

## **POLITICAL EUTOPIAS: PIERRE MANENT'S CRITIQUE OF BRUSSELS**

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*Pro patria mori* – to die for one's country was generally seen as one of the greatest acts of heroism among the ancient Romans. In the modern era, this strong notion of patriotism justified a nearly religious veneration of the Founding Fathers of the American Republic, as well as the public respect for courageous individuals, such as Winston Churchill, Margaret Thatcher or Ronald Reagan. To love one's nation has always meant to study its past, to nourish its culture, to protect its borders, to fight for its glory. One's country was a place called home. The virtue of patriotism is unthinkable in the absence of powerful symbols, such as the flag, the anthem, and the military uniform. And yet, the European Union seems to discourage people's allegiance to their nation-states. In the absence of a European demos, the bureaucrats in Brussels are keen on building a European army. Will they succeed? We shall answer this question by looking at the late works of Pierre Manent, a French philosopher who constantly critiques the EU's top-down managerial approach of very diverse issues, from immigration and demographics to the problem of monetary union, Brexit, or political Islam.