

# NURTURING THE HUMANIST METAMORPHOSIS

**Newsletter “Metamorphosis in process”  
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# AN URGENT NEED FOR "CATALYSTS OF PUBLIC ACTION"

In 2015, Alain de Vulpian wrote in *Éloge de la métamorphose*:

**"Our representative and partisan democracy is at odds with the new society, which feels excluded from power and is beginning to contest its legitimacy.** The authoritarian and bureaucratic style of governance we have inherited is becoming ineffective, causing turbulence when it intervenes in a hypercomplex and independently functioning society. The resulting ill-governance sets the people against the élites. The tutelary state and the homogenising system of social protection created in the mid-twentieth century are slowly breaking down; meanwhile they work against a society seeking to optimize the situation of each individual. The European Union, sitting on the fence, is paralyzed.

Because of these maladjustments, the majority of our governments and that of the EU are losing effectiveness and are unable to adequately support development in the current globalised context. They cannot provide the common good that citizens expect. Populations suffer and are demoralised. They hold governing élites at all levels responsible for their misfortune and brutally contest their legitimacy at the polls and in the streets. **Serious political crises could disrupt the metamorphosis."**

## **The Gilets Jaunes (Yellow Vests), the movement rocking France**

At the outset, there was a friendly, playful aspect to the Gilets Jaunes. The unique characteristic of these movements - which sprang up initially on social media - was that there was no designated leader, no organisation with which the authorities could discuss. They did not want to be represented. The resulting complexity is that of "dissipative systems": self-regulation occurs - or not - depending on the members of the networks involved and their internal or external manipulations.

There is profound ambiguity: The Gilets Jaunes are likely not concerned about ecology since, in the short term and individually, their primary aim is to make ends meet. What were they initially demanding? That they be heard? That mayors and other forms of organisation be heard? Whatever the case, their disenchantment has crystallised around a single person; their grievances, manipulated by extremists, have transformed into anger that is violently destructive.



There is an urgent need for **"catalysts of public action"** in situations of extreme complexity. Those with a heightened sense of socio-perception are likely to be first to pick up the primary dynamics of the metamorphosis underway. They then could originate **"hybrid collectives"**, where socio-perceptive agents drawn from public authorities, intermediary bodies, unions, and associations could gather. Could these agents play a naturally self-organising role within a complex system?

Metamorphosis includes the transformation of even serious crises into opportunities: the caterpillar becomes a butterfly. What will the socio-perceptive "imaginal cells" create? Might the Gilet Jaune movement, currently steered by political extremists, be - or have been - an opening for Emmanuel Macron to distance himself from technocratic expertise and to reconnect with the daily reality of citizens by simply listening to them? The future remains unclear.

*Éloge de la métamorphose*, written by Alain de Vulpian, is now available in **e-book format** for 14,90 €. You can download it to your e-reader or using the [Kobo by FNAC](#) mobile app or on your [Amazon Kindle](#).

## SOCIETY IS REINVENTING ITSELF

Society is metamorphosed by individuals and also by changes in its own functioning.

### Artists contribute to collective awareness

**A**rtists' engagement in the face of social and environmental challenges has become commonplace. A landmark example is **the preparation of a "Requiem for Humanity" by the composer Vangelis**. The importance of music in revealing the collective effect of individual journeys is well known. Music played a decisive role in accelerating the metamorphic process in the second half of the twentieth century. The Requiem being composed by Vangelis could have a significant impact at a time when awareness raising relative to all types of disfunction - economic, social, climatic - is critical.



### An orchestra without a conductor: Les Dissonances

**T**he **Les Dissonances** orchestra was launched in 2004 when it gave a Christmas concert to benefit the homeless in the heart of Paris, in the Châtelet-Les Halles quarter, thus signalling that attention to others and to the world is at the heart of the project.

Returning from a period of reflection in the Libyan desert, the young international soloist David Grimal had decided to "join the path of others." *Les Dissonances* became the only philharmonic orchestra in the world to be invited regularly to play the grand repertoire, in the greatest concert halls, **without the presence of a conductor on stage**. A hundred musicians, relying on their skill



and sensibility, are guided only by the dictum of their knowledge of the works and *their regard for one another in the role assigned to each by the composer.*

David Grimal says it well, through his words and his sensibility: "It's an adventure of friendship, of love of life, of music, of people; a society made up of men and women who believe in their collective intelligence in the era of the development of artificial intelligence." This example is of particular interest to entrepreneurs. To join the path of others in the workplace allows for self-development of employees in providing useful goods and services to clients, all the while respecting social equilibrium and local well being, now and in the future. Such a scenario need not call into question existing authority, which is problematic only when exercised abusively, without regard for others. Vertical relations of authority therefore exist within the orchestra, as in the workplace: they are expressed through committed leadership that is freely accepted; no obligation ties the musicians to the orchestra.

### Crazy toads and street innovation: Thanh Nghiem and David Li

**T**he crazy toads are the ones who, to get to the pond where they will reproduce in the season of love, avoid crossing roads where they could be run over by cars, instead seeking another route - in this case little tunnels created for them by humans. The toads who depart from their ancestral routine are like the innovators of the metamorphosis. **Thanh Nghiem** seeks them out around the world. The crazy toad is the nonconformist who saves the species and raises awareness about imminent dangers.

An example of a crazy toad active on the ground is **David Li**. He has studied what happens in the streets of **Shenzhen**, where people. He believes in open teams have thus created a intelligence allows it to undesirable plants, minimising human labour. Open Innovation Laboratory, smartphones, drones, electric has become the second France in less than a year. in the interest of all under the motto "**Goods for Good.**"



innovation is generated by and for the production on the Internet. David Li's robot that weeds on its own: artificial distinguish between desirable and facilitating organic farming while The creation of a platform, Shenzhen allows anyone to prototype any object: vehicles, etc. Thanks to this system, Wiko largest manufacturer of telephones in David Li is a modern Robin Hood, working

### Reinventing society around the fight against exclusion and poverty

**L**ast September, an association called "Convergences" brought together in Paris 5,000 people from civil society to imagine new solutions to insecurity and poverty. Under the overarching theme "**Making Society Tomorrow, Makes tomorrow**", participants worked on five sub-themes, drawn from the the UN's objectives for sustainable development: health and well being; high quality education; decent work and economic growth; sustainable cities and communities; and partnerships for meeting objectives. Discussions occurred over two days



between participants from the public and private sectors, the media, and civil society. In addition to the great success of the event, it is worth noting the presence of numerous institutions seeking inspiration on the main themes as well as supporting the initiative. This confirms that the metamorphosis is gaining ground throughout these organisations.

### The social fabric of proximity is strengthening, a sign that the metamorphosis works through the enrichment of the "collective."

**C**yril Emelianoff is Assistant Professor of "collective capabilities" at the Université du Mans. The "capabilities" are collective capacities/competencies.

She believes that neighbourhood is a resource for civic transition and the concrete transformation of the environment. Like Pierre Giorgini, she highlights the concept of an enlarged campus embedded in the local area, contributing to breaking down silos.



In her view, the key stages are the following:

Making walls permeable

Allowing free flow, horizontality

Encouraging cohabitation with the living

Promoting values of welcome, hospitality, openness, "living together" in peace

Cultivating cooperation, constructing alliances between collectives

Holding the course toward the transition, which is not an end in itself but is a condition of survival

What is of particular interest from the point of view of the "metamorphosis" is the reorganisation of the collective in order to disrupt outdated relational patterns, redouble individual efforts through complementarity, and open perspectives onto new solutions. It is a step beyond the event organised by "Convergences."

### The city metamorphosed by networks

**A**ware of their role in global transformations, and under combined pressure from the evolution of the digital economy, climate change, and the environment, cities are creating alliances, over and above national governments, on multiple themes: climate, resilience, smart cities, civic heritage, local currencies, and even learning cities. Ilya Prigogine said: "**Cities are the best example of a complex dissipative system.**"

In parallel, at the local level, initiatives are multiplying around organic farming, alternative education, shared transport, etc., demonstrating the maturity of a society ready to embrace the metamorphosis.

The latest analysis of the phenomenon of third places in France is a comprehensive report, "**Doing together to live better together**"; it was recently presented by Patrick Levy-Waitz to Julien Denormandie, Secretary of State to the Minister for the Cohesion of Localities, which demonstrates **the diversity of local initiatives throughout the country.**

These spaces respond to the desire for cooperation, mobility, creativity and uniqueness flowing through society today. The metamorphosed city exists!

### Breathing life into neglected localities

In the 1970s, while rehabilitating a hamlet in ruins in the Ardèche Gorges with work crews, Gérard and Béatrice Barras discovered a wool mill, the roof of which was falling in, in a remote valley an hour away. Confident in the power of collective action and motivated to reinvigorate this abandoned rural area, they mobilised a team of youth in an experiment in cooperation with the goal of local economic development.



The aim was neither to create a museum nor a wool mill, but to restructure the local spinning industry in order to enhance appreciation of wool that was often discarded, while generating employment. **The SCOP Ardelaine was created in 1982.** Shearing sheep, transforming wool into bedding, bringing production closer to market, the cooperative has developed and added new jobs yearly.

In 1986 a knitting and clothing manufacturing workshop was set up in a disadvantaged quarter of Valence. The cooperative members thus found themselves faced with the challenge of adapting their approach used in local rural development to a high density urban zone. Two hectares of communal gardens at the foot of buildings were the most visible outcome. To reinforce its local foothold, activities were expanded to include tourism and culture. One, then two museographic itineraries were mapped, attracting 20,000 visitors per year to this historic site. The cooperative - henceforth considered a "territorial cooperative" - continued to evolve, diversifying its activities to encompass a local food sector. A restaurant and a cannery, available to all local users, opened in 2010, as well as a café-bookshop open all year round. Today Ardelaine employs 54 people and is approved by the French government as an "Enterprise of Living Heritage."

### Europeans-As-one-Brain

Even as current political affairs and the media warn daily of the risk of a collapse of the European project, another approach to Europe - to which too few observers are attuned - is emerging and gaining momentum. A non-administrative Europe, existing through networks working on concrete projects, is taking shape.



Following the presentation of the book *Éloge de la métamorphose* in Delphi, Raymond Van Ermen focused the **European conference on sustainable development in Milan in May 2018 on the theme "Europeans-as-one-brain"**, paraphrasing Alain de Vulpian's notion of "society-as-one-brain."

Europeans must organise themselves as-a-brain: some concrete projects are already underway. The final accord stipulates: "On May 31, 2018, in Milan, we have launched an operation Europe-as-

brain in order that networks, partnerships, and initiatives supporting the climate accord function together to respond to the need to move forward, in particular toward a 'new social contract.'" The Europeans-as-brain initiative will begin as a European ecosystem of organisations and processes based on five priorities.

An initial list of partners in the "Europeans-as-brain ecosystem" has been drafted.

## THE METAMORPHOSIS CALLS FOR NEW REGULATIONS

### Alternative modes of transport and shared public space

From Los Angeles to Paris or Berlin, from London to New York, an explosion in new modes of transport is disrupting the status quo. In addition to cars, motorcycles, and public transport, greater numbers of pedestrians are taking to the streets, as well as bicycles, scooters, skateboards, rollerblades and a litany of motorised micro-vehicles: hoverboards, Segways, WalkCars, and monocycles, to name a few. There is sufficient competition for street space to create the obvious tensions that now exist in cities where users have not learned to co-exist and regulation lags behind the proliferation of forms of locomotion.

It is understandable that some wish to create order in the chaos. While municipalities are overwhelmed by a phenomenon they do not wish to discourage, street scenes are on the rise in which cyclists argue with pedestrians, who in turn scold scooter users. **In short, there is tension in the air.**

On closer examination, what do we see? Here someone reminds a skater that the sidewalk is for pedestrians; the skater replies that the road is for motorised vehicles, which is not his case. There a motorist invites a motorised scooter user to use the cycle path, whereupon a cyclist retorts that the path is for bicycles. Out of these manifold tensions arises the need for rules to guide the sharing of public space and for living together. Although it is too soon to draw conclusions, an onlooker in a busy Paris street recently observed that, little by little, public space has been divided up and behaviour has become more civilised. Pedestrians tend to use the sidewalk farthest from the street, while non-motorised vehicles use the sidewalk closest to the street. Small electric vehicles are generally in the street close to the sidewalk, while cars and motorcycles make their way as best they can. Those who contravene these implicit rules find themselves quickly taken to task.

**T**he first outcome of a very interesting process, including citizen deliberations and co-construction involving various stakeholders:  
**The Montreal Declaration for a Responsible Development of Artificial Intelligence**

The key points of the summary of citizen consultation address seven themes, each with its own indicative questions as well as a principle recommended in the preliminary version of the declaration.

The proposed principles:

**Well being:** The development of AI should ultimately aim at well being

**Independence:** The development of AI should foster the independence of all human beings and oversee responsibly that of computer systems

**Justice:** The development of AI should aim to eliminate discrimination, in particular that linked to gender, age, mental and physical capacities, sexual orientation, ethnic and social origins, and religious beliefs

**Private Life:** The development of AI should allow persons using it to access their personal data as well as the types of information used by algorithms

**Knowledge:** The development of AI should promote critical thinking and protect against propaganda and manipulation

**Democracy:** The development of AI should foster enlightened participation in public life, cooperation and democratic debate

**Responsibility:** The various actors in the development of AI should take responsibility and combat risks associated with technological innovation

### Does Google self-regulate by redefining the principles applicable to its development of AI?

**S**ome think so. According to various sources, between 3000 and 4000 Google employees have signed an open letter to Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google: "**We believe that Google should not be involved in the business of war.**" The petition came on the heels of a refusal by nine engineers to work on military projects, as well as several resignations.

Google sought to clarify its ethical stance as applicable to the uses of AI. An exercise in self-reflection on the subject - which failed to convince other companies and NGOs - led Google to take the initiative. The current atmosphere around development of applications based on AI is volatile. Events accelerated when Google decided to withdraw from the Pentagon's Project Maven, which uses artificial intelligence to analyze images captured by drones. The specter of killer robots appears not far behind.

The debate was not limited to ethical rules but also practice. How should such issues be discussed internally? Is internal governance sufficient? Should a third party be involved? How should different viewpoints be taken into account?



The challenge now is to open the debate externally on the basis of an internal ethical stance, which could evolve through consultation with external partners.

Will the metamorphosis have bearing on GAFA's position in terms of global economic and social stability and fiscal responsibility?

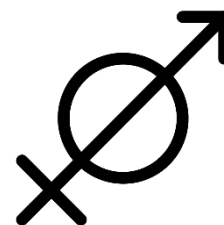
## THE INTERNAL METAMORPHOSIS CONTINUES

### Health through ecosystems

For decades it has been understood that health depends not only on lifestyle but also on environment. A systems model underlies grassroots movements toward a world that is more ecologically aware and more humanely hospitable. It becomes ever more clear that there is not, on one hand, human health, and on the other hand that of nature (plants, animals); rather, **"there is integrated health: human-plant-animal."** Decades ago, the Metamorphosis cleared a path for evolution in the relationship between humans and nature, the animal species, and the planet. This was a sea change in understanding the complex nature of human identity in relation to the world, a highly evolved state of consciousness. A new step forward is underway with the understanding of the importance of zoonoses: **the majority of diseases are transmissible between animals, plants, and humans**, making up some 70% of human diseases.

### Hybrid gender identity

More and more commonly, we see people in the street whose gender we cannot easily discern. It is not a question of hair style, but rather **a way of dressing which is neither conventionally masculine or feminine, but both: androgynous.**



It has been thirty years since artists like David Bowie and Mylène Farmer began to flirt with androgynous physiques. Until recently the phenomenon remained largely private. But in the last few years it has become more than a fashion trend: it has become a lifestyle. Clothing web sites promoting an androgynous look have multiplied. For example, the "Tendances de mode" site offers an "androgynous style" section with suggestions for clothing and footwear, with various fashion subcategories. Another site surfing this fashion wave is "[MonShowroom.com](http://MonShowroom.com)" (recently bought by Sarenza), which offers no less than six different ways to dress masculine/feminine. Despite appearances, it is not a matter of men wishing to look like women or vice versa; rather, both men and women are seeking to live - at least in part - according to both sets of codes. The singer "Chris and the Reine" makes the point when she states that, in sexual terms, she is more interested in the person than the gender.

## Father-child contact through the skin

**F**athers are increasingly cuddling their babies and feeling the need for a deeper sensory connection than is possible through words or eye contact alone.



One says: "I feel our connection is deeper and more authentic." Pediatricians and midwives encourage fathers to think of their relationship with their child in a new way. Physical contact allows for engagement on multiple levels, involving all the senses (smell, hearing, touch, taste and, of course, vision). Knowing that babies are particularly sensitive to touch, this approach by new fathers can only be encouraged.

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## Presentation of Happymorphose

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**Happymorphose** is a joyful band of socioperceptives who detect positive signals to accelerate the humanist metamorphosis. It includes people from all walks of life: business, government, associations, unions, local authorities...

We are at a **crossroads, a bifurcation!** Happymorphose identifies positive initiatives that are changing the world. It seeks to counter the constant flow of information that focuses on what isn't working, discouraging the impulse for reflection. Happymorphose nurtures our **humanity**.

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Find the latest information on Happymorphose on our web site:

<https://www.mouvancehappymorphose.com/>

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