**Forward**

**The long road toward a fair migration policy and a nonracist European society**

Willy Monteiro Duarte was 21 years old. He lived in the area of Rome and dreamed of one day playing for la Roma, his favorite football club. His parents were from Cape Vere but Willy was an Italian citizen. He was also Black. The weekend of the 5th September 2020, he was massacred to death with kicks and punches by five young white Italian bodybuilders who chased him 5 to 1 for no other reason than his skin color. The Italian press reported that these young men were close to extreme right-wing movements or vague sympathizers of these movements. The youngest of the bunch was only 17 years old.

A few days later, one of the largest refugee camps on the territory of the European Union on the Greek island of Lesvos was almost totally destroyed by fire on 9th September 2020. It is not quite clear who set fire to the place and why. The fire forced the authorities to remove the 12.000 persons who were surviving sometimes for years in indecent and inhuman conditions in a place that inspired the title of a book by Jena Ziegler, *Lesvos, the shame of Europe*.

Can these 2 catastrophic events serve as wakeup call in the mist of the global pandemic crisis? As a matter of fact, most media and political resources have been allocated to the unprecedented sanitary situation in the world and to its economic consequences since the beginning of March 2020. The understandable focus has involuntarily occulated two other crucial issues for the future of democracy in the European union: on the one hand, the permanence and in some regions the growth of structural racism and exclusion, and on the other hand, the lack of a fair, comprehensive pro-active migration and asylum common policy.

As a citizen, I would love to live in a colorblind society in which each person would have the rights and the same opportunities and the same access to public resources and goods whatever the skin color, the religion, the gender, the sexual orientation and socio background. As a researcher, I have to notice that our social, economic and political structures produce exclusion and discrimination on the bases of those criteria. Europe is not spared by structural and systemic racism, sexism, “classism” which are rooted in the European expansion of the past, in slave trade, in industrialization and in colonialism. The is a clear mismatch between our theoretical fundamental values and the growing social and racial inequalities and polarization of European societies. Covid-19 or not covid-19, solving this mismatch is a crucial challenge if we want to give a future to the democratic European Union.

A same mismatch exists in the field of migration and asylum between the same fundamental values we claim to defend the reality made of several thousands of persons dying in the see in their attempt to seek refuge or build a new life in Europe, of thousands of persons forced to survive in formal or informal camps in worse conditions than animals, of tens of thousands of persons living without documents and rights in our societies and explored in various sectors of our economy (agriculture, construction, etc.).

What do we need to respond to these 2 challenges. We certainly need political will and pugnacity. But we also need facts, figures and analysis about the various faces of those 2 challenges, which could then be used by politicians and policy makers as well as by the cicil society. In that respect, the volumes edited by Theo Fouskas are a solid contribution to a renewed approach to migration, asylum and racism for 2 reasons. First, the numerous contributions cover a wide range of topics and show the diversity and the complexity of the issues at stake. Second, the perspective is multidisciplinary and global. This is particularly important to deal with global social phenomena such as migration, asylum and racism. To be sure, the books do not come up with magical and easy solutions to the challenges mentioned above. But they contribute to “detrumptize” fake thought which gain ground in political discourse and dominate in social media. The road toward a fair migration policy and a nonracist European society remains very long.

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