Story*, which deals with racial segregation. It can also charm the audience through the quality of its style and the dynamic and sparkling characters who act, dance and sing. Finally, musical comedies are also intended to move the public with humor (*Mamma Mia*, for example, is based on misunderstandings that make the subject comical) but also by the pathetic. Indeed, the French musical comedy *Les Misérables*, based on Victor Hugo's text, deals with a revolution little known by international audiences. But even if it was a real failure, it represents the revolution of the Parisian people against misery, which shows an exacerbated patriotism on the part of French people ready to sacrifice themselves to save the Nation. This is the beauty of this dedication to others and the messages represented by this tragic musical that moves the viewer.



television poster of the film *Mamma Mia*, adapted from the songs of the band Abba

Musicals: An Instrument of Soft Power, a Geopolitical Power Factor :

According to the geopolitician Serge Sur, the notion of the power of a state is evaluated in terms of capacity, influence, and radiation. Power confers to a State the sovereignty of its decisions especially on the international scene. Henceforth, within our modern and complex world, power retains direct forms of domination (economic and military domain: Hard Power) but also complements them with indirect instruments such as cultural and diplomatic influence: the Soft Power. In a matter of fact, Soft Power corresponds to the ability of a power to influence but above all to seduce other states by its attractiveness and cultural influence. We will show here that musicals can be used as a Soft Power instrument. First, we can affirm that what distinguishes musical comedy from other forms of representation is its spectacular and sparkling ability to entertain and attract an audience. However, do we not associate musicals with their history and origin? In fact, we do. Unofficially, we associate Broadway musicals, as we do for Hollywood productions, with American power and more precisely with Broadway Street in New York City, a true pole and emblem of this type of musical show. The heritage of the American city of New York, and more specifically Broadway and its musicals, attracts tourists from all over the world to attend; which reveals the attractiveness of the city, proving that musicals are important Soft Power traits.

Moreover, the success of musicals in the USA in the middle of the 20th century, has soared on a multi-scalar scale, giving the other world powers the desire to become actors which has made the market of musicals a competitive market. Indeed, several countries in Europe are launched in this race for cultural innovation and especially France which succeeds in competing with the United States through the production of musicals like the *Demoiselles de Rochfort*, *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* or the aforementioned *Les Misérables*, the later holding the 13th place in the ranking of the most famous musicals in the world. This reinforces that we live in a society in constant competition and pursuit of innovation. This competitiveness is based on the fact that we live in an interconnected world, which can be described as a "global village", in which any power can become dependent on another. Therefore, this shows that the competitiveness and attractiveness of the musical comedy market generates dynamism within the powers. Thus, these productions become a cultural asset that makes the power attractive and thus reinforces their Soft Power, vector of domination and a draft of the cultural hegemony of world power.

In short, we can affirm that musical comedies have a scope that goes far beyond mere musical entertainment but reveals a moralizing and even geopolitical dimension.



# Undercover Messages Hidden in Music

By Nora Gutiérrez Maderna

**Author's suggestion:** Before starting to read the article, check the music cited at the end of the article and play it while you read.

Have you ever wondered what famous artists think about while writing their music? Or, what are they trying to convey through it? From Beethoven's sonatas to Taylor Swift's singles, there is a whole repertoire of stories hidden from the naked eye, or ear, I might say.

## Classical Music

At first, it could look like classical music is not capable of sending messages, just using the melodies of different instruments. But in fact, each work represents the values that the author wanted to portray. For instance, the most emblematic symphony of classical music, Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony," describes the history of a man who feels the call of destiny, and throughout the different parts of the composition, this history is described. In one part, in particular, we can contemplate the description of his victory in contributing to a more fair and free world, as well as his personal achievements regarding the uncertainty of life. Also, Mozart's "Magic Flute" tells the story of a prince who falls into the power of a mischievous queen and makes him find her daughter. As the only device of help, he has a magic flute. Many sources, including biographies and dramatic representations, imply that the famous musician came up with this piece during some tough times at home: his wife had just left with their only son, and his mother-in-law was pressing him to become a better man and get his wife back.

## Modern Music

Nowadays, song writing is not very different than before. Musicians get inspiration from their experiences, write music and share it with other members of the community. Nothing changes, right? Well, actually it does. Over time, musicians have been becoming more and more influential characters in our society, to the point that there is absolutely no comparison point between Mozart and Eminem. These lifestyle changes have affected the type of music they write and even the way we listen to it, but it is still a powerful channel of communication.

Has it ever happened to you that, while listening to the lyrics of music on the radio, find yourself identified by them? Well, it comes with no surprise, as the lyrics we see now are usually more expressive than in the past. Plus they commonly refer to situations we ourselves have experienced. Artists like Taylor Swift have come to, very emotionally, represent their breakups or, on the contrary, the happiest moments of their relationships, as well as other aspects related to love, as in her famous hit "Mine," where she tells the story of a couple who has a fight, but stays in love, and how the fighting of the young woman's parents taught her to fear abandonment. Other songs are more tragic, like "Tears in Heaven" by Eric Clapton, which at first is similar to any other song talking about heaven, but that turns out to deal with the death of his son when the kid fell from the balcony of a New York flat.



Freepik image

## Controversial Cases

It has also happened that fans took lyrics too seriously, coming to "over-interpret" certain phrases. For example, it once happened that the Beatles included a reverted tape on one of their songs, and since then, fans have overreacted, believing they would find more "hidden messages" like this. In the end, it led to the belief that one of the members of the band (Paul McCartney) had died and a stuntman had been performing for him ever since. Then, as some people stated that the sentence "Paul is a dead man. Miss him," could be heard if one of the tapes of the group was played backward. The misunderstanding was later solved and the band explained this was just "a coincidence." But after it happened, the public became more analytical about music, and other famous bands were accused of sharing satanic beliefs, like Led Zeppelin or Electric Light Orchestra.

## Conclusion

All things considered, music has been, is, and will always be the most powerful channel of communication of all times, used as a medium to share our emotions and experiences. There clearly are endless examples of stories found behind lyrics or melodies of famous works, which at the end of the day are just like any other novel. What do you think? Have you already identified any hidden story?

### Music Selections

Beethoven, *5th Symphony*

Taylor Swift, *Mine*

Mozart, *The Queen of the Night*

Eric Clapton, *Tears in Heaven*



# Film Reviews:

## Enola Holmes, an Idol for our Generation

By Marta Salvador Cortés

*Enola Holmes* is a movie starring Millie Bobby Brown and Louis Partridge set in 1898. This movie features a girl named Enola Holmes who is the famous detective, Sherlock Holmes' younger sister lives with her mother, Eudoria Holmes. The movie has a cast of colorful characters, including Enola's mother who is a member of the most radical wing of the suffrage movement whose activists were known as "suffragettes."

All her life, she has lived with her mother, who taught her jiu-jitsu, painting, among many other kinds of art and skills. But when Enola Holmes, the little sister of detective Sherlock Holmes, discovers that her mother has disappeared on her fourteenth birthday, she is determined to find her on her own.

This movie gives the audience great insight into what life in the late 19th century was like for women. Enola is very untraditional young lady, as she is very independent, and cunning. Also, I thought it was interesting how they played with the romance between Enola and Tewksbury to make it more interesting. It talks about feminism too. This saga also has a book set, which is perfect to read on rainy days. I think that it's a book that everyone should have on their bookshelves.

*Enola Holmes* was released on Netflix in September 2020, and became a very popular movie during the Covid-19 pandemic. Also, Enola has become a feminist idol, nowadays, mainly because of the popularity movie. So it's important to remember that this movie has a message about feminine empowerment. If you like the fashion exhibited by "Anne with an E" and "Bridgerton," you will also see the elegant dresses and the peculiar suits that make this style so characteristic of the epoch.



*Enola Holmes 2, Netflix*

The *Enola Holmes* was very well received and on the specialized site Rotten Tomatoes, which collects reviews from critics from the main media outlets in the United States; it obtained an approval rating of 93% based on 108 professional reviews.

This movie has a sequel, *Enola Holmes 2*, that came out on November 4th, 2022 on Netflix. Many fans say it is better than the first film.

From my point of view, I think that the movie is very good. The film focuses very well on the moment in which it is based and perfectly shows what it was like to be a woman at that time.

I would highly recommend both the movies and the books, especially to boys and girls who are interested in learning about feminism, what it implies and all its goals. Both *Enola Holmes*, and *Enola Holmes 2* can be watched in English on Netflix with subtitles available in many languages for non-English speakers!

## A Thriller of Terror: *Novembre*

By Charlotte Hubau

"A captivating thriller," wrote critic Michaël Melinard in the newspaper *L'Humanité* a few days after the release of the new film *Novembre*. But is this movie just a thriller? Some journalists question its artistic aspects and lack of documentation. Others compare it to an action film, or a thriller with a sole objective: to hold the spectator in suspense. The story told by this film is, however, that of a country and its shift into a new state of terror, that began a few months earlier with the Charlie Hebdo attacks.

**"It was after dark on November 13, 2015, when the French capital fell victim to a series of simultaneous attacks. Claimed by the terrorist organization Daech, the attacks that evening would kill 130 people and injure more than 350 victims."**

It was after dark on November 13, 2015, when the French capital fell victim to a series of simultaneous attacks. Claimed by the terrorist organization Daech, the attacks that evening would kill 130 people and injure more than 350 victims. Released on October 5 of this year, *Novembre* plunges the viewer into the heart of the anti-terrorist forces during the 5 days of investigations that took place after the attacks. Admittedly full of action, *Novembre* does not only recount in detail what seemed to be happening behind the scenes. It also shows the French people that their country has never stopped fighting for their security. The film, which takes on the air of a documentary, keeps a muscular cast and uses the talents of experienced actors such as Jean Dujardin or Anaïs Demoustier to tell its story.

It seems to combine all the necessary details of a successful feature film, yet the question of its objectivity remains an element of controversy among critics. As we know such delicate historical events have marked the minds and hearts of every Frenchman. Adding fictitious details can transform a film that wants to be punchy into a real nest of misinformation. History, the real one, however, cannot be changed. Although remaining very documented, the police investigation does not seem to have been modified. Details concerning the interpretation of certain aspects of reality, however, remain linked to fictional choices. These harmless details attest to the use by the directors of a fictional aspect that does not give the film the total credibility that it would seem to wish to grant itself. While some go so far as to question the credibility of the film, which fails to "develop a relevant point of view" according to the review site *Ecran Large*, many admit that these elements do not change its original intention. But the question of his intention remains open.

What was Cedric Jimenez's goal when he directed *Novembre*? Among the answers, some agree to say, like the newspaper *Première*, that it was designed "like a pure action film", others that the film wanted to be effective, telling as precisely as possible a story that touches us all. In my opinion, the film intended to reassure a French population still in doubt about its police forces. The debate on civil protection is still raging in France today, having even been one of the central subjects of the programs of the presidential candidates which took place a few months earlier. Bringing to light the details of the intense, and hitherto almost unknown, investigation of such a violent event shows us all the daily fight that our country leads against hatred.

Anyway, whatever its original purpose, the fact remains that everyone has the opportunity to interpret this film according to their wishes. *Novembre* is currently available in French cinemas, and it will soon be available for purchase in versions with English, Spanish and German subtitles.

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WRITTEN BY STUDENTS AROUND THE WORLD

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