**ARMENIA**

Ani KARAPETYAN

*The European of the Future will change the world by stretching out hand to many people and holding many hands.*

**Imagining the European of the Future**

We often used to organize discussions with friends on different topics. The topic of our discussion today is the European of the Future. We speak about the challenges facing the world, try to find ways to overcome those challenges, and understand how the European of the Future can help us in that regard.

Suddenly I stop listening to the voices in my surrounding, cut off the world, and by an unexplainable force find out myself in a moment where I have never been. First, I think that I am alone – there is nothing and no one around me. However, in some seconds, I notice a person who I also see for the first time.

- Who are you? Where are we, am I lost?

I do not hear the answers to my questions. No, I have not gone deaf. The mysterious stranger just does not wish to talk to me. I have to get out of this labyrinth by myself.

I move forward and notice that he/she is also walking with me. Maybe he/she is lost like me? And what if he/she is the European of the Future, about whom we were talking a short while ago? But he/she was not like this in my imagination. Finally, I got the answer to the first question. I am in Europe, and he/she is the European of the Future, who is going to leave for the future, and I have got an opportunity to speak to him/her, a chance to give him/her a piece of advice, and to ask questions.

We pass a few steps, and he/she points to the Council of Europe building. My new friend proudly looks at me, as if wanting to say "See how accomplished, happy, and free our states are. A lot of countries dream of the values that we have."

- I agree with you,- I answer to the non-uttered words. Europe is free and also happy; however, it is not so unified today, this being witnessed by the lengthy process of Brexit that has not yet got a solution, the disagreement between some European countries, etc. These countries are not interested in each other anymore.

- And what can make Europe more united, - asked the European.

After this question, I realized that my "interlocutor" was not at all silent, that he responds to me just with a glance.

- Maybe now the communication between you and me makes Europe more united, - I continue,- but I also think that Europe needs to unite around a common purpose, for example around the solution of cultural, environmental and other problems, that will be humanitarian, harmless and beneficial for everyone. Due to unity, the region will become more stable, secure, and mighty, and the population and society will become more protected.

- Isn't our society protected now? How can Europe have such a problem?

My last sentence seemed to have surprised my unknown friend.

- In all European countries, human rights protection prevails at first glance, - I am trying to clarify,- however, this rule circumvents hundreds of thousands of immigrants, who reach Europe with difficulty. And often the last hope to receive help following their life full of sufferings and the loss of the statehood and home turns into a not less tragic continuation of their life. Some European states undertake steps that will prohibit the entrance of migrants to their country. Meanwhile, many minor migrants that are already there are lost forever due to carelessness and indifference. Most probably, they are used for trafficking, organ sales, and other criminal offenses.

- But after the arrival of migrants, the number of crimes has increased in Europe,-says the European standing at the crossroads of the present and the future.

- It is unfortunate, that under this argument, the same human rights are being violated in Europe, which has the highest body of human rights protection, like the ECHR. Don't you think that in case of creating necessary conditions for the migrants and providing them with a job and a shelter, this problem will be solved?

He seems to agree with me. I see his look gradually changing. The impression is that for the first time he gets concerned with the problems of people who live around him. Glimpses of life are noticed in his eyes. The cold look gets shattered by slight warmth. He really wants to shift to the future, after self-improvement. And I continue to speak:

- After becoming united, Europe can help the world to combat against violence.

- Do you remember the brutal murder of Armenian officer Gurgen Margaryan in Budapest? The murderer Ramil Safarov, after being sentenced to life imprisonment, was handed over to Azerbaijan by Hungary, where except for heroization of the criminal, nothing else was expected. Your cold look tells me that you have not even heard about it. Maybe you are also not aware of the Armenian Genocide? You are not aware, because some European countries have not recognized the events of 1915 in Ottoman Empire as Genocide. The world has not witnessed the process of condemnation of Genocide. That is why there are no guarantees against new genocides that happen in different vulnerable points of the globe and often are not condemned even verbally. Today, when you are here happy, and without concerns, maybe someone is expecting help from you and a lot of other Europeans like you, because someone wants to live, and because you can prevent new crimes…

My speech was ended by the fire in the distance, and not me. We hurried ahead and found ourselves in Paris.

- It's burning, it's burning! - screams Paris.

But this is not a fire. The Notre-Dame Cathedral is burning in Hugo's Novel. And now with the smoke in the center of Europe, the Europeans' indifference and coolness that split the world are pushed up and vanish. A few days ago, during the "yellow jackets" movement, the French people who were breaking the shop windows, doors and cultural monuments are now mourning the possible loss of the cultural giant. I see not only a united Europe but also a united world. My friend kneels down, gives freedom to the locked tears, and starts praying. I see not only the united Europe, but the world. My friend knees down, bursts out in tears and starts praying. I look at him/her and understand that the Europeans that have been united around this tragedy can unite again tomorrow for the sake of creating new value, for the sake of peace, for the sake of a protected society.

- I am leaving, - finally, the European started to speak, - I leave for the future, leaving behind all my shortcomings, taking with me love, warmth, and readiness to change the world.

- You can stretch a helping hand to states burdened with problems – free of charge, without any hidden agenda, and without seeking your own interests. You can get out of your borders, spill over the Western policy through the whole world, and provide the formula for democracy in the example of your country. You can have the political will to free the world from vicious phenomena – terroristic acts, groups that organize them, the wars …

I say good-bye to the European of the Future with these words, and return to the reality, and find out that the words of my friends are the logical continuation and summary of our conversation – thanks to the European of the Future, the human rights will be more protected. Receiving sufficient support from Europe, the refugees will return home, will restore their homeland, making the world more prosperous. The number of deaths from hunger and epidemics will significantly decrease, and the world will become healthier. Wars and terrorism will reduce, and the world will become more peaceful. And the European of the Future will change the world by stretching out hand to many people and holding many hands.

The European of the Future disappeared in the blue mist, leaving a vital and well-known message "…The Eastern part of the world, the Western part of the world, the Northern part of the world, the Southern part of the world, let there be MARDERGUTYUN (an ode to humanity)…"