

# **CrossCultur'Roads Of May 21**

Preamble

MMXXI

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## **Preamble**

**“And what will we share on May 21?”**

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English version reviewed by Paula Kalustian

## Once upon a time on May 21...

Of all the reasons for hope, there are some that fiercely resist the temptation of disillusionment. They are of this species which seems on the contrary to be getting stronger with the passing of time, resolutely showing their ability to reenchant things. The *CrossCultur'Roads of May* would be one of those? This is the question we will ask here, joining ourselves by the power of the mind, the brush, the pen, the voice, the acts. Who knows, perhaps we could engage in a part of humanity sharing the will to find ourselves within a common and evolving dynamic?

As the Routes continued their test phase over the last few terms, as nearly a thousand students led them with brio to meet Australian Aborigines, fire, chocolate, musical events, energy and dozens of other themes, a growing feeling emerged: What if an idea as simple as advocating a universal sharing of our cultures could be an unprecedented lever for mutual discovery? What if a wave of the humanities were to take hold of it with a purpose for cross-fertilization and mutual enrichment? What if the coming years offered us the opportunity to weave and expand this network of Routes and ports of call, while drawing on the cultures of the world and the joy of discovering them together?

During these introductory times, continuous contacts have in parallel nourished this hope by promoting the next

Intercultural Routes of Mauritius with Indira, of the Imazighen with Selma, of calligraphy with Ali or of Brazil with Ivy... And a dream began to come true. The dream of an assembly of the humanities, which accepts the question of its desire to be. The dream of a May 21, carrying with it in every place and every spirit likely to join it, its desire for fulfillment.



May 21 was proclaimed in 2001 the *World Day for Cultural Diversity, Dialogue and Development*. This proclamation followed the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. Of course, 2001 was no ordinary year; it was a year that made us all, present and future generations altogether, move into another world in many ways. The Director-General of UNESCO, Kōichirō Matsuura (1999 – 2009), wrote: “The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity was adopted unanimously in a most unusual context. It came in the wake of the events of 11 September 2001 [...] and it was an opportunity for States to reaffirm their conviction that intercultural dialogue is the best guarantee of peace [...] and raise cultural diversity to the level of “the common heritage of humanity”, “as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature”...”

Twenty years elapsed and here we are in 2021. These two decades have marked many of us in the wake of major upheavals, be they geopolitical, ecological, religious or digital. And while our era is facing the greatest challenges,

including a tremendous health crisis, how are we to measure our capacity to ensure or restore our present and future equilibrium? What exactly is the reason for such a capacity? Is it due to a desire for social and economic justice? To a better defense of dignity for all? Is it due to a better listening, to the will to take action differently, to create, to innovate.

This is where May 21, World Day for Cultural Diversity, Dialogue and Development, may be helpful. Could we take advantage of this day to reflect and better welcome the richness and vitality of humanity? To question the means of activating this lever of cultures in the relationship with others, the relationship with climate, food, migration ... and ultimately to establish a sustainable peace based as much on the anticipation of crises as on the ability to overcome them through the strength of dialogue and a better shared intelligence?

Finally, the question remains simple. We will put it this way: does a day possess such power? The answer is two-fold. First of all, no, it probably does not possess it, at least not on its own, not in its mere statement. However, yes, a day does have this power if we invest its whole opportunity. Yes, if we awaken to a world capable of mutual knowledge and recognition, a world of forgiveness, a world of creativity, of innovation, articulated around an intergenerational contract renewed in its forms and means. A world asking the digital revolution and the media to

resolutely choose the path of humanism and dignity, putting ordinary hatred and its dispatches at a distance. A world echoing those people who do good around them, deserving all our gratitude...

A day can fulfill such a contract, connecting the knowledge of a watchmaker, a familial recipe, a traditional legend, the contemporary creation of a work, a thought imbued with wisdom, a mathematical equation, an agricultural or environmental initiative, a historical chronicle, the explanation of a symbol... Yes, our cultures in all their daily life are the place of an unheard-of and universal inspiration and such a day can invite us to take advantage of all this in order to proclaim our unity in diversity.



The first of three essential words is then formulated: that of “unity”. Unity of humanity facing the challenges that threaten us collectively and individually. Unity is urgent because it is an understatement to say that we are victims of our divisions, oppositions, hostilities, enmities that everywhere lead to suffering or desolation. Unity is a powerful antidote, even if it requires for some people a little more than others to understand that it is not uniformity. Unity of humanity leads to a common consciousness respecting our differences. The diversity that underlies it is the very condition for its realization.

Here we come to the second word, what better way to remind us of this than through the diversity of our “cultures”! What could be better than the long journey of our societies in order to express the extraordinary heritage that is ours, even more extraordinary when we think of crossing it, discovering its mutual contributions and enrichment? Let us observe all that we owe to this sharing, which founds the history of our species! Let's observe to what extent wisdom, techniques and populations have never ceased to meet and cross paths.

Sufi wisdom is admirable when it tells us that there was once a mirror of truth in heaven. But one day it fell to earth and broke into countless pieces. It was then that men retrieved the fragments and, shimmering in it, believed they saw all the truth in it. Human cultures are the countless reflections of this universal truth, and as singular is the path taken by each one of them, it is by gaining access to the highest respect for the other culture, other cultures, that they definitively reach their share of eternity. Let us believe, moreover, with the poet Kenneth White, that beyond its heritage, culture is also and perhaps above all an “ideal to be reached”, a way in which the human being “conceives and directs itself”.

Then comes a third word after those of unity and culture: project. What's the humanity's project? Can it be summed up in the myriad of individual and collective projects and their potential to bring people together or to detest each

other? Will we reduce the very meaning of the human species to that of a collection of more or less compatible ambitions, endowing themselves with the means to accomplish, defend and occasionally annihilate each other? Are the wishes formulated after great disasters and especially those of the 20th century only intentions? When the Charter of the United Nations Organization proclaims its objective to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind”, when it praises “to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours”, are these only empty words? When UNESCO declares in the preamble of its Constitution that “since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed”, is this only a formula ready for all its denials and renunciations?



However dizzying the horizons that these statements reach for, however contradictory and sometimes perilous the paths that lead to them, we can have no doubt about the nature of the objectives common to humanity and peace plays a decisive role in them. Our unity, based upon the values of our cultures and their infinite crossings, as well as the designation of a project addressing the challenges of our time, are part of a complex response that we have a duty and responsibility to provide.

It is here that a new ally can then manifest itself with the animation of what we have called the Cross Cultural'Roads, which are a multiplicity of concrete, tangible alliances, helping to discover the past, present and future human epic. Today we suffer very greatly from our mutual ignorance. We suffer from not having sufficiently taken the roads of rain, bread, calendars, colors, the Malagasy, Mayan or Maori roads... But by energizing them together, by observing their correspondences, let us take advantage of these roads to proceed to an unprecedented questioning of humanities. Let us take advantage of this opportunity to create a true project of harmony and crossroads between our views, our perceptions, our interpretations ... Let us take to the letter, the idea of consolidating the “spirit of good neighbourliness”, and the duty “to build the defenses of peace”. Let's turn hundreds, thousands of roads into embassies for a change of perspective on the human destiny.

For this let's ask ourselves just one question: “What do we share on May 21?” The answer is strangely simple. Let's share elements of our cultures, knowledge, languages, beliefs, stories, professions, tales and legends... And let's see how, from this sharing made up of an infinite number of fragments, we are going to be able to reach a wider and more active mutual understanding, the need for which lies at the very heart of the greatest challenges of the present times and we are going to respond to them...

## Let's share our cultures

How to implement these CrossCultur'Roads? With whom? For what kind of public? To begin with, let's talk about the very first road that was created and the context in which it took place. These CrossCultur'Roads were those of Japan and their development is linked to an international program: the Tokyo Olympic Games, initially scheduled for 2020. When the route of the torch on Japanese soil was fixed, it was said that it would go through all of the 47 prefectures of the country, starting from those of Fukushima, then Tochigi, Gunma, etc., until reaching that of Tokyo. Then a suggestion occurred: what if we took advantage of this route to go and meet the infinite richness of Japanese cultures? To address this, we began within a small team composed of Clara, Jules and Mederic to build an immersion in this cultural reality.

The idea was basic: take the road of the 47 prefectures, and incidentally that of the torch, in order to discover Japan from one stop to the other. Discover successively a contemporary haiku author, a card game, a museum of ukiyoe, a City of Science, **an** Ainu village ... while taking time to question their interactions with other fragments not only in Japan, but around the world.

Eventually the pandemic was to decide a postponement of these Games. Nevertheless, regardless of whether they were to be held at a later date, the movement followed its course and the CrossCultur'Roads of Japan took shape. With **it**, a perspective emerged: that of extending them to dozens of other places, other nations, other regions, other cities, other peoples ... That of designing a project on the scale of humanity and of its cultural mosaic. That also and above all of ensuring that each element of this or that road would be an invitation, a relay to the world and to the dialogue that we could then establish.



The idea was set and it was therefore quite natural to move towards a test phase, which took place around May 21, 2020. During this inaugural sequence, about forty young souls undertook to lay the foundations of a trial composed of 48 sequences. Why 48? Because the pretext was seized for an exceptional day according to the time zones, that is to say, starting in the Pacific with a tribute to Tonga, Tuvalu... and gradually crossing the world at the rate of one testimony every hour during the 48 hours of this planetary day.

The result took the form of 48 introductory texts including for instance a mention for the symbol of the fern in New Zealand or that of eternity in Armenia (arevakach Արևախաչ), the Festival of swings in the Akha world in

Thailand, the Yemeni song of Sanaa, the Capeverdean kriol, the Peace Tower, Friðarsúlan in Reykjavik, or the Mashramani festival of Guyana's independence... As another example, here follows an invitation to take the CrossCultur'Roads of the Comoros, inviting those who are likely to nurture them, to tell us about their life and beauty...

“Comoros, the aptly named archipelago...

Taking its name from the Arabic “Djazaïr Al Qamar جزر القمر”

The Moon Islands Archipelago

Over time, “Al Qamar” becoming “Comoros”



There are many legends to explain the link with this celestial object.

In particular that of a crescent formed by the different islands.

Others ensure that Arabic sailors

Were guided by the moon to find their course at sea

And what about the lunar landscapes of this archipelago?

Described in the Tales of the Arabian Nights!”

(proposed by Marie L.)



And what about this other invitation on the CrossCultur'  
Roads of Samoa...

“Fa'a Samoa, the Samoan way of  
life

Fa'a Samoa: for more than 3000  
years

An unfailing guide to lead a life of  
respect

And aspire to happiness

Fa'a Samoa: the “we” rather than the “I”.

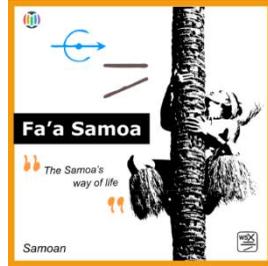
the family, the ancestors, the community...

Fa'a Samoa: a custom with many laws

Of which no writing imposes the will

And yet anchored in the heart of the Samoans...”

(proposed by Nina P.)



In the end, the aim of these introductory essays was to show that a broader approach could be taken tomorrow in the extended vision of a planetary correspondence. These first developments, through their eclecticism and through the involvement of those who favored them, thus constituted a key moment in the entire system defended by this Preamble, and the sharing to come follows their path...

## Let's share our knowledge

Each individual goes through a more or less conscious and voluntary way in a quest for knowledge carried out in all the diversity of our situations, environments and means. For instance there are so many differences between a knowledge rooted in the relation to nature and the knowledge resulting from books. The knowledge from nature, patiently founded in the daily light of the sun, the growth of plants, animal companionship and the patience required for their respect. The knowledge from books, by accumulating hours spent in a library, obstinately seeking the one that will delight us, or a digital knowledge entrusting a search engine to guide us and servers with the mission of archiving it...

This is the adventure of humanity in all its eclecticism. However, we are all united in the decisive place that this knowledge holds at the root of our opinions and judgments, and of our decisions, as well as our doubts. Could we then invite humanity to question the diverse forms that the knowledge of each object can take? An example to meet the rain...

“On May 21 we will pay homage to the rain and its relationship with the cultures of the world.



We will then understand how beneficial rain can be,

As Botswana's motto states, “Pula!”

Which, by the way, also refers to its currency...

We will share the story of Danaë

Receiving Zeus in the form of a golden shower

Soon giving birth to the hero Perseus...

Following the example of Mapuche knowledge,

Sharing the life of the shepherds during transhumance

We will make a rain stick, palo de agua...

Together with the Dogons, we will formulate a prayer to the creator god Amma...

“Make the rain soft as salt,

Gives millet, women, unborn children ...”

And while in other circumstances,

We'll be in Japan looking for good weather,

We will ask a small traditional doll

Named Teru teru bôzu てるてる坊主

(lit. “Shine, shine, monk”).

To give us a sunny day...

And who knows, in the meantime through Iris,

Messenger of the gods,

Or following the oscillations of Wagyū,

During the Aboriginal Dream,

We will share the eternal beauty of the rainbow...

...But of course let us never forget

That if rain can be rare and precious

Its outburst may also bring anger and desolation...

... The traditions of the Flood will not deny it...

Whether they come from the Chinese, Aztec or

Mesopotamian worlds,

Or from Egyptian or biblical beliefs...

So on May 21, 2021, let's take the *CrossCultur Roads of  
the rain*

In order to pay tribute to all these facets and to the  
meaning they give to Life...”



As stated in this multiple evocation of rain, let us recall the complexity and diversity of any object of knowledge. The CrossCultur'Roads offer an opportunity to question an infinite number of themes and issues related to trees, society, exclusion, health, food, justice... Let's take these routes in the spirit of mobilizing an exceptional encounter with many varied points of knowledge. On May 21, let us ensure that we experience the infinite pleasure of this sharing and its extension throughout life.

## Let's share our languages

5000 to 7000 languages are spoken throughout the world. It's simply fantastic! It is also and above all one of the most beautiful tributes we can pay to the diversity of the human species. This homage draws us into the power of the verb, into the strength of its representations, into the creativity it has authorized, into the emotions it conveys... This homage, sometimes neglected, exposes one of the most beautiful faces of our species when we give it every chance to be constituted and extended.

In truth what could be more marvelous than the spirit of a child who acquires a language, sometimes several, playing with them, with the infinite possibilities they give us to testify our existence. What could be sadder than their impoverishment, for lack of the means or the environment to support them. The stakes of our relationship with languages, including writing systems, sign languages, and various codes, is at the heart of a planetary renewal. It is one of its most essential levers.

Of course, this wealth is not free of endangerment and we know that languages regularly disappear because they have not been able to renew their speakers. With them, cultural heritages and whole sections of this wealth

disappear while the promise of a more or less complete oblivion awaits them. Indeed (,) another reason to advocate their better consideration and call on May 21<sup>st</sup> for an unprecedented sharing of our linguistic treasures.



February 21, 2013, International Mother Language Day – UNESCO. Like its Bangladeshi origins dating back to 1952, this day commemorates the struggle for the recognition of our languages, cultures, heritages, as well of their singularity, epic, but also of all the paths that have nourished them. Let’s imagine a journey in about thirty stages, taking us to the plains of Central Asia to meet Turkic and Mongolian languages, but also Indo-Iranian ones, inviting us to discover, alongside the Han ethnic group, the 55 Chinese national minorities through their heritage, their specificities and their mutual contributions, requiring us to explore the extraordinary richness of India, where Indo-European and Dravidian influences meet... Let's imagine in this whirlwind, other stops whether they are Austronesian, Papuan, Australian aborigines. And while this journey takes us similarly through the Americas, Europe and Africa, let us be won over by the voice of the poet Ki no Tsurayuki (872 / 945):

*“Between the countries, the languages differ but the spectacle of the Moon is the same and the heart of men is one.”*

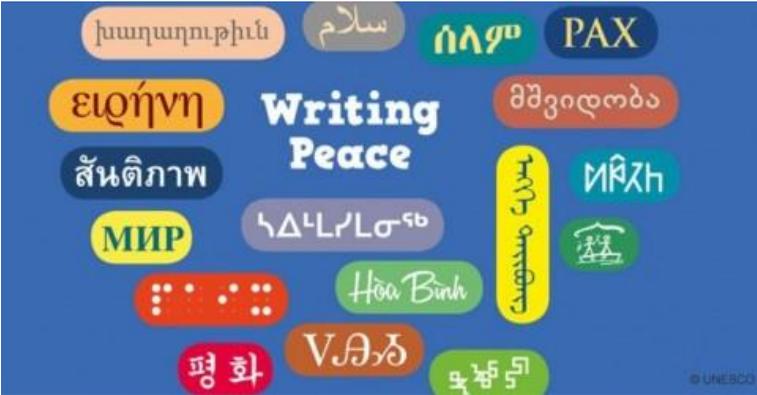
The CrossCultur'Roads offer an unprecedented opportunity to mobilize myriads of speakers, calling on them to share with us words, expressions and proverbs, their genesis, their regional or national resonance proclaiming the defense we owe them for generations to come. Moreover, wouldn't these projections also provide an opportunity to promote our own learning and the pleasure of extending it? Among the many men and women who contribute daily with passion and resolution to this project within a multiple of projects and institutions, let us mention here an operation carried out within UNESCO, which in turn bears witness to this, entitled "Writing peace".



This initiative took off at the United Nations General Assembly in New York on September 21, 2012, World Peace Day. The objective was to initiate a general audience composed of students and teachers, to the knowledge of about twenty contemporary writings including Latin, Arabic, Chinese, Cyrillic or Greek systems of writing, as well as Mandombe, Naxi or Cherokee.

With the graphic talent of Vincent and Yves, and with the unfailing investment of the UNESCO teams initiated by Katerina and led by Amina, an incredible adventure began. It first took the form of an exhibition accompanied by a catalog. Then, at the request of the public we met, the need to elaborate a manual was born. Finally, a pedagogical

guide was associated with them, promoting the understanding of all these elements by teachers and trainers. From Rabat to Abidjan, from Cairo to Muscat, from Bangkok to Astana, from San José to Geneva, with the help of translation teams, nearly forty countries embarked on the adventure, supported by schools, human rights clubs and the UNESCO Associated Schools network. It is difficult to summarize in a few lines an adventure of nearly ten years in which the worthiest of respect, generosity and willingness to act have been and will continue to be mixed. However, perhaps one example may share its spirit...



This was in Rabat. It had been decided with the assembly of teachers and students to experience videos dedicated to peace writing. All on a free theme. Choose a word, tell it and write it in the video. Then a young girl suggested the word “horse 𐵓𐵙𐵚𐵐”, in Amazigh. “Why?” she was asked. She replied with all her soul, and a huge smile, that in her

life, riding a horse and galloping in the desert was the most beautiful way for her to feel at peace.

So if an Amazigh horse takes us there, let's think of all the words that we will be able to summon to the meeting of May 21st in order to say and write peace. Words as simple, as true, as those that allow us to share a loving gaze, a responsible attitude towards others, or our environment. Words that hold high, in all languages, in all scripts, the values of sharing, dialogue and mutual trust that are the best guarantors of peace.

## **Let's share our histories**

We are heirs of a complex history, or rather of histories that are sometimes very different and that have been told to us according to places, times, powers and chronicles. Such a fascinating task is that of our history and geography masters, when it sets its course to reach a form of objectivity. A difficult task for peacemakers and bond makers to reconcile divergent, even hostile readings. An exciting task when it comes to conquering the part of meaning and mutual respect that a peaceful knowledge of history can allow.

By crossing geopolitical and cultural spaces, by echoing their progress, their advances, and their struggles, May 21 cannot do without this sharing. It is therefore of course, to all those who are capable of helping us that we turn here, professionals and amateurs, often passionate people who represent within humanity as many sentinels likely to accompany our journey towards diverse forms of mutual knowledge.

Of course, the conflicts, and the disputes that resulted, paved the way for countless difficulties hindering the wish for a more peaceful history. There are so many reasons not to trust each other and who will take the risk of making a

mistake. In this narrow corridor of peace left to us by the disposition of nations, alliances, agreements and disagreements, what exactly can CrossCultur'Roads do? Perhaps it may help us to get closer to the reasons that have led to it. To help us understand how history could be heard on both sides of a border, a river, an ocean, a political vision. Understand, from Herodotus to Ibn Khaldun, from Sima Qian to Mabillon, that the making of history is part of a time, a reading, a set of values, and that one of the greatest challenges in the world if not to achieve conciliation, is at least to open our eyes to the reasons that delay its advent. Let's think then about those concrete elements that could help us to do so, such as, for example, the discovery of our respective calendars...



“On May 21st, we will focus on *the Calendars' CrossCultur'Roads*,

We will then be introduced to the Egyptian year

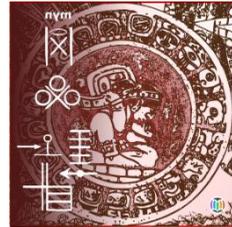
Following the fluctuations of the Nile  
Aiming at the regulation of agricultural works

A year divided into 12 months,

Each month made up of 3 decades of 10 days each.

Without forgetting the five harmful epagomenal days

Considered as the anniversaries of Osiris, Set, Isis, Nephthys and Horus



We'll mingle with Mayan calendars  
The sacred one, the Tzolk'in in 260 days  
The other, solar, the Haab,  
Composed of 360 days and 5 additional days, known as  
uayeb  
Without forgetting the long count, which links both

We will meet the Yellow Emperor 黄帝 Huáng Dì  
At the origin of the Chinese calendar  
Which, in 2021, will have turned 4718

We will move closer to the luni-solar Hebrew calendar.  
Its solar years, of its lunar months,  
Which, during 2021, will have turned 5782  
And we will familiarize ourselves with the rules of the  
weekly Shabbat

We will take note of the Buddhist calendar  
Beginning with the parinirvana of the Buddha, in 543 BC.  
Which, in April 2021, will have thus begun the year 2564

We will remember how the year 1582  
Saw the advent of the Gregorian calendar  
While the Julian calendar  
Introduced by Julius Caesar in 46 BC.  
Would follow its own course

We will remember that with the Hegira in 622  
Began the Muslim calendar  
Which in August 2021 will have gone from 1442 to 1443

And how can we not pay such attention  
To so many other accounts of time  
Whether they are Assyrian, Republican, Iranian, Hindu,  
Aztec ...  
All these variations strongly helping us to approach a facet  
of our diversity of cultures.  
A facet of our rich history  
And instruments to report on it...

On May 21st, we will focus on the *Calendars' CrossCul-  
tur'Roads...*"

## **Let's share our experiences & skills**

« What do you want to be when you grow up?» a mother asked her very young son, as the bus slid through the streets of Paris. His sister, a little older, watching the National Assembly, then declared with majesty: “I would like to vote the laws!” Then, as the bus was spinning on the Concorde Bridge, her brother decided to answer in turn and exclaimed: “I would like to ride on the Ferris Wheel” pointing to one of the attractions of the City that was facing him and to which he had, no doubt, been denied access. “Voting the laws” or “getting on the Ferris Wheel”, this is how we can project ourselves into the challenge of Life and its quest for fulfillment. Who can be unaware that this is one of the most decisive points of balance in all existence?

When we think of the mosaic of human activities, and more particularly of the professions that go through them, when we think of the choices or constraints that have accompanied them, it is in a vast whirlwind that we are about to plunge. That of our destinies as artisans, of our agricultural practices, that of the professions of hospitality and commerce, that of the professions of security, faith, justice, education, travel, the professions of the arts, cultures, administrations, professions within which ethics and

deontology's are commonly at stake... So many anonymous or more illustrious situations, which attest to the human adventure and within which the CrossCultural'Roads aspire to trace themselves taking advantage of encounters that mark out and often shape our lives. Encounters in which the notion of experience, practice, and sharing holds a central place. Among many others, let's meet Denis Mukwege's for example, somewhere on the chessboard of existences and their incarnation...



« On May 21, 2021, we will stop at Panzi Hospital in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

With Dr. Denis Mukwege



Born in 1955 in Bukavu, South Kivu province,

Young Denis discovers life at his father's side, a pastor,  
Daily committed to those who suffer

Taking the decision to alleviate the world's sorrows in turn

He chooses the path of medicine  
And more particularly gynecology

After his training in France

He makes a choice of conscience

The one to work in his native country

Where the worst observations that can be made are waiting for it  
That of innumerable women, innumerable girls, raped, mutilated,

He will make it his life's fight  
Denouncing rape as a weapon of war  
By all means  
By all possible commitments

Assisting every woman, every being,  
Working to prevent these crimes,  
Opposing the madness of a world abandoned to its distress

Abyssal task if any  
And how disturbing for some  
So much that an attack tries to prevent it definitively in 2012  
This does not alter his trajectory in any way

On May 21st, we will remember  
The tributes paid to him  
Human Rights Award (UN) in 2008,  
Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in 2014 (European Parliament),  
Nobel Peace Prize in 2018 alongside Nadia Murad,  
So many distinctions that did not affect, quite the contrary,  
The human simplicity of a man of heart and unfailing commitment...

He was given the nickname "the man who fixes women".  
As if to shout out the crying abjection he is fighting  
against  
And the untiring hope that he embodies... »



Following the example of Denis Mukwege, let's think of other moments leading us from one destiny to another, highlighting values, knowledge, instruments, places and times. Let's think to a better recognition of the heritage that has been entrusted to us, charged to us to extend, transmit or transform it.

Choosing a profession or several, training, seeking to flourish in it, are rightly said to be fundamental elements in the balance. Now, in our modern times, digital technology intends to modify the range of professions and skills in a more or less complete way. This is one more reason to conduct together the most beautiful, the richest of surveys on the CrossCultur'Roads... An opportunity to question justice and injustice. An opportunity to welcome its universal legacy with gratitude and lucidity. An opportunity to share with future generations the fundamental challenge of a humanist future that gives each person his or her share of dignity. As we have just said, the digital upheaval is an excellent opportunity to take up this challenge. Will we seize it? Will we seize this opportunity to think together about the human species with regard to our

activities, our needs, their distribution, and how to respond to them fairly? So, from theater to economics, from architecture to journalism, let's explore the themes in order to enhance their mutual awareness. Another example, that of bread to consider what it means...

“May 21st will be a day dedicated to the *CrossCultur'Roads of bread*.



Thus, in the early morning we will let ourselves be won over by the infinite pleasure of joining men and women who make us smell its daily delight

We will thus approach a traditional Armenian tonir  
As lavashes լավաշ are getting ready for it  
Inheritors of a tradition that goes back thousands of years  
Mixing flour, salt, water and yeast  
And shared in many other parts of the region under various names

Making a stop in India

We will discover papads पापड, thin flatbread made from urd bean flour,

We will taste chapatis चपाती traditionally unleavened

We will bake some naan नान on the walls of the oven

And in this never-ending farandole, we'll enjoy the knäckebrod or Swedish crispy bread

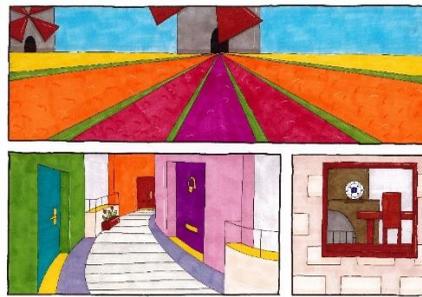
German pumpernickel made from rye and whose first mention would go back to the 15th century

Or tortillas made from corn which the Aztecs called tlax-calli

Wherever our steps will take us  
In the variety of flours and their obtention  
With or without the use of yeast, salt or other ingredients,  
In the gestures of kneading  
As in the forms and the cooking time  
In the morning scents that emanate from the ovens  
We will pay a brilliant tribute to human inventiveness

On May 21, let's share the bread of the world as we travel  
on their *CrossCultur'Roads...*”

## Partageons nos contes & légendes



*Directed by Hugo, Justin, Matéo, Maxime and Samuel on  
the Dutch story of the child of the dike*

Do we know the Mongolian legend of Hailibu the noble hunter? Were we ever told about the misadventures of the child of the dam on the outskirts of the city of Spaarndam? Or the episodes of the Garden of Hesperides and its golden apples? How sweet it would be to sit in the armchair of eternity next to our storytellers, welcoming their sense of storytelling and its ancient transmission. How beneficial it would be to make this other richness even more present than it is, and especially to place it at the heart of a discovery of our values and the debates they may convey.



*Directed by Arthur, Estéban, Pierre-Alexis, Stephen and Yoann on the myth of Danaë*

Thus, about fifty students were invited to a graphic facilitation workshop with Martine, with the aim of representing a selection of free and, if possible, universally accessible narratives in any given language. Hailibu and his exploits were there in the company of the adventures of a veena master in India or a story of three ryōs 両, gold coins, on the Japanese roads. By their investment, by their creativity, ten teams showed both intelligence and a pronounced sense of inventiveness... Not only the boards they delivered at the end of this workshop, but also the path they took to get there, (to) bear witness to this. A total immersion in cultural, symbolic and historical universes and in the power of imagination that can accompany them.

At a time more than ever lacking in connection, unity, and universality, what don't we grasp our epics, our myths, and our tales, in order to give from the earliest age a better perception of their infinite messages? As for benefiting from the most eminent contests in order to promote the

idea, who would think for a moment that we don't have any! From Greek aedes to African griots, from Kyrgyz manaschi to Japanese biwa-hoshi, from the Basque country to the Inuit or Polynesian areas, how many storytellers are just waiting to be called upon? What are we waiting for to do it at the scale of a narrative of narratives? Of an epic of the human species told in all its variations of contexts, legacies, values?



At the heart of this galaxy, a story, an existence, that of Remy, a Gabonese storyteller. Rémy belongs to the Masango community and if we ask him: “And you Rémy, what will you share on May 21st?” his answer will be worthy of a firework display. Between the voice of his father, captured in the village decades ago, and the traditional stories that he has been transmitting all his life, but also in his way of crossing cultures, of pointing out the universality that we have just evoked, Rémy is the image of this boundless movement and of the essential values that the Cross-Cultur’Roads of storytelling are likely to bring with them... So on May 21st, for our greatest pleasure, let us be drawn into the swirling verbs of our storytellers...

# Rendez-vous chaque année le 21 mai

As you can see, we could multiply to infinity the chapters and illustration fields of the *CrossCultur'Roads*. Their current writing bears witness to this. *CrossCultur'Roads* of Beliefs and Unbeliefs, *CrossCultur'Roads* of Science, *CrossCultur'Roads* of the Arts and their power to transcend our relationship to space and time... This is precisely the wish we expressed in this Preamble. And to anyone wondering what relays such a wish can find in the world, let's point out the animation of the *CrossCultur'Roads* of Gardens with François, of wine with Marc, of Kyrgyzstan with Nazira, of Switzerland with Laurine but also of Slovenia, Polish language, Armenia, Rapa Nui, travel, trees, **spirituality**, theater or education... among others. So many introductory routes whose crossroads are expanding every day, as invitations to feed them are pouring in to allow one May 21st - or the next - to share them better.

As we have pointed out, our times are particularly confusing and hectic. No one will disagree. Yet could not the world's current suffering be reduced to some extent by the awakening and appeal to our cultures? Could we not promote a form of cultural growth of humanity to which this awakening can contribute in its wake? A growth which would not harm the planet, quite the contrary.

Consider the material set in motion along the *CrossCultur'Roads*. Let's think about the knowledge, languages, stories, professions, expeditions... likely to come to life there. Let us consider that the questioning produced, the initiatives communicated, the intersections made in space-time, are conducive to designing a living map of the humanities. Conceive a dynamic architecture likely to promote a spirit of mediation, connection and listening. Conceive mutual teaching in an incalculable number of fields, notions, problems via series of interviews, meetings, syntheses, digital applications...

We are indeed living in a historical moment where a Renaissance is truly conceivable. Asked whether, in his youth, he had envisaged "rebuilding the world," Albert Camus would have answered that for his generation, "first of all, we had to avoid it being undone". From one age to the next, the challenges are renewed, and the generations discover that they have to take their turn. Faced with the multiple challenges of our world, how happy it would be if cultures could find the path that made them the most beautiful levers of humanity. Let's share it, let's share them on May 21st by proclaiming that their diversity is their major asset, and their dialogue an unlimited resource...

Eric, January 1, 2021





This Preamble to May 21, World Day for Cultural Diversity, Dialogue and Development, is an invitation to share our cultures, our languages, our histories... in the dimension of humanities. Sharing that we will formulate by means of the CrossCultur'Roads, whether they be the routes of rain, theater, Mauritius or the Incas... Sharing that we are invited to believe it could play a role in the very definition of peace and in the defense of dignity for all. Certainly some will estimate at first sight this perspective illusory, because why haven't we proceeded to this sharing previously if it had been so easily envisaged? And others will say that the present chaos of the world makes it very unlikely that a universal concord would be desired or even attempted. The answer stands here in a simple question: "And what will we share on May 21?" Each of us will be able to answer this question in conscience by communicating a fragment, a knowledge, an experience, a story... It is by joining together through the ordinary magic of the humanities assembly that we will see how far this sharing can lead us.

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