



### **Philosophy Festival 2026 - European Dialogues “Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean in Dialogue in Athens”**

For its 2026 edition, the Philosophy Festival, organized annually by the French Institute of Greece, is delighted to host a **special edition of the European Dialogues in Athens.**

The European Dialogues are a travelling series of debates and discussions held successively in several European capitals. Their ambition is to explore the consequences for Europe of the ongoing conflicts in its immediate neighbourhood by bringing disciplines and generations into dialogue. For their 12th edition, the European Dialogues will stop in Athens – their very first gathering in Southern Europe.

**From May 26 to 29, we invite you to engage in discussions on Europe’s role and place in the world, and more specifically in the Eastern Mediterranean, from both retrospective and prospective perspectives.**

This edition of the European Dialogues will bring together writers, philosophers, diplomats, journalists, researchers, artists and activists through keynote conversations, round tables, performances and exhibitions.

The opening evening at the National Theatre of Greece on May 26 will set the tone for this edition with a discussion dedicated to Europe as seen through the eyes of its writers. The programme will then address the return of war on the European and Mediterranean horizon and invite the audience to a broader reflection on the European project and its new challenges. The discussions held at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and Panteion University, on May 27 and 28, will address contemporary conflicts, geopolitical tensions and information wars, before opening a wider reflection on European construction and unity in the context of the crises affecting the continent.

The two evening sessions and the closing day at the French Institute of Greece will welcome conferences, roundtables and performances: on May 27, with a dialogue on the philosophy of war and the concept of cosmopolitanism today; on May 28, focusing on questions of hospitality, migration and intercultural dialogue. Finally, the Dialogues will conclude on May 29 at the French Institute of Greece with presentations by students from partner universities and a roundtable conceived by the French School at Athens.

Special events will be held throughout the “Dialogues”: workshops with students from the Eugène Delacroix Franco-Hellenic High School, exhibitions in the gardens of the French School at Athens and on the railings of the National Garden.

**Four days dedicated to debating the geopolitical challenges facing our continent, while drawing on history and philosophy, the arts and literature.**

ΣΥΝΕΡΓΑΤΕΣ | PARTENAIRES



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## PROGRAM

**Tuesday, May 26th  
Opening night**

20:00 – National Theatre of Greece (Ziller Building – “Níkos Kouúroulos” New Stage – 22 Αγίου Κωνσταντίνου Street)

**The Mediterranean, cradle of the European identity: a literary conversation with Olivier Guez, Andrea Marcolongo and Ersi Sotiropoulou**

This first conversation will open the European Dialogues and seek to explore contemporary visions of Europe at the Athenian geographical and historical crossroad. How do these visions disseminate and what do they tell of the making of Europe?

With: Olivier Guez, writer, editor of *Grand Tour, autoportrait de l'Europe par ses écrivains* [Grand Tour, autoportrait of Europe by its writers] (Grasset, 2022) and author of *Mesopotamia* (Grasset, 2024) ; Andrea Marcolongo, writer and Hellenist, author of *La lingua geniale* [The Genial Language] (Laterza, 2016) and *Déplacer la lune de son orbite. Une nuit au musée de l'Acropole* [Moving the moon from its orbit. A night at the Acropolis Museum] (Stock, 2023) ; Ersi Sotiropoulou, novelist and poet, contributor to the *Grand Tour*, author of *What Remains of the Night* (Patakis, 2017).

Moderation: Manolis Piblis (journalist, Vouli TV)

**Wednesday, May 27th**

Location: Eugène Delacroix Franco-Greek High School (closed to the public)

10:00 - 12:00

Roundtable: “Freedom of the Press and Information Challenges in Europe and the Mediterranean” with high school students, and the participation of Anne Bocandé (RSF), Basile Dekonink and Alexandros Kottis and Alexandros Kottis, French correspondents in Greece

Speakers: Anne Bocandé (editor-in-chief for Reporters Without Borders), French correspondents.

Ekpa (Amphitheatre “Ioánnis Drakópoulos” (30 Panepistimiou Street)

14:30 - 16:00

**Roundtable “The Eastern Mediterranean at the epicenter of multiple crises”**

In a context marked by the war in Ukraine, conflicts in the Near East and in Iran, and by tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean, this roundtable seeks to address the current geopolitical reshuffling in the region. Armed conflicts, geopolitical rivalries, issues of migration, energy and defense: these crises have profoundly reshaped the local and regional balance of power.

The session will be opened by master students in geopolitics from the University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne, followed by a discussion between: Nur Arafeh, Fellow at the Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center, specialist of the political economy of the Middle East; Maria Gavouneli, professor of international law and director of the research programme on refugees and migration at EKPA University in Athens; Panagiotis Tsakonas, professor of International Relations, Security Studies and Foreign Policy Analysis at EKPA University in Athens; Amélie Voisin, historian, associate fellow at the French Navy Strategic Research Centre, professor of geopolitics, history and cartography at the Pôle Écoles Méditerranée.

Moderation: Ino Afentouli (ELIAMEP)

16:00 - 17:30

**Roundtable “Information Wars in Europe and in the Mediterranean: Challenges and Responses”**

Starting from the conflicts in the Eastern Mediterranean, this roundtable will look at the information wars waged in the region and explore in what ways information has become a strategic issue. It will explore the mechanisms of disinformation and propaganda, the challenges of journalism in conflict zones, and the asymmetries in how narratives are circulated. It will also highlight ways to preserve good practices in investigation, fact checking, and editorial independence.

With: Anne Bocandé, editor-in-chief for Reporters Without Borders; Nada Maucourant Atallah, journalist correspondent in Beyrouth for *The National*; Katerina Oikonomakou, journalist for *Inside Story*; Lamprini Rori, professor at EKPA; Sissy Alonistioutou, director of Journalists about Journalism; Marie Jo Sader, freelance journalist based in Paris and Beirut, specialist of the conflict in the Near East (*Le Monde*, *L’Orient-Le Jour*, France Télévisions).

Moderation: Laurent Marchand, deputy editor-in-chief for Europe and International Affairs at *Ouest-France*

Location: Auditorium, French Institute of Greece (31 Sina street)

19:00 - 20:30

**“Why War?” - roundtable with philosophers George Arabatzis and Ninon Grangé**

A dialogue between two philosophers on the spectre of war, this conversation explores the role of philosophy when it is faced with war: how have philosophers tackled war, how have they reflected on its causes, its justifications, its forms, and its limits?

At a time where we are confronted with a renewed presence of contemporary war and armed conflicts, this roundtable offers to revisit the great philosophical inquiries on war. From the Classical Era to our current societies, war has been a central object of meditation, at the crossroads of ethics, political philosophy and the history of ideas.

A conversation between George Arabatzis, philosopher, professor at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (EKPA) and Ninon Grangé, philosopher, professor at Paris 8 University, author of *Philosophie avec personnages* [Philosophy with characters] (Mimesis, 2024), *L'Urgence et l'effroi : l'état d'exception, la guerre et les temps politiques* [Frightening Urgency: State of Exception, War and the Politics of Time] (ENS Éditions, 2018), *Oublier la guerre civile ? Stasis : chronique d'une disparition* [Forgetting Civil War? Stasis: Chronicles of A Disappearance] (Vrin, 2015) and *De la guerre civile* [On Civil War] (2009).

Moderation: Alexia Koulouri (journalist, Vouli TV)

20:30 - 22:00

**“The Cosmopolitics of the Earth Against the Ecology of War”: a conversation with Patrice Maniglier**

The generalisation of wars and migrations puts more than ever cosmopolitics at the heart of political thought, while offering new perspectives on its framing: a conversation with Patrice Maniglier, philosopher, and co-author with Étienne Balibar of *La terre ou le monde. Divergences cosmopolitiques* [Earth or the world. Divergences in cosmopolitics] (Mialet-Barrault, 2025).

Speakers: Patrice Maniglier, philosopher, associate professor at Paris-Nanterre University

In a conversation with Georges Faraklas, professor of political philosophy at Panteion University

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**Thursday, May 28th**

Location: Panteion (Amphitheatre “Aristotle” Amphitheatre (136 Andréas Syngrou Avenue)

14:30 - 15:30

**Roundtable “Rethinking the unity and the action of the European Union in the face of a changing international order”**

In a context marked by growing uncertainties about the transatlantic relationship and by the crises of the Eastern Mediterranean, this roundtable explores the consequences of these changes on the political unity and the diplomatic and strategic outlook of the European Union. In confronting geopolitical tensions, regional conflicts and a changing international order, the

discussion will debate whether Europe is able to reinforce its autonomy, cohesion, and role in its Mediterranean neighborhood and beyond.

Speakers: Constantinos Arvanitopoulos, professor of international politics at Panteion University, former Minister of Education, Constantinos Lavdas, professor of European and comparative politics at Panteion University, Laurence Auer, Ambassador of France to Greece  
Moderation: Vassilios Paipais, director of IDIS

15:30-16:30

**In-Depth Conversation with Catherine Colonna: “Europe and the Challenge of Power”**

Moderation: Marilena Koppa, Dean of the Faculty of International Studies, Communication and Culture at Panteion University, former Member of the European Parliament (2007-2014)

In this in-depth interview devoted to the theme of “Europe and the Challenge of Power”, Catherine Colonna will share her analysis of the major challenges facing the European Union today. A career diplomat and former Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs (2022-2024) and former Deputy Minister for European Affairs, she will discuss how the war in Ukraine, tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean and crises in the Middle East have reshaped the European strategic outlook. This discussion will offer an opportunity to explore the capacity of Europe to defend its interests, strengthen its cohesion and consolidate its security role in a profoundly changing strategic environment.

Location: Eugène Delacroix Franco-Greek High School (closed to the public)

15:30 - 16:30

Discussion between the students and Michel Agier on migrations in the Mediterranean

Location: French Institute of Greece (31, Sina street)

18:00 - 19:00

**Keynote: “Europe and the Repressed Arab Intellectual Heritage: the Picture of Truth”**

Speaker: Jean-Baptiste Brenet, philosopher, specialist of Ibn Rushd and of arabic philosophies

Without the contributions of Arab thinkers, who shared and enriched the Greek intellectual legacy, the intellectual life of the medieval western latin world would not have been what it was. This is a legacy and a debt, however, that “Europe” has struggled and continues to struggle to take into account, to integrate and to reflect upon. It is rather an intellectual repression and occultation that is taking place. This will be shown through the figure of Averroes (Ibn Rushd, d. 1198) in 14th and 16th centuries Italian painting. What can we learn from the way he is pictured, as a defeated Muslim, at the feet of Thomas of Aquinas shown as a triumphant saint? What filters through however, and defeats the fantasy of simplistic intellectual roots and genealogies?

19:00 - 20:15

**In-depth conversation with Michel Agier : “Rethinking dialogues: ethics and politics of hospitality”**

Michel Agier is an anthropologist, research professor at the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS) and emeritus research director at the French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD). He has conducted and coordinated, since 2000, field work and theoretical research in Africa and Europe, on borderlands, refugee camps, exile and migration.

He has authored *Racisme et culture. Explorations transnationales* [Racism and Culture. Transnational enquiries] (Seuil, 2025), *Les migrants et nous. Éloge de Babel* [The Migrants and Us. Praising Babel] (CNRS-Éditions, 2023), *La peur des autres. Essai sur l'indésirabilité* [The Fear of Others. Essay on Indesirableness] (Payot-Rives, 2022), *Babels. Enquêtes sur la condition migrante* [Babels. Studies on the Migrant Condition] (co-directed with Stefan Le Courant] (Seuil/Points Essais Poche, 2022), and *L'étranger qui vient. Repenser l'hospitalité* [The Coming Stranger. Rethinking Hospitality] (Seuil, 2018).

Moderation: in discussion with Nefeli Tzanetakou, journalist, followed by a discussion with Nikolina Klajic, Zola Chichmintseva Kondamambou and Emina Sehic.

Location: IFG Terrace

20:30

**À la saison des abricots [The Season of Apricots], by the Shaeirat collective**

Bilingual performance poetry from the *À la saison des abricots* [The Season of Apricots] collection, by Palestinian poet Carol Sansour, based in Athens, and French actress Christelle Saez. The two performers, the poet and the actress, have elevated their reading to a rare degree of intensity and deploy the full oratory of a profound and human vision encompassing the totality of the lived experience of a Palestinian woman.

In Arabic and French, with a translation in Greek

Registration is needed, limited availability (+ link to Fienta ticketing system)

*This performance has been selected by the Institut français as part of the 2026 Mediterranean Season.*

Location : Auditorium, French Institute of Greece

21:30 - 22:30

**In-depth conversation with Anne-Claire Legendre: L'Institut du Monde Arabe (Arab World Institute), a bridge between cultures**

In this in-depth conversation, Anne-Claire Legendre, the new president of the Institut du Monde Arabe, will share her vision of the institute as an instrument for understanding the contemporary world and a bridge between the Arab worlds and Europe. She will explore in particular the role of this cultural institute when it comes to understanding the complexities of Arab societies and diasporas and will give the outline of her new mission, in France, in the 22 Arab States, and

beyond. A career diplomat, she has been posted at the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations in New York, as the North Africa and Middle East Advisor in the Office of Minister Laurent Fabius, as General Consul of France in New York and the Ambassador of France to Kuwait, before becoming Spokeswoman for the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and North Africa and Middle East Advisor to the President of the Republic (2023-2026).

In conversation with: Christos Carras, executive director of the Dinos & Lia Martinos Foundation and of the future centre KYKLOS for arts and culture.

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**Friday, May 29th**

11:15 - 12:30

**Roundtable “European migration policies and human rights defenders of the Eastern Mediterranean”**

This roundtable will provide an analysis of the European migration policies in the Eastern Mediterranean and of the interactions between institutions, human rights defenders, and the States. It will adopt a range of perspectives from geography, law, public policy, State actions and fieldwork.

The discussion will be opened by the masters students in geopolitics from Reims Champagne-Ardenne University, followed by a conversation between Vassilis Chatzopoulos, Sarah Mekdjian, Alberto Horst Neidhardt and Lefteris Papagiannakis.

With: Alberto Horst Neidhardt, public policy analyst and head of the Migration and Diversity programme at the European Policy Centre, specialist of the European public policies for asylum and migration; Daniella Marouda, assistant professor of public international law and humanitarian international law at Panteion University; Sarah Mekdjian, geographer, associate professor of social geography at University Grenoble-Alps, specialist of borderisations and contemporary exile situations; Lefteris Papagiannakis, director of the Greek Council for Refugees in Athens.

Moderation: Vassilis Chatzopoulos, professor of European Law at Panteion University

14:00 - 15:00

**Memories of exile — How to tell the legacy of migrations and diasporas**

Archiving, conserving, collecting, telling the memories of displaced peoples, whence they come, where they arrive to and what they build: this is one of the necessary preconditions to properly reflect on the present and the future. How do diaspora communities of the Eastern Mediterranean transmit these stories, how do these stories, in turn, get integrated to national memories and histories?

This session will provide academics the opportunity to present their research.

Speakers: Alik Angelidou, associate professor of social anthropology at Panteion University, on the “Memories of Exile” project devoted to the sound archives of refugees of the Greek Civil War; Iris Polyzou, researcher at the National Technical University of Athens, on the “Social Atlas of Athens”; Pierre Sintès, associate professor of geography at Aix-Marseille University, for ASKI (Contemporary Social History Archives) on the Albanese migration in Greece.

Moderation: EFA

On the railings of the French Embassy and of the National Garden, throughout the festival :  
**“Look at Ukraine” exhibition, from Oleksandr Glyadyelov**

This exhibition is an excerpt of the retrospective dedicated to Ukrainian photographer Oleksandr Glyadyelov in Kiev in September 2025. It leads us through a sensitive exploration of Ukraine, from its independence in 1991 to the current war. Through the eyes of a humanist, the artist covers the mobilisation of citizens, daily life, and the challenges facing Ukrainian families. The exhibition is presented during the European Dialogues on large scale prints, on the railings of the French Embassy (Leof. Vasilissis Sofias 7) and of the National Garden.  
In collaboration with the *This is Athens - City Festival*.

In the gardens of the French School of Athens, throughout the festival:  
**“Archipel de Pierre” (Stone Archipelago) exhibition, by Elsa Mazeau**

*Archipel de Pierre* is the fruit of three years of research in Egypt (Assouan, Karnak) and Greece (Delos, Naxos). Elsa Mazeau has designed this photography exhibition between quarries, marble workshops, archeological sites and museums (Hellenic National Archeological Museum, Goulandris Museum of Cycladic Art, Louvres Museum). In her work, marble, tools and dust shift the quarry from a place of extraction to a disputed space where the conditions for the apparition of antic forms are played anew. This exploration of the transmission of matter and forms, from Egypt to Greece, is particularly significant in the context of a programme dedicated to the Eastern Mediterranean, where it shows the continuity, the resonance, and the exchanges at play in the region.

Works presented in the gardens of the French School in Athens: *Transcription, Χάριτες, Surface de pression, Souffle sédimentaire, Partition*.

Works presented at the French Institute of Greece: *Réactivation pigmentaire*.

This project has received the Photography Bicentennial label from the French Ministry of Culture.

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