



Big Brother in Europe

by Raf Jaspers



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Big Brother is watching you.

How? By inspection, surveillance, supervision, monitoring, policing,...

What are the tools? RFID chips, observation cams, search engines, scanners, DNA kits, spyware, databases with algorithms, spy satellites... Plenty of those in our daily lives! They are indicators of how we don't just lose our confidentiality between each other but even our own private selves. Transparent governance and transparent business are still a distant cause, the transparent civilian however is a fact.

The European Union, in particular, is pushing this reality with such organizations as Europol and Eurojust, with the Frontex border guards, e-border concepts, Galileo and expensive pilot projects on safety research, with European web checks, a European police academy, special investigation and intelligence methods and so on. The Union is building a dangerous safety net at the service of the free market, regarding civilians as potential safety risks. Democratic, social and cultural rights have their hands tied. The *war on terror* became the alibi to drastically limit every expression of freedom.

Raf Jaspers' book summarizes everything. The result is highly explosive. Civil rights and freedoms are not safeguarded by abolishing them: Europe is in need of a new charter for the protection of fundamental rights.

SOCIAL POLITICS

Employees are no tools. The International Labour Organization, syndicates and numerous NGOs are campaigning for decent work in this world.

Farm hands, factory workers, web designers or postmen, (nearly) all of us have to work for a living. But this has become increasingly difficult now that the global economic crisis is raging, on top of an ecological and social crisis. Millions are losing their job, while half of the global labour force earns less than two euros a day.

Many countries around the world have prospered thanks to globalization, especially in Asia, but at the same time the income inequalities have grown in most countries. Companies are relentlessly hunting for the cheapest and less protected labour. The internet offers them a virtual global factory hall. As never before they can chop up work and outsource at will in their global recruitment office. As a result, almost everywhere the share of wages in the economy decreases and employees are pressurized in different ways.

Can we do better? Absolutely. Countries like China, Brazil and India are undertaking substantial measures to improve the position of their employees. And the urgent tackling of our environmental problems is one big cry for work. The crisis challenges us to build a social, ecological and democratic economy.

Global Recruitment

Decent work in times of globalization and crisis

by Dirk Barrez & John Vandaele



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When NATO Preaches with Passion

by *Ludo De Brabander & Georges Spriet*



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Experts Ludo De Brabander and Georges Spriet explain the real origins of NATO: the organisation had to institutionalize the American influence in Europe after the Second World War and create a military structure to ensure the protection and expansion of the capitalist world.

After an intensive historical portrait of the alliance, the authors adequately describe the new global ambitions of NATO based on a doctrine of military intervention. Even today the United States wants to consolidate its status of only superpower in the world through NATO.

But many NATO members primarily prefer to defend their strategic and economic interests. The reinvented NATO leads to new global tensions and questions. Is the US policy dividing the EU? Are we on the verge of a new Cold War with Russia? What about surging powers like China?

The Shadow of the Star analyzes the history of Zionism, from the origins to the present meaning of this nationalist movement. A century ago, Theodor Herzl's essay *The Jewish State* started the Zionist movement. Herzl and other pioneering Zionists based their movement on a racial translation of the Judaic theme of God's chosen people. It was the beginning of a terrible history of consequences in which the ends, a Greater Israel, justified the means in almost every way.

The option of a pure Jewish or by Jews dominated state in Arabic Israel, would inevitably lead to a situation of colonialism, finally resulting in a military conflict between the two ethnic groups. After the foundation of the state of Israel in 1948, Zionism held on to the theory of God's chosen people and used it against the natives of Palestine. Zionist militia ousted large numbers of Palestinians to refugee camps.

In the 1960s, the Zionist movement used the holocaust as a centrepiece of their propaganda. After the trial against the Nazi Adolf Eichmann, the responsibility of the genocide was projected on the opponents of the Jewish state. From that day on, the Zionists have regarded every criticism of Israel equal to the crimes of the Nazis. The confrontation persisted.

The Shadow of the Star

An introduction to anti-Zionism

by *Peter Edel*



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Gaza

**A history of the Palestinian
tragedy**

by *Lucas Catherine & Charles Ducal*



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'Israeli tanks destroy Gaza City'
'Israel bombards UN school in Gaza'
'Inhabitants of Gaza isolated in open air prison'

The newspaper headlines on the Israeli invasion of Gaza in 2008 were quite clear:

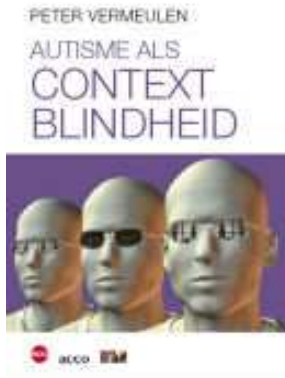
1,400 dead, of whom a third were children.
4,000 buildings destroyed.
No food supplies. No medicines.

Why this iron Israeli assault? Was it because of the Palestinian missiles that hit Israel? Or does Israel have other reasons? Why is Hamas launching missiles? Is it a terrorist attack of fundamentalists? Or are there deeper causes? How did the conflict between Israeli and Palestinians start? How is the peace process going? Is there a solution?

These are all questions answered by Arabia expert Lucas Catherine in this revealing book. The facts, used in an historic summary of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, lead to conclusions on the real causes of this Palestinian tragedy. Poet Charles Ducal reflects on the drama in a striking cycle of nine poems.

Autism as Context Blindness

by Peter Vermeulen



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Why does the moon on the horizon look so big?
Why is a book sometimes a murder weapon?

The answer to these questions: because we are sensitive to context. Nothing in our observation has an absolute or fixed meaning. Tears on someone's cheek, for example, could mean sorrow as well as happiness, relief or just an ordinary allergy.

In Flanders and the Netherlands alone there are over 100,000 people struggling with context. They hardly manage to use context in order to make sense out of what they see, hear, taste, smell and feel. These people suffer from context blindness. The world in all its multiple and ever changing meanings is very confusing to them. They think absolute in a relative world. Misunderstandings in communication and social conduct are the consequences.

In this book, Peter Vermeulen looks for the role of context in the processing of data by the human brain. As ever, in a very accessible way, Vermeulen summarizes all scientific research. Numerous examples illustrate how context blindness offers an explanation for the thinking and behaviour of people suffering from autism.

Ever since the thirteenth century, foster parents in the Belgian town of Geel adopt psychiatric patients and invite them to take part in the daily life of the family and the community. The patients get a chance to prove themselves as valuable members of society. This unique approach has fascinated experts around the world and, as a result, it has become the dominant approach in mental health care.

Welcome in Geel tells the history of community mental health care in this small town somewhere in the Belgian province of Antwerp. The book focuses on the first part of the twentieth century, when thousands of patients were sheltered in a town of only 15.000 inhabitants.

It offers a unique portrait of the psychiatric institute in Geel and of the life in foster families. The authors also zoom in on the international fame of Geel, the stories of hundreds of Dutchmen and a number of other remarkable foreigners. We get to see the daily life as well as the therapies and methods applied by doctors and nurses in the past. All of this results in a warm humane story with realistic and well documented images of the people who participate in this unique project.

Welcome in Geel

A history of community mental health care

by Bert Boeckx & Geert Vandecruys (red.)

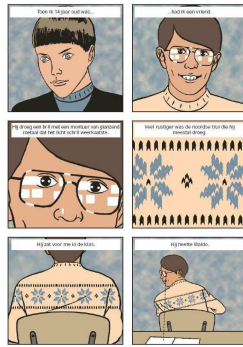


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The Secret of the Space Elevator

by Erik Thys



The Secret of the Space Elevator is the very first quality comic book on autism. In a highly accessible, colourful story, the author, psychiatrist and talented cartoonist Erik Thys, draws a striking image of how it is to live with the limiting autism spectrum disorder.

Synopsis:

Linus is a boy with a passion for computers and elevators. Linus' classmates call him Mr. Spock because in many ways he resembles the famous character from the Star Trek TV series. Just like Mr. Spock, Linus analyzes the world rationally and analytically. He is fascinated by all kinds of details from his surroundings, while at the same time this also seems to bother him. What classmates and other people say and do is a bigger mystery to him than the functioning of elevators. Most of all, he would just like to shut himself from all those confusing things. It takes awhile before a psychologist finally diagnoses what is wrong with Linus: he has autism spectrum disorder...

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With dvd

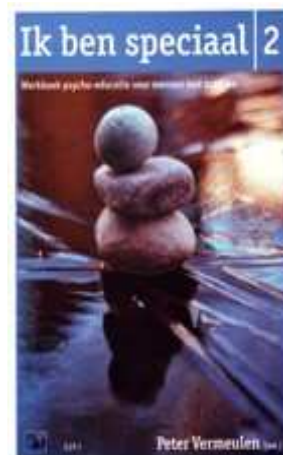
For years, experts have explained to parents and caretakers what autism is. But normally gifted people suffering from autism are also wondering, directly or indirectly, what exactly they are suffering from. Peter Vermeulen wrote a workbook especially designed for those people who, after all, read, think and understand differently. Even the lay-out of the book takes that into account.

I am Special is, in this new edition, a programme for psycho education with the purpose of improving autistic people's self-knowledge, their general knowledge of autism and how to deal with it. The book proposes an empowering Socratic method.

I am Special is a genuine WORKbook; you have to work with it. Autistic children, youth or adults run through the different pages with the help of an adult. In this second edition, additions, corrections and suggestions of parents, autistic people and caretakers were included. The book comes with a dvd facilitating the development of proper personalized versions, resulting in a unique and creative book.

I am Special 2

by Peter Vermeulen



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MENTAL HEALTH



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CATALOGUE

With CD-ROM

"We are not allowed, we are afraid, we cannot talk about it." People with a mental handicap as well have the right to make choices in their sexual and relational lives. Sexuality and how to cope with it is a growth process. Experimenting, learning by experience and education are very important. Depriving people of that leads to non-adequate behaviour. Still there is much shyness in the (professional) environment to talk about sexuality with people who suffer from a mental disorder.

This book offers some supportive visual material for good communication with those people. Numerous photos illustrate, with no nonsense and great tenderness, such themes as body, physical changes, sexual feelings, masturbation, reproduction, having sex, pregnancy, birth, contraceptives and sexually transmissible diseases.

An absolute unique book, first of its kind, for people with a mental handicap and their (non-)professional environment so that they would 'work' together on their relational and sexual prosperity. The book with CD-ROM included is the result of the work in practice of the Flemish NGO VMG. *Sex@relationships.come!* comes in two parts: one on sexuality, the other on relationships.

Sex@relationships.come!

Parts 1 & 2

by *Greet Conix (red.), Hilde Claerhout & An Ryckaert*



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MENTAL HEALTH

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China Express

by Ng Sauw Tjhoi



Radio reporter Ng Sauw Tjhoi, Belgian and member of the Hakka ethnic group in China, returns to his roots and reports on the many and fast metamorphoses of China. With the speed of a Chinese bullet train, Tjhoi writes down his experiences and impressions of Chinese labour - his favourite theme -, of the rescue operations after the devastating earthquake of May 2008, of the new role of Chinese media, of the unexpected large presence of Muslims in China, and so on.

The author looks for open minds who tell freely what they are up to and what they dream of. CCTV journalist Li Bing, for example, or Wang Kang, who informs immigrants on the Chinese labour laws; Kuang Ai Yung who got poisoned in a chemical factory and who is now a women's rights activist; Lu Zhaowen, chairman of the Bureau for Environmental Protection; Zhang Jing Yi, who works for a syndicate in Urumgi, and many more.

Ng Sauw Tjhoi travels along the ancient Silk Roads and freeway G312 to the western, poorer Xinjiang, where Uigurs live together with Chinese and where few journalists wander. He visits many parts: Suzhou, Xi'an, Lanzhou, Dunhuang, Jaohe, Turpan and Urumgi. Then he goes on to the East Coast: Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Xiamen, Wenzhou and Yiwu.

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TRAVEL - HISTORY

Nepal. The Himalayas. Mount Everest. Kathmandu. With many people these names evoke an exotic dream world, but how are things in reality? Geographer and freelance journalist Nick Meynen walked down 2500 km of unknown roads in Nepal and bundled his experiences and impressions in a fascinating journalistic travel book.

Throughout his journey in the isolated western parts of Nepal Meynen remains in touch with the broader Nepalese and global contexts. His fascination with the links between the lives of the Nepalese and our world results in a surprising view on such varying subjects as missionaries, machine guns, environmental disasters and Maoists.

In this globalized world, the daily life in the Himalayas is not at all immune to the decisions we make in our parliaments, at home or even in our minds. This book shows the Nepalese face and story of globalization. Nepal, a country just around the corner.

Nepal

New roads in the Himalayas

by Nick Meynen



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Congo for Beginners

by Tony Busselen



Corruption, war and misery: it is what we think about the Democratic Republic of Congo nowadays. We are bombarded with a continuous stream of pessimism that loves to forget the colonial past of this troubled country.

In *Congo for Beginners*, journalist Tony Busselen tries to understand how the Congolese regarded colonialism and why they fought it, how the dictatorship of Mobutu was installed, how it was kept alive and what it meant to the Congolese. And why Mobutu was overthrown in the end. The author argues that, after fifty years of independence of Congo, we finally should listen to the Congolese themselves.

At the same time *Congo for Beginners* criticizes Belgium's current foreign policy towards its former colony. Is Belgium really prepared to let Congo go down its own political and economic road and develop a respectful relationship with this country?

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TRAVEL - HISTORY

India

An appointment with time

by Kris Peeraer

India, soon the most populated country in the world, cherishes its ancient traditions while indulging itself in globalization. In just a few years, India has developed into an economic giant, in a bid to reclaim its long lost position of world power. But at the same time the country still suffers from typical third world problems.

In *India. An appointment with time* author Kris Peeraer visits the old country side as well as the modern cities of Mumbai or Bangalore, where he stays at the homes of various kinds of people. He meets programmers working for India's thriving IT sector but also yogi. In no time, Peeraer discovers India's human landscape from an intimate, personal angle.

The caste system, religions, the political situation, marriage, poverty,... everything that makes India India is discussed in a fascinating cocktail of philosophy and adventure, devotion and blasphemy, old and new, east and west, escapism and social criticism.

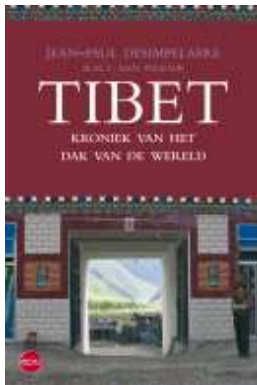


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Tibet

Chronicles from the roof of the world

by Jean-Paul De Simpelaere in cooperation with Kris Peeraer



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Tibet has always remained one of the world's best kept secrets, even in this era of globalization. Located in an isolated and distant part of the planet, this country has only produced myths and legends. That is why, today, most of us know Tibet as a kind, feudal paradise of purity. Historians did little to clarify these myths, some of them even added new ones. The vast Tibet, that only houses a few million people, has become a controversial name. But what is there behind the controversy?

Tibet. Chronicles from the roof of the world invites us to take a walk through the Tibetan highlands and through time, in search for the history, culture and religions of Tibet. We start in the ice age, pass by the Yarlung Dynasty and the great Tubo empire in the 7th and 8th Century A.D., and stop by to take a look at the origins of the Buddhist schools and at the invasions of the Mongols.

From the 17th Century onwards, relations with the Chinese empire improved. But when the dominance of the local theocracy and war lords came to an end in 1951, the dispute between one of Tibet's leaders, the dalai lama, and the Chinese government began. Whatever the result of this dispute, under Chinese rule Tibet has made the leap from a feudal to a modern country in just a few decades.