



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summer Seminar

### **The rise, decline and – demise? revival? of Europe**

23-28 July 2012  
Vama Veche, Romania

#### **Introduction**

The Luxembourg Institute for European and International Studies (LIEIS), in association with the Black Sea University Foundation and the European Cultural Centre of Bucharest, organised a seminar on '*The rise, decline and – demise? revival? of Europe*' from 23 to 28 July 2012 in Vama Veche, Romania.

Since 1994, this seminar has been part of a long-term project of summer courses involving students from the wider Black Sea area and neighbouring countries. Past topics in this series have included the *nature of conflicts in the international system, conceptual and practical issues in relation to European and world security problems, the scope and viability of European integration* as well as, more recently, *ideas for a viable society in the 21st century* (2008), *the evolution in Central and Eastern Europe since 1989* (2009), *searching for a decent society* (2010), and *searching for a decent international society* (2011).

In line with this tradition, the goal of this seminar was to have an open and frank debate about the current status of Europe and its future. The objective was to think about key issues in relation to this theme, without any *a priori* assumptions, prejudices or stereotypes. Rather than having long alternating presentations, there was a free-wheeling debate and a brain-storming with a clear focus on interdisciplinary concepts, with diverse and even clashing perspectives as well as attention to specific empirical facts. The ambition of the organisers was to raise awareness about the issue of the decline of Europe by offering theoretical and descriptive analysis combined with a rich historical background in order to avoid presentism.

As in previous years, the seminar brought together lecturers from various countries and 25 students from Western and Eastern Europe, and the Black Sea area. The lecturers were Dr Armand Clesse, Director of the LIEIS, Professor Christopher Coker, Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science, and Professor Gerhard Michael Ambrosi, Jean Monnet Professor ad personam at the University of Trier.

The group of students included a wide range of different levels and profiles: some undergraduates, others doing Master degrees, yet others were PhD candidates. Several have studied abroad and gained professional experience at international level. Most of them came from *Romania*, but there were also participants from *Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece, Luxembourg, Moldova, Serbia* and *Ukraine*.

The seminar was divided into twelve sessions. This report does not outline in a chronological order the presentations given by the lecturers or the questions posed by the students. Rather, it seeks to provide an overview of the discussions and to highlight the main questions and conclusions that emerged from the lively exchange of ideas.

In addition to the plenary sessions, the students debated in separate working groups during five sessions. The results of these debates were summarised by the students themselves (see appendix I). Appendix II, III and IV include a text prepared by Professor Malitza for the summer school entitled “They died not all, but all were sick...”, a table with the most important dates in the European history, according to the participants, and a table with important European dates by G.M. Ambrosi. Appendix V includes the agenda.

## **1. Explaining the rise and decline of countries and empires**

In his introductory remarks A. Clesse stressed the importance of organising a summer school on the rise and decline of countries. He pointed out that the rise and especially the decline of political entities has been a persistent, almost obsessive, concern of Europe. Prominent authors on the matter have been ancient ones like Petronius, Martial and Lucian as well as more modern ones like Montesquieu, Gibbon, Nietzsche, Oswald Spengler, Ortega y Gasset, Arnold Toynbee and others. Unfortunately though, contemporary popular treatises have been superficial. Given the difficulty of defining these concepts and provided their many facets, he opened the discussions by asking what the notion of rise might mean and what may explain it.

In his first remarks C. Coker elucidated this concept by offering clarifications and conceptualisations. First of all, the nature of the unit under concern sets limits on how rise can be defined. For instance, rise and decline represented different things for ancient Athens, early Victorian England, the Italian city-states and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Secondly, the issue is complicated as demonstrated by the conflicting views that different authors have. Hegel, Plato, Machiavelli, Weber and Spengler all hold distinctive ideas about the subject matter. It is also important to note that their ideas have been influenced by their time (i.e. pre-modern, modern or late modern, pre-industrial or post-industrial).

Thirdly, he inquired what rise means and put forward a series of categories. *Does rise mean creativity?* The creation of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century novel is often associated with the rise of 18<sup>th</sup>-century England. In that case, rise would also be a cultural issue. *Does rise mean “energy”?* Is it the ability, for example, to export 17 million people across the world just as England did in the 19<sup>th</sup> century? *Does rise mean “spirit”?* Is it associated, for example, with the will to power? Nazi Germany is a typical example. Its pursuit of power led to its rise.

In addition, he wondered, what might explain rise. Is it related to *geography*? For example, was it beneficial to be a Mediterranean power when the Mediterranean was the centre of European culture until the 16<sup>th</sup> century? Is it related to Toynbee's idea of *challenge and response*? To what extent does a society need a challenge before it can rise to the occasion? If societies are not confronted with challenges then they become lazy because there is no need to over-excel oneself. Is it related to *war*? War has been the single most transformative challenge that societies have faced and they have mostly risen through war – except for the Italian city-states. Wars make some powers and 'unmake' some others. Is it related to Spengler's idea of "*life cycles*"? Oswald Spengler had argued that societies have youth, adulthood and senility. Arguably though, he stated, there are cases to the opposite like Alexander the Great's empire that revitalised the ancient Greek world and led to the Hellenistic age. He continued asking if rise is related to *culture* and referred to the repetitive resurgence of Germany in the past centuries – even before its unification – which he related not with the German state but with German society and its culture. He then raised the question of whether rise is related to *demography*? Is it because the population of a country is increasing or because a country is exporting its population overseas as a result of this increase? And finally, is it related to *social capital*, i.e. the ability of a society to mobilise its social resources?

A. Clesse remarked that the group is dealing with elusive and ambiguous concepts. For that reason he commented that demography may be important; it can be affected by war and diseases and yet societies may still be able to recover. He also exposed contrasting views on war. Thucydides had a negative view of war whereas Heraclitus considered war as the father of all things. He then pinpointed the possible impact of religion and of innovation or creativity and wondered where innovativeness comes from and how a nation can lose it.

In relation to innovativeness, C. Coker indicated that it is insufficient on its own if, for example, the challenge – evoking the notion of challenge and response – is overwhelming. He then referred to demography and maintained that "a power can rise by exporting its people and by importing people but if you cannot absorb those immigrants immigration becomes a huge social and demographic issue", which will also lead to decline because of an inability to respond to that particular challenge. The fact that Europe cannot assimilate its people in the same way as the US does is part of the decline of Europe.

His third point related to the major intellectual break in Europe after around 1940 concerning attitudes towards war. War was considered part of the vitality of nations and indispensable for the rise of a great power until then. In contrast, Europeans now find this idea extraordinary; but not the Americans or the Chinese for instance. Does this mean, he asked, that Europe is ahead of the game or that it has been left behind?

G.M. Ambrosi in his remarks drew attention to the issue of what kind of an entity Europe is, if it is one, and to the transformation of polities. "What are really the entities about which we talk when we talk about Europe...?" He invited the participants to state the dates they considered as the most important ones for Europe (which are included in the appendix IV). G.M. Ambrosi then referred to some additional paradigmatic dates in the history of Western Europe (which are included in the appendix).

C. Coker argued that if one looks at the rise of states, then one should start with the first European state, Athens, which is the model that everybody else follows and a very important and inspirational one for many philosophers. The victory of the Athenians at the battle of Marathon signifies the beginning of the concept of Europe. The defeat of the Persians in Salamis was due to Athenian innovativeness. These two events mark the rise of an insignificant city called Athens

that actually had a greater impact on the history of Europe than any other city-state or nation-state, including the contemporary ones, with the exception of England because of the Industrial Revolution it initiated. The most important thing about Europe, he stated, is its historical consciousness. In a way Europe is burdened by a sense of history and this is what makes it not unique but different.

A. Clesse proceeded with the examination of decline and said that a fuller understanding of rise and decline includes not just economic, material, institutional, and political factors but also spiritual and moral ones. He referred to hubris which the ancient Greeks believed will be punished by the gods. He emphasised moral corruption which is often neglected in favour of a narrow non-philosophical definition of decadence. For the ancient Romans decadence was the opposite of prudence, wisdom, constancy and permanence.

C. Coker joined A. Clesse's emphasis on moral decadence. If you do not fulfil your life, this is decadence. For the ancient Greeks *eudaemonia* meant self-fulfilment and not happiness as many wrongly believe. Plato argued that we can fail to be properly or fully human. We are born with potentialities (i.e. someone can become an athlete or an academic etc) and a good society is one that allows its citizens to realise their potential. Decadence is when one stops developing oneself.

A society's decadence also goes along with its inability to take intellectual leaps. C. Coker referred to the Hellenistic world which had first discovered the steam engine to lift theatre props including a toy train. Nevertheless, they could not imagine the utility of this. They could not make the intellectual link and missed the Industrial Revolution. Moreover, decadence is the failure to assimilate people. A case in point is the failure of the ancient Romans to assimilate the barbarian mercenaries. As a result, the mercenaries gradually stopped fighting in the Roman way, became barbarians again and the empire fell.

A. Clesse introduced another dimension of decadence that seems contradictory; the flourishing of culture and the arts despite economic, political and military decadence. A striking example is the Habsburg Empire. Decades before the First World War decadence had set in but culture was at its peak.

C. Coker linked this phenomenon with what Arnold Toynbee described as the flush on the cheeks of a patient dying of galloping consumption (tuberculosis) and the impact of outsiders. More precisely, in Austria-Hungary the artistic and cultural resurgence took place thanks to the Jews who were excluded from society (the outsiders) and could only be productive as its critiques. Despite the temporary fluorescence of the Austrian society, this neither changed its course nor reversed its decadence.

Various participants expressed their own views on decline i.e. inescapable historical facts, subordination of the whole to the parts, consumerism, lack of innovativeness, inability to pursue change, and inability to realise one's potential.

## **2. What is Europe**

Before proceeding with the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of Europe A. Clesse asked what "Europe" is. Is it one entity? Does the use of the term "Europe" make any sense at all?

C. Coker addressed a common mistake made about the meaning of “Europe”. He dispelled the idea that Europe is only Western Europe and offered a concise historical overview of the ever-changing political landscape of Europe. Europe has a multifaceted and rich history and we should not forget that. A selective view of Europe is an impoverished one. For more than 700 years Spain was Arabic and was one of the most dynamic societies of the Middle Ages with an extraordinary culture. Southern France was under the Arabs for 300 years too. Sicily maintained its Arabic influence even after the departure of the Arabs. In Eastern Europe the movement of the Slavs, one of the greatest migratory waves in history, changed the face of contemporary Europe. It contributed to the collapse of the Western Roman Empire and forged Ukraine and Russia. Also, the Byzantine Empire saved Eastern Europe twice from the Arabs, averting an Islamisation of Europe. Another important medieval country was the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which was a great European power with a strong culture, saved Vienna from the Turks (1683), and produced the first truly democratic constitution (1791).

A similar lack of memory is apparent in European literature as well. Jonathan Bate, a British scholar of Shakespeare, wondered who the greatest playwright was. His answer was that if it was not Shakespeare, it would be Lope de Vega, one of the most prolific authors in the history of literature and famous for the profane and mystical elements in his characters. However, he is relatively unknown and the reason may simply be that he was not British. This lopsided awareness of Europe has been exaggerated by the rise of the US. When we talk about Europe we usually refer to post-1492 Europe – Europe after the discovery of the New World. This is the Europe of the Industrial Revolution, the Reformation and the Enlightenment. More importantly though, this is just Western Europe. Nevertheless, Europe’s history goes back many centuries. Parts of Europe have risen and parts of Europe have fallen. It is essential to remember that not only in order to be mindful of our own history but also in order to broaden our analysis when we are talking about the resurgence of Europe. Europe is not only Germany, France and England. These countries will still be important but the economic powerhouses of Europe and the world are elsewhere now. Among the fastest growing economies are Poland, Mexico and South Korea, and they may soon be in the top 10 economies of the world. Turkey is another important economic power and will play an important role if it remains part of the European ideal. In order to imagine a reinvented Europe, we need to turn away from the Western European architects that will no longer be the driving forces of Europe.

Since 1957 Europe has started changing again, but we must be precise about what has arisen from these efforts. They have not led to a common culture but to a common civilisation of the single market, the European legal system and certain practical norms and standards. No matter how noteworthy this is, it is different from a common European culture. At the Hague Congress (1948) Salvador de Madariaga expressed his hope for a Europe in which the English could say our Chartres, the Germans could say our Krakow and the Spanish could say our Brugge. In today’s Europe there is no “our”. Europe has never had a united culture and it still does not. Even in the Roman Empire there was not a single culture but a Roman civilisation based on the *lex romana* and the Roman citizenship.

### **3. What made Europe so strong**

Following the analysis of the concept of “Europe” the summer school focused on what made Europe so strong and in particular on the European way of thinking, capitalism, imperialism, military revolutions and money.

A. Clesse put forward the significance of Enlightenment and the kind of thinking it produced. For some thinkers the success of Europe is based on utilitarianism because it is a pragmatic approach that aims to organise nations in the most optimum way. It may also depend on the social contract theories of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. Rousseau's general will (*volonté générale*) for example could be seen as the idea behind the contemporary welfare state. Locke's ideas have formed the basis of constitutional liberal societies and our understanding of toleration. Kant's notion of the autonomy of the individual has contributed to making people realise they determine their own fate and they are responsible for it.

The progress of science has been another turning point in European history. In Samuel Johnson's book *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia*, Rasselas asks a philosopher why are Europeans so successful. The reply he receives is "knowledge". Outside Europe scientific knowledge has been less important. Another important factor is institutions but the real question is where they emanate from. Are they dependent or independent variables? Are they the offspring of culture (in general terms)? Europe's strength could also be justified by its educational system, or at least be explained through it, but this is not an independent factor since it is also related to culture.

Other central issues are those related to the economic and legal organisation of European societies. The existence of a stable legal framework, the *pacta sunt servanda* (agreements must be kept) clause and the establishment of property rights are prerequisites to stable economic activities. They lead to reliability and trust. This is the basis of "social capital" which Fukuyama considers as the basis of development and of things that would be impossible in an anarchical society.

C. Coker highlighted some of A. Clesse's points and expanded on the importance of knowledge in Europe's success and the intricate relation between capitalism and the idea of the social contract. Europeans do not acquire knowledge for its own sake but to empower themselves, usually over others. This is underlined by Francis Bacon's idea that knowledge is power. For the Spanish historical knowledge was instrumental in helping them conquer the Aztec Empire. They manipulated the subjects of the Aztecs to fight them and then subjugated them. Works like Herodotus' *Histories* about inter-civilisational interactions have practical use too.

As far as the social contract is concerned it has been crucial for the rise of the West and is connected to capitalism. When we see the social contract we must see it in capitalist terms. For instance, Hobbes' *Leviathan* is written in capitalist language. A revealing passage is "*The "value" or "worth" of a man is, as of all other things, his price; that is to say, so much as would be given for the use of his power*" (Pt. I, Ch. 10). The notion of "trust" is also relevant because it is contractual and is anchored on capitalism which in turn relies on legally enforceable contracts. Trust is a prerequisite to investments. If one does not trust the state, then investments will not follow.

A. Clesse then posed the following question: "why did nations that developed in parallel later start to diverge?" Does imperialism make all the difference? Why did China that in 1750 had a parallel level of development with Europe, then began to fall behind? Was the conquest of the Americas decisive for the take-off of Europe?

G.M. Ambrosi argued that the conquest of the Americas was important because in Europe it led to an enormous increase of the monetary base and of effective demand, and not just in Spain and Portugal. The great influx of gold and silver from the Americas increased the monetary base first

in the colonial powers Spain and Portugal. But this spread to other European countries due to a steep increase in the demand for materials for the colonial activities (ships, arms, provisioning, qualified workers in Europe etc.). Trade deficits of the colonial powers were then an important factor and to some extent explain why Spain's pre-eminence was dissipated towards England and the Netherlands. The discussion on what made Europe strong led to a relevant question but from a different perspective. Both the participants and A. Clesse raised the issue of the price of primacy. Are certain nations willing to pay the cost of rise?

C. Coker depicted the dual nature of European imperialism. He maintained that Europe's rise would be impossible without imperialism but mentioned that it was accompanied by atrocities. In the case of Britain the slave trade was the basis of its economics in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Still, the slave trade and the horrors of Belgian rule in Congo are also the worst aspects of colonialism. No European empire came out with clean hands.

One participant asked why Europe's eminence lasted so long despite its outrages whereas in other cases brutal empires like the Nazis lasted less. C. Coker referred to Britain and said that it adjusted. The greatest slaving nation in history came to the forefront of the anti-slavery movement when it decided that slavery was no longer needed for its economic development. This is one of the ironies of history, as Reinhold Niebuhr would put it.

Another participant expressed the view that military capacity is critical. It makes countries feel secure, which is required before they start to rise and is essential for expansion. Great empires also had the vital capacity to produce money. Others wondered about the relation between military and commercial empires. Are commercial empires the outcome of military power or can this relation be seen differently?

A. Clesse followed up on those remarks and commented on military capabilities. Military capacities are the result of developments in many sectors e.g. science, technology, innovation. They also require a stable social entity. Success often depends on having a balance of various factors among which the military is only one. He also wondered how important have wars and battles been for the rise and decline of powers. Can they change the path of history? Are battles decisive? How would Europe look like if Spain had dominated?

In response to these reflections, C. Coker argued that military power is not sufficient unless it is mobilized effectively. What makes the difference is what is called military revolutions; a radical change in military strategy and tactics. Europe has known around 14 military revolutions since the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The Dutch for instance were the first to set up a military academy in Europe and to apply mathematics to the study of fortifications. The Prussians introduced an extremely complex network of manoeuvres on the battlefield, and the French applied the famous "*levée en masse*". Therefore, according to C. Coker, mobilisation, innovation and creativity in military thinking have always been the key to military success because military power does not translate directly into pre-eminence, nor into rise.

Subsequently, G.M. Ambrosi touched upon the monetary dimension of empires. The US, for example, funded the Vietnam War by printing and spreading US dollars abroad. Nowadays the reserve holdings of US dollars and treasury bills in China, Japan, and many other countries constitutes an enormous volume of credit which the USA enjoys at low or negative interest rates. Nobody expects that these debts will be ever fully repaid. Such are the benefits of "seigniorage" enjoyed by a country with a dominant currency. The EU created the euro with the hope that the

Euro Zone, too, will be able to enjoy “seigniorage” from foreign holders of Euros as reserve currency, the eurozone then reaping the benefits in form of cheap and abundant credit.

Last but not least, A. Clesse mentioned the impact of medical progress on the rise of Europe. Medical progress is the ability to avoid diseases, i.e. smallpox, measles, typhus or Black Death. In the past, such illnesses were dreadful and repeatedly depleted parts of Europe.

#### **4. What brought about Europe’s decay: Lack of historical purpose and high culture**

Having talked about what was critical to Europe’s success A. Clesse decided to ask the participants about when the apogee of Europe was. To his surprise the responses revealed an overt emphasis on contemporary dates and events which led to a consideration of Europe’s role in the world or rather its lack as well as to a discussion of its cultural decline.

The participants’ responses concerning the apogee of Europe were as follows:

1492 (Discovery of the New World)	1957 (Treaty of Rome)
1850 – WWI (colonisation, infrastructures, technological advances, creation of new nation-states)	1989 (Fall of Berlin Wall)
1861-1865 (American Civil War – Europe unthreatened)	1990s (Treaty of Maastricht, Economic & Monetary Union)
1914 (Before WWI)	1999/2002 (Creation of Euro)
1950 (Schuman Declaration)	2004 (EU’s eastern enlargement)
1951 (ECSC)	

A. Clesse was astonished by the replies. He described the consideration of the Maastricht treaty as the apogee of Europe as shocking. Churchill and De Gaulle would have never thought of this treaty as evidence of grandeur. This present-oriented focus depicts a lack of “*longue durée*” historical thinking. If that is what Europe is mostly proud of, then what did it stand for and what does it stand for now? Europe seems to have lost its sense of history.

C. Coker intervened to clarify that decline, which is embedded into European consciousness, is necessary to assess apogee. An apogee is relative to a decline and Europe is able to make such distinctions because it is familiar with the idea of great ruptures. There have been three European Dark Ages. First, the end of the Mycenaean civilisation around 1200BC in ancient Greece. Second, the collapse of the Western Roman Empire. Third, Nazism and Europe’s division by two non-European nations (USA, URSS), that were European in origin but not in mentality. This is distinctive. This is what makes us Europeans. The Dark Ages may be debatable but this is not the point. Their idea is rooted in the European mind. Other people like the Chinese do not share the same concerns. The Chinese lack this concept. The worse thing they could come up with would

be something like the British occupation of Hong Kong. However, these are small breaks of no historical significance.

C. Coker's second point was that Europe's decline is evident in its lack of ambition. Europe was at its apogee in the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century. At that time it had an extraordinary ambition it lacks today; to make the world become European. This is a unique European motivation. Europe almost always aimed to become "what it was, without knowing what it exactly was". It was always "becoming" something, whereas non-European countries were thinking differently and endeavouring just for "being". Such is the case of Nazi Germany that had a non-European mentality which led to barbarism. Nazis were pursuing "authenticity" and had demoted Europeans to a racial category, the Aryans.

For A. Clesse Europeans have not only lost a sense of purpose but, to make matters worse, Europe itself seems to have nothing to offer as a society, a culture and a civilisation to the rest of the world. These things must be analysed concomitantly. Pinpointing the issue that Europe after WWII was not an actor in international politics until the US allowed it to become one is only part of the story. One should not lose sight of the impact of society; a society that is weak, hypocritical, mediocre and uninspiring.

More specifically, our societies are becoming increasingly individualistic, influenced by neoliberal values and ethics. Our attitudes are becoming less and less tolerant and liberal despite a certain sense of permissiveness. Xenophobia, Islamophobia and anti-Ziganism are taking root. These problems are a test of European civility. We do not produce any high culture. We are influenced by the US and have settled for mediocrity. We only strive for equality. We are afraid of intellectual elites. We want an egalitarian community that stifles excellence. This Americanisation of society is leading to a proletarianisation of life. Equality is omnipresent, even in the relations between sexes. Today's goal is to smooth over gender differences. Society aims at harmony and balance through its de-masculinisation. Feminists want to eliminate the differences between the two sexes. Is this possible? Should the West stop accepting the non-biological differences of the two sexes despite scientific evidence of genetic, brain and hormonal specificities? Is this hostility towards masculinity a manifestation of decadence? Is feminism a source or an indicator of decadence? How can an androgynous society create high culture? Today there is no longing for greatness. A cultural desert is the outcome of the longing for far-sweeping equality, mass consumption and Americanisation. Even the European project itself has lost its initial impetus. Instead of bringing in the people, it has remained an elitist project betraying initial federalist ideals.

C. Coker supported A. Clesse's claims about culture. Europe is becoming a glorified theme park. The Americans did not rebuild the twin towers. If 9/11 had happened in Europe and a Cathedral was attacked, the Europeans would build an exact replica of it. The reasons are two. First of all, Europeans are Christians. Secondly, such buildings have acquired more historic rather than spiritual value. Europeans lack the self-confidence to produce something new and memorable. They impress with their past; hence their will to reproduce it.

The final point C. Coker raised was about the dangers of increasing European intolerance towards the "other". A multicultural society may become impossible and Europe may lose its identity. For instance, second and third generation British citizens still strive to take interest in Britishness but they are increasingly at a loss. This is because Europe does not know what it stands for. Every society needs a value system in order to inspire the "other" to buy into its values and to retain an identity. Without that the "other" will betray society.

## **5. From a Eurocentric to an Asiatic world?**

Amidst the European economic crisis a new concern is looming. Not only is Europe in deep crisis but the world seems to be moving eastwards. Will the coming century be an Asia-centric one? Is China modest or aggressive? Will China rise to primacy soon and unavoidably so? What are going to be the repercussions for security? What is the demographic future of China? Will China remain stable? Are there any historical parallels? Is Europe's sense of gloom justified? These considerations united professors and participants but their answers revealed disagreements. They agreed on one thing: China's rise is unavoidable, unsettling and fraught with uncertainties.

A. Clesse opened the discussions with a cautious exploration of the prospects of the Chinese resurgence. Is the world becoming Asia-centric? Is China the pre-dominant country already in real buying power? Previous predictions expected Chinese economy to grow larger than the American one by 2030. Recent predictions have revised this date to 2020 or earlier. However, the real issue is to assess whether China can maintain current growth rates because this is not clear any more. It is dangerous to extrapolate from the present situation because there are too many uncertainties. What will happen if rising prosperity leads to social instability and citizens start demanding more civil rights? Can China's economic success continue relying on the lumpenproletariat that is living in indecent conditions? Will China retain its competitive edge like Germany has managed to do, despite its increased welfare expenses? Or will China lose it due to the costs of increased social protection for the labourers when it becomes richer? Economic predictions about the future of China that ignore social factors are not reliable.

C. Coker touched upon further uncertainties surrounding the rise of China cautioning against the proclamation of the Pacific- or Asia-centric century and of its possible outlook. First of all, our international system is the first one with two different dominant countries. Secondly, it is the first time a Third World country becomes a great power. Thirdly, it is still dangerous to invest in China. In contrast, the UK has been practising equality before the law since the introduction of the principle of *habeas corpus* in 1679. The UK was not a liberal democracy until recently but even before that it was a liberal society that protected property and investment – unlike China today. Fourthly, it is uncertain whether China will manage to lift another 300 million people out of poverty as quickly as it did in the '60s and the '70s.

Another concern and characteristic difference of contemporary China is that it does not think like a global power. A global power is a modern industrialised society that thinks globally and sees globalisation as an opportunity. For China globalisation is not perceived as an opportunity but as a threat. China is a regional power with regional ambitions. It wants to resurrect the hierarchic regional system of the Middle Kingdom or the so-called Sinosphere. In this system of governance China is the most important country. The Western system which was imposed on China by the West in the 1840s is different. It is governed by international law based on a legal fiction called the sovereign equality of states and on law and contractual obligations which are a capitalist invention of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. If the US wants to integrate China into the globalised system peacefully, then it will have to make it a stakeholder. Nevertheless, it is uncertain if China wants that since it is increasingly becoming aggressive and the only pro-Chinese country in Asia it is left with is Cambodia.

C. Coker added that we should be reserved about the proclamation of the Pacific century not just for the aforementioned reasons but also because sweeping generalisations are often proven

wrong. For instance, Halford Mackinder had wrongly predicted in 1904 that the 20<sup>th</sup> century would be the Pacific one. In the following century Asia was not the geographical pivot of history and although the US and Russia did clash, as Mackinder had predicted, they did so after two World Wars where they were allies; and they did not do so in the Pacific but it in Europe during the Cold War. If one dated the beginning of the Pacific century, that would be the 1960s or the 1970s. At the time the powerhouse of the US was Silicon Valley in California, the most cosmopolitan city in the US was Los Angeles on the West coast, not New York on the East coast, and US Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to Asia was increasing. California was attracting internal immigration and was exporting ideas like those surrounding the success of Silicon Valley. Yet, today, 65% of US FDI is in Europe. Europe remains important for the US. We must be careful before second-guessing the future. Even if the US digs itself out of this crisis and endures, China is bound to rise even by sheer consideration of its demographics. Nonetheless, believing that this will happen “tomorrow” is unfounded.

If one would like to take a look at a society in Asia that resembles a Western one it is Taiwan. Taiwan is also the future of China. It is not a Western democracy but it is a kind of democracy. It has some of the Victorian values privileging thrift, investment, education and providing for the elderly. These are not distinctly Asian values – as some argue mistakenly – for there are no particular Asian values. These are the values of a society that is on its way up. These are old fashioned values and in the end societies want those values for themselves in order to live the easy life that the West has for the past 30 years or so.

A. Clesse expressed his disagreement with the negative depiction of China’s rise and aggressiveness, even though he accepted that there will be increasing animosity around China. First of all, many scholars, even conservative ones like Niall Ferguson, admit that China is likely to rise sooner than we think. Secondly, the Chinese, unlike many Europeans, are hard working. Thirdly, China does not see itself as a global power because it never conceived itself as one. The Chinese are aware of the price to be paid for world primacy. China is an old country with a different historical perspective on things. It is naturally cautious. Admittedly, one does not know whether this sense of modesty is honest. It may be instrumental. Moreover, it is uncertain whether China will be able to withstand looming domestic conflicts and other challenges. For example, the Chinese believe they can succeed by working harder than the Americans. If their expectations are not fulfilled, then this may lead to instability.

As far as China’s belligerence is concerned, it is more than uncertain but this is not how it is being perceived by its neighbours who already feel vulnerable. On the one hand, China is rising and this is making it feel psychologically stronger. On the other hand, some of its adversaries like Japan are tiny in some respects such as territory and endure problems such as Japan’s Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster which has affected the Japanese collective psyche making them feel at risk. Even the US feels it is losing its pre-eminence.

This is a new situation and Europe has to adjust as well. Not only is China more assertive in Asia but it is also looking at Europe with contempt. The Chinese like to visit Europe, learn about its culture but it is China they consider as the coming number one country in the world. Their behaviour, from the way of dressing to the way they approach the world, has altered. Westerners cannot ignore this change. They have to adapt and do so together with the Chinese within the international institutions they have created. The UN Security Council is not credible any more. It is obsolete because it reflects a Western-centric world. The real strength of countries is not reflected any more in international organisations such as the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation. We also do not know whether Europe’s achievement of peaceful coexistence is an

asset or evidence of an exhausted culture. China is bound to rise (unless a civil war erupts) and this will signify the end of the primacy of the West.

This subject cannot be studied in a narrow way though. Particularistic questions must be addressed along with theoretical ones. For example, is China building an informal empire? Could it create such a system? What would be its impact and would it be perceptible only after it would already be visible?

G. M. Ambrosi agreed with C. Coker on his remark about China's pursuit of a Sinosphere. He argued that although the Sinosphere of the past was a feudalistic phenomenon that allowed a certain amount of autonomy to people to organise themselves, China's current assertiveness leads to malaise in Asia. As far as China's growth model is concerned he characterised it as problematic. It cannot rely anymore on exports and an uneven distribution of the income. The more the domestic income increases the less competitive Chinese products will become and China will continue losing part of its competitive edge in favour of countries like Turkey and Bangladesh. Despite that, G.M. Ambrosi was optimistic claiming that even if the foundations of Chinese success wither away, new ones will rise. The Chinese and Indian space programmes are promising and could lead to technological advancement and inspire loyalty to the local people. However, China confronts two challenges. First, can Chinese nationalism counter-balance destabilising ethnic diversity? Second, can China combine Marxism with capitalism?

C. Coker returned to the issue of Chinese assertiveness and its implications. He stressed that the new century is not going to be a return to past conflicts between the West and China. The British historian Ian Morris makes a compelling argument in his book *Why the West Rules – For Now* concerning the impact of geography in the West's supremacy. Nevertheless, many of these challenges have been overcome due to technology. In the new globalised world, Ian Morris suggests, the rise of one country does not mean the demise of another.

A neglected malaise that C. Coker underlined was the Chinese people's lack of self-knowledge due to the geriatric and corrupt communist regime. This deprives China of many opportunities for success. A. Clesse had previously mentioned the Chinese zest for knowledge. C. Coker did not deny it but emphasised the lack of self-awareness. Many Chinese are incredibly ignorant of their own history. They consider the Opium Wars as the greatest catastrophe in their history and neglect that this was a symptom of their civil war, the worst in human history with the death toll being close to 30 million people. The Sinosphere was not destroyed by the British. It imploded. The Chinese regime is responsible for imposing this lopsided reading of history. It is also guilty for alienating the Chinese from other people. Chinese workers in other countries, i.e. in Zambia, live in compounds and do not talk to locals; they are deprived of learning from other cultures and are therefore ignorant of them. This is the outcome of the policy of a corrupt regime that is divided by factions. The Chinese are no different from other people. They do have an interest in learning but their society is not a free one. By contrast, European people were allowed to develop their interests in other societies, which has led to the creation of such sciences as anthropology and ethnology. In short, knowledge is useful because it is the key to preventing conflicts. Self-knowledge is uniquely important because it leads to Machiavellian intelligence. If one knows how others see oneself, then one can manipulate them.

In the ensuing roundtable some participants questioned the continuity of some Chinese characteristics like modesty and the similarities between interwar Germany and China. Others pointed out, *contra* Coker, that China is more interested in strengthening its influence not in Asia but in other continents such as in Africa. One participant wondered what the impact of China's

increasing power is on security matters. Depending on the issue China can be seen as either a partner of Russia or of the West. Another participant focused on demographic trends and on future projections according to which by 2050 31% of the Chinese population will be retired.

In his response, C. Coker focused on three issues: demographics, comparison between China and interwar Germany, as well as security. C. Coker expanded on the first issue arguing that demographic imbalances may lead to social instability and that this is a real challenge despite China's advances in robotics. On the second issue he sustained that there are useful parallels to be drawn from a comparison between China and Germany. High growth rates can be problematic. In Germany they led to social and political instability leading people from different political classes to support extreme parties in order to protect the workers from the bourgeois and vice-versa. Germany was also an illiberal state that privileged the army, just like China is doing now. This is alarming because the Chinese army has an increasing budget, it is very nationalistic and one does not know when it is going to use its new armaments. Weapons are bought to be used. The Chinese army needs to be controlled and yet one cannot forget the misgivings of such a solution e.g. the Napoleonic wars. Lastly, on the security issues, China's goal is to prevent the US from becoming an East-Asian military power. However, the creation of a Sinosphere will have to confront hard realities such as the ever-present American influence in Asia, manifested through US military bases in Asia and US special relations with Vietnam.

## **6. Strengths and weaknesses of present-day Europe**

After the discussions on definitions, the past of Europe and the possible upcoming Asia centric world A. Clesse prompted the participants to make an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of present-day Europe.

One participant mentioned that Europe has greater historical experience and consciousness to learn from in contrast to other societies like the US. Another one wondered whether summer courses like the current one represent evidence of Europe's slow realisation that it is decadent and if this may be a true strength because it is a prerequisite for change.

G.M. Ambrosi suggested that the greatest strength of the EU is the sharing and pooling of sovereignty. The EU is a non-hierarchical entity where all member-states, even the small ones, participate in decision-making and no state is subjugated by another state.

A. Clesse reacted by stating that politicians in Brussels would always say diversity is the biggest strength of the EU but its existence or salience is uncertain. For example, don't the Chinese have this same characteristic? He then stressed four different perspectives on the strengths of Europe. First, some European countries retain a competitive advantage in some domains. Second, the European social model is different from others, although it is not clear anymore whether that remains a strength or has become a liability. Thirdly, he wondered whether Europe maintains a scientific and high technological advantage in comparison to other countries. In the past three hundred years most major scientific breakthroughs took place in Europe. Lastly, he focused on natural resources and the environment asking whether Europe has an advantage because of its benign climate compared to many other parts of the world.

G.M. Ambrosi reminded that the first high cultures developed in extremely hot regions like Mesopotamia, Egypt and Latin America. These are the hydraulic civilisations that were stimulated by the effort to combat drought and make the most of water.

One participant asked whether the fact that war is no longer contemplated in Europe represents one of its strengths and evidence of European cultural progress. C. Coker disagreed and characterised this idea as dangerous. Europeans have not changed anthropologically. War is not “dis-invented” (John Mueller). It is their institutions that make them not contemplate war and this reality is reversible. Europeans have not reached such a high level of civility. Perhaps a war between France and Germany is unimaginable practically, but aggressiveness and the will to impose one’s will on another have not vanished. They may simply take a non-violent form.

Subsequently, A. Clesse directed the discussions towards the weaknesses of Europe. He pinpointed contemporary moral corruption, devaluing of the importance of religion and an increase in secularisation. Although, for some thinkers, secularisation is an asset, it has nevertheless been combined with a will for immediate satisfaction of all desires with no concern for the future. In this context, A. Clesse referred to *The Embarrassment of Riches: An interpretation of Dutch culture in the Golden Age* by the historian Simon Schama who described a socially and morally problematic Netherlands during its golden age (1570-1670).

C. Coker argued that consumerism represents Europe’s contemporary decadence. According to the ancient Greeks decadence is the failure to live a self-fulfilling life. This is essential to human dignity. One is responsible for his own life and his accomplishments. In contrast today, people pursue instant gratification through consumption with no intention to develop themselves. We have now replaced all ideologies (we have kept liberalism only as philosophy, not as ideology) with consumerism and we have ended up being unhappy and unaware of where to seek happiness.

Another contemporary fallacy is the connection between living a self-fulfilling life and mass education. Today all get prizes and no one is allowed to fail. However, living a better life is an ethical position and it is something one learns through life. It is not being taught. It is what the ancient Greeks called *orexis*, or longing and striving. What is necessary is everybody to be given the chance in a competitive environment to strive for success. C. Coker continued maintaining that decadence is probably part and parcel of civilisation. If Sparta and Rome declined – a reference to Rousseau’s famous phrase – then what hope is there for the rest of us? Europe has probably reached that very decadent stage in European life.

A. Clesse expanded on the issue of decadence linking it to the lack of will for greatness. He wondered whether such a will is compatible with democracy. The Americans consider themselves exceptional and are animated by the will to be great. But is America a democracy or is it a theocracy as some argue? Does lacking the will to be great signify decadence? The Chinese, who are now rising, have never lost confidence that they would eventually get the place they deserve on the world stage and in history. Can we still talk about greatness or is it a dirty word?

C. Coker linked the fragility of the European social model with democracy by arguing that it could lead to instability and political extremism. The European social model has its roots in Bismarck who bought out people’s loyalty with social services. If that is the case, then how truly democratic is Europe? If the European social model has become unsustainable then how safe is democracy? Democracy is new. For instance, the UK only became truly democratic in 1923. Democracy is solid only in Scandinavia. Even the Netherlands who were thought of as an exemplary tolerant society is now becoming intolerant. Also, the UK has created its first constitutional court to check Parliament. This is a sign of lack of trust towards politicians. This European belief in the congruence between political and social stability is particular and different

from the American one. Huntington proposed that the US has come up with a political culture that marries social instability with political stability. They are not incompatible. For example, the Human Rights Movement would not succeed without social instability. C. Coker concluded with an ominous question: is democracy safe in Europe?

A. Clesse wondered whether demographic deterioration, which has contributed to the unsustainability of the European social model, is evidence of decline. How could Europe compensate for the lack of births and maintain certain social security standards? Is this a sign of societal fatigue? Is Europe running out of steam?

C. Coker clarified that demographic growth and decline are significant yet ambiguous concepts. Sometimes low birth rates were taken as sign of vitality and sometimes as the opposite. The Protestants in the 17<sup>th</sup> century practiced for the first time in history birth control because they believed that it was immoral to give birth to children that you cannot provide for adequately. The Mormons represent an opposite case. They have such a strong belief in the future that their birth rates are high. And believing in the future is always a sign of vitality. In short, the importance of demographic growth is a subjective issue. Different attitudes towards birth rates may simply reflect different values.

G. M. Ambrosi offered another viewpoint advocated by Leopold Kohr about the overdeveloped nations. Kohr favoured smaller nations due to coordination problems and the struggle to mobilize resources for the upkeep of a large system. A case in point is commuting in big cities, like in California, which is time consuming and deteriorates the quality of life.

Commenting on the strengths and weaknesses of present-day Europe, a number of participants expressed different points of view. One urged caution, mentioning that empires have lived for approximately two centuries and that if the EU were seen as a modern empire, then it would be a relatively young one. Another one emphasised the rich political traditions of Europe and its spirituality as well as rule of law, social security, good educational system, democracy and human rights which could help revitalise Europe. On the other hand, other participants pinpointed Europe's moral corruption, self-serving elites, increasing public debt and energy dependence.

## **7. Living with a diminished status**

Before discussing specific issues in relation to power assets, political integration, and the feasibility of the revitalisation of Europe, A. Clesse raised a central question: that is, whether Europe can, or is prepared to, live with diminished resources and a diminished economic, military, political and cultural status. He doubted whether Europe has realised its deteriorating socio-economic condition. He referred to the European social model as unsustainable and with no alternative on the horizon. For example, the British social model is moving closer to the American and in France the 35-hour week is undergoing change.

A reference to the “folly of enlargement” further underscores his assessment that there is a discrepancy between Europe's capabilities and behaviour. The EU expected to maintain and even strengthen its status by expanding its territory. However, not only is this a fallacy but also, as C. Coker mentioned, the EU is only exacerbating its situation by further enlarging and integrating.

A. Clesse then posed a series of new questions: can we envisage that we live worse than our parents and grandparents? Can we maintain a decent standard of living and who is going to pay for that, the elderly or young people? Can we build the modern society we want or have we become too passive and dependent on the state and the welfare state that is vanishing? These are completely new questions for the West and the troubling issue is that parts of society that could push for change are less radical than in the past. For instance, although the students of the May 1968 protests in France failed, they were at least longing for a different society. They were at least striving against materialism and capitalist exploitation.

## **8. The relevance of traditional power assets in the upcoming international system**

A. Clesse launched the discussions on the relevance of traditional power assets in the upcoming international system. This subject was essential in order to lead the participants to reflect on the future of EU's integration, revitalisation and its future role. An evaluation of the power assets of any polity and of their relevance to contemporary challenges provides useful insights for what this polity can achieve. A. Clesse made an introduction to the approach of Klaus E. Knorr who came up with a power equation: material factors (e.g. territory, population, natural resources, economic factors) and science & technology, multiplied by the strategic purpose and political will. Using this equation as a starting point, A. Clesse concentrated on territory and population.

He contrasted the past salience of territory with its contemporary diminishing importance. Until the Second World War, territory was essential. For example, Russia considered her territory vital for her survival. However, nowadays, some countries have different perceptions. The dissolution of the Soviet Union is a case in point. Nevertheless, Putin regrets the break-up of the Soviet Union. Moreover, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) that brings together most countries of the former Soviet Union has been transformed into the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC) with Russia being a major player. A. Clesse wondered whether the value of territory is returning. Is there a possibility for a kind of re-conquest? The significance of population for the power of a nation is resurging again. Rising countries like India consider it fundamental. The real question though, is whether population will matter as much as before or whether smaller successful units like Singapore offer a glimpse of future success.

C. Coker focused on how Europe has throughout its history managed to overcome its deficiencies and be preponderant due to another power asset, i.e. its inventiveness and the creation of force multipliers. Europe's inventiveness today is mirrored in the Western-led international order. It is based on the idea of networking Western ideas and thus multiplying Western power. Even the idea of the West itself is a European one. The Western international order is based on liberalism and international organisations (UN, WB, IMF, WTO). This has created a regulated international system or empire which has prolonged Western power and has been instrumental in engaging the rising powers. For example, China was "fast-tracked" into the WTO in an effort to make China a "stakeholder" of the current world order.

Nonetheless, the future of the West is uncertain. Traditionally, alliances were based on a common threat. During the Cold War the common threat was the Soviet Union. Now there is no such danger. Although the EU may continue being important in economic terms, it may not remain so in terms of political power. The negotiations at the 2009 UN Climate Change

Conference revealed how the US moves closer towards powers like China and how less important the EU is becoming for the Americans. If that trend continues, then the association of the West should not be taken for granted anymore. The West is the force multiplier of the EU. Without the partnership with the US, the future of the EU seems bleak.

An alternative case for the persistence of EU's power is to become a "civilian power". That was an old idea of the 1970s when the salience of military power was underestimated due to the existence of nuclear weapons and which has returned. It is in the core of the 2003 "European Security Strategy" document of the EU. Nevertheless, it has not been materialised. In theory the idea is good and is based on the admission that the EU can only be a "civilian power" and that it should work with the challenges and constraints it faces. However, even though this is a lofty goal, C. Coker wondered whether in fact it reflects a declining form of power.

In the observations following these remarks, a number of participants talked about the EU as a civilian power and its deficiencies in this field as well as about discourse hegemony. First, it was argued that the EU has the civilian force which the EU uses through civilian missions which are as important as NATO's military missions. Second, another participant, judging from his own experience, underlined practical problems of such missions which the EU has not yet overcome i.e. staffing, lack of continuity, a limited approach, and untapped potential of using experts from Eastern European countries that have experience with post-transitional countries. Third, it was mentioned that a powerful tool and a major power asset of the EU is its discourse hegemony which it should continue using to socialise the rising powers.

## **9. Can political integration stop or even invert decline?**

Having previously talked about "territory", A. Clesse returned to this subject from the perspective of "sovereignty" and linked it to the future of the EU and its integration. He asked whether "sovereignty" will still be as relevant in the future. Is the world primed for peace and international commerce, thus making "sovereignty" obsolete, or even in that case is "sovereignty" so salient (considering who owns natural resources and has competitive advantage) that smaller units are doomed to be the lesser powers of the coming world order? If that is the case, if "sovereignty" persists as a fundamental organising principle of the international system, then the European political integration cuts to the heart of the issue and is precious for revitalising the EU and keeping it among the top of the world powers.

Nonetheless, how feasible is this possibility, A. Clesse pondered. The European project has historically failed to implement highly ambitious military and political projects. A case in point is the failure of the European Defence Community and the European Political Community in 1954. In addition, efforts to transform the EU into a security community have also ended in failure. Now this prospect has become even less possible given the large number of EU members. Also, the past federalist ideal has faded away and the idea of creating a common entity with political and strategic will has been marginalised. What will happen then, wondered A. Clesse. Are we entering a new phase of reunification? Are we going towards a paradigm shift? Can we pursue long-term goals for a European "telos" given that the EU is now mostly concerned about its survival and cannot concentrate on other aims?

C. Coker took the floor and answered laconically: the EU will never have an army. The three weapons systems Europe does not have (enough of) are air to air refuelling; anti-radar

suppression weapons and drones. The EU is not militarily prepared, its status is diminishing and it does not have a unitary strategic culture that could support political integration, the creation of an army and a more successful foreign policy. First of all, we are experiencing a period of demilitarisation in Europe and a period of militarisation in Asia. On top of that, the EU is ill-prepared even for tasks that it could carry out were it to become a “civilian power”. For instance, it does not have enough unmanned air vehicles, airborne carriers and radars. Secondly, its status is diminishing. The Americans are gradually coming to realise that NATO is an outdated international organisation like the Concert of Europe and the Holy Roman Empire were in the past. The European weaknesses have most recently become evident during the 2011 Libya intervention where the US presence was indispensable. Thirdly, the EU lacks a common strategic culture which is a prerequisite for the creation of a political community. For example, different nations hold different ideas about how to engage in battle or what is considered success as well as the status and prestige of the army in their respective countries. An EU strategic culture is simply unimaginable and so is European integration.

## **10. Is a revitalisation of Europe conceivable? Feasible?**

The issue of the feasibility of the revitalisation of Europe was framed along the lines of mentalities, strategies, qualities of societies and political systems, and civilisation, and connected to the question “what society do we aspire to?”.

A. Clesse opened the discussion and set out the first dilemma: is a nation’s vitality related to its inner strengths and the will to move ahead or can it be provided artificially? If past successes make societies blind to changes and lead them to failure, can this be averted? How important is social mobility and the ability to adapt, resist, be open and embrace diversity?

Subsequently, C. Coker presented three models of revitalisation. The first model is the *fascist* one which supports that progressiveness is based on the idea of permanent war. Hitler, for example signed only armistices and not peace treaties. The second model is *Mao’s* model which relates revitalisation to permanent revolution. Mao perceived that Communism was becoming sclerotic and that permanent revolution and chaos would lead to creativity. The third model is the *American* one which links reinvigoration to the unregulated market and its capacity to reinvent concepts. It avoids sclerotic growth, suppression of dynamism and the creation of bureaucracy such as “ObamaCare” style solutions which has created 72 new federal agencies. As far as other models are concerned, he added, we have not come up with a new one.

The next questions posed by A. Clesse were whether what we are doing to our societies is self-defeating, and where does this lead to? He connected his concerns to feminism, totalitarianism and risk aversion. He accused feminists of getting it wrong because they are trying to impose behavioural norms on the two sexes in just a few generations’ time although relevant attitudes have been shaped over the course of millennia. This is part of a totalitarian approach to equality and an effort to abolish the two sexes. Countries like Sweden and the US are almost totalitarian societies in regards to these issues. A distinctive example is that of a kindergarten where it is forbidden to refer to the child’s sex, and children have to play with both female and male toys. There are no real men, and women are not mysterious anymore, he asserted, and this leads to a trivialisation of their relations. Men are cowards towards women. Men are not restless anymore and this leads to an emasculated society longing for mediocrity. It leads men to no longer be creative; a trait related to risk-taking and disappearing due to this desire for equality. He also

wondered about the impact of hormones and how they are related to risk-proneness for a decent society.

C. Coker followed up the remarks on risk and introduced the participants to the idea of a ‘risk society’ and linked it to the prospects for the revitalisation of Europe. Authors such as Beck, Giddens and Luhmann are associated with the idea of risk society and the second phase of modernity. This is a period when people are reflexive and constantly aware that every achievement (i.e. progress) has unpredictable consequences. For that reason this society comes with four rules: (1) the necessity of consequence management; (2) the greatest threat to oneself is him/her-self (i.e. industrialisation comes with pollution); (3) people are indecisive due to the awareness of the risks; (4) everything we do in our lives has side-effects. This is how we guide our lives and if we are too concerned with side-effects, we will do absolutely nothing. If that argument is convincing, C. Coker suggested, then there is no way that Europe can revitalise itself and certainly not in competition with high-risk societies.

C. Coker then compared Europe with China and India and made an assessment of the future. China is not a risk society. It takes however immense risks with its economic growth and accepts the horrendous environmental consequences. Similarly, India is not a risk society either. Perhaps Europe and these eastern societies are not on an equally despairing note. Perhaps that is the future or perhaps we will not have great powers in the future. Perhaps the very concept of rise and decline will no longer be efficacious because there are so many risks in rising, i.e. decline. If a country does not rise, then it cannot decline but of course it does not go far either.

C. Coker complemented A. Clesse’s ideas by relating his idea of an emasculated society to the concept of domestication. Plato, he argued, wondered how we can domesticate men without emasculating them. He was looking at how we can have warriors in society that do not turn on society and have social intelligence. Plato suggested that we must balance spirit, reason, and appetite. These are the three aspects of social life common to us all. However, in the West, instead of trying to find a balance, we have banned the word “warrior” from our military cultures (with the US being a partial exception). Therefore, we have lost the balance of domestication. Domestication is absolutely essential to our humanity, civility, and civilisation but it is not to stamp out aggression but rather to channel it into socially useful forms of activity; And that is not just about aggression in war but in all realms of life. Aggression is a natural, healthy expression of competitiveness. And we in the West are in danger of losing sight of that fact, even though Plato was the first to identify that as a challenge to society.

Expanding on his critique of society A. Clesse put forward a series of arguments about the distorting effects of specific mentalities and stressed how difficult it is for Europe to come back. Not only is there a leadership deficit – a lack of leaders with strong intellectual credentials – but also there is a mentality of conformism and hedonism in citizens who do not want to rebel and are preoccupied with control and security. This creates an illusion of liberalism that leads to illiberalism. A case in point is the obsession with security during the 2012 Olympic Games in London that led to the creation of the “fortress Olympic Games”. Another issue is that people, including intellectuals, cannot understand problems of societies because they are distanced from them. For example, how can a person who has not visited slums or Roma camps be fully aware of these problems and be credible when referring to them? People need to change their mentalities, otherwise their attitudes will create self-fulfilling prophecies, i.e. in this case xenophobia.

C. Coker interjected Zygmunt Bauman’s idea of capitalism’s collateral damage and connected it to the slums which he considers as waste disposal units. Capitalism does not know what to do

with those people because there are no jobs for them and so (since shipping is not possible any more) these people are condemned to a situation without any way out.

A. Clesse continued his analysis and likened the Western state to an illiberal state. It easily dominates individuals and it has formed societies that are prone to be controlled. For instance, any kind of belief is considered better than religious beliefs. Also, new forms of family are increasingly acceptable instead of the traditional nuclear one because they are easier to be disciplined. Various activities and medicine are conducive to keeping people down and prevent them from thinking. Following this trail of thought it becomes evident how much our societies have approached the societies that Huxley and Orwell depicted.

Following a participant's inquiry about the possibility of a state's reinvigoration, such as in the case of the Emperor Basil II who expanded the Byzantine Empire under his rule giving it its greatest territorial expansion since the Muslim conquests, four centuries earlier, C. Coker referred to the concept of transformation and linked it to vitality. The concept of transformation differs from the concepts of rise and fall that Gibbon used for the history of the Roman Empire. The success of the Byzantine Empire was its ability to transform itself from an unsustainable Roman Empire to a Balkan state. The vitality of a country consists in its ability to transform itself and its dynamism.

Returning to the present situation C. Coker contrasted Europe with the US and its potential reinvigoration, depicting a gloomy picture. If Europe does not transform itself, then it will become increasingly less relevant in a world where China is rising and the US is reinventing itself. There is an imminent major demographic, social and cultural transformation coming in the US. The new Americans, not the Obamas and the Romneys, C. Coker estimated, are the future of the US. This transformation is typical of American politics but not of Europe. Examples include the Five Great Awakenings (great social and moral movements relating to an idea that is absent from Europe, i.e. re-consecration) and the American civil war. Moreover, the new Americans may turn into something unpleasant or not but they will certainly be neither western nor Atlantic. The idea of the West is finished too.

A. Clesse then directed the discussions towards the issue of the mobilisation of resources and its relation to the reinvigoration of nations. He asked whether a nation or a group of nations like the EU can overcome stagnation and invert decline by setting goals. The EU, for example, tried to do so with the Lisbon Agenda that would render the EU the most dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world by 2020, but this project did not go far.

G.M. Ambrosi agreed, but he recalled past successes of the EU and pinpointed specific problems that prevent its reinvigoration. The current "Europe 2020" strategy that probably will not fare much better than the Lisbon Agenda, has long roots which go back to the Colonna Report for industrial policy of 1970. Another important document in this connection is the Cecchini Report of 1988 on "The Cost of Non-Europe". It set the ground for the Single European Market and for the European Monetary Union (EMU). The positive side of these reports was their drive for the abolishment of costly economic and administrative separatism in Europe. The negative side is their manipulative and unrealistic "supply side" approach. The EU lacks a forward oriented vision in these types of debates, something like the "new frontier" policy in the US, which would inspire people and would lead to progress. Providing subsidies or applying ideas crafted by bureaucrats is different and ineffective. The second problem he identified was the inappropriate implementation of the EMU which has not led to proper economic convergence. The advantaged states have simply consolidated their economic power. A possible solution would be to generate

regional multiplier effects where the economic activity and its benefits would spread in the near vicinity of a given project.

A. Clesse sought to focus reflections on the question of what kind of political system is best able to mobilise the resources of a nation. In essence, the real question is whether revitalisation can be purposive or spontaneous. Are authoritarian systems or liberal democracies more successful in mobilising energies? At first glance authoritarian systems with central political and economic planning seem more suitable to the task. Khrushchev for instance was confident that the USSR could overtake the US because it could mobilise people better. These regimes have confidence that they can change a whole country at will. However, the US, an ultra-liberal state, also managed to do it.

In response to this key question, C. Coker provided a typology of revitalisation projects. Such projects can be either bottom-up or top-down approaches. The latter ones are usually met with disaster. A case in point is the Chinese “Cultural Revolution” where Mao attempted to start history from scratch and create new values. However, according to Nietzsche a society is revitalised when it takes old values, anchors them in tradition and makes them relevant to current times. Societies like the Soviet Union perished because they attempted to repudiate their past. The democratic top-down attempt to revitalisation was made in the US and consisted of major public works such as Roosevelt’s New Deal, the Hoover Dam, and the Manhattan Project. In this way the US managed to mobilise people’s support around these projects. Perhaps the equivalent effort in the EU is the CERN project. Unfortunately, one has to know quantum physics to understand it.

G.M. Ambrosi clarified that we must distinguish between command-style and demand-style top-down approaches. The first type, including even subsidies, leads to failure. The second type consists of projects which people support because they feel inspired.

A. Clesse drew the participants’ attention to the issue of specific qualities of different societies and how they can impact the feasibility of their reinvigoration. He questioned whether liberal societies are good at motivating people but not good enough at imposing. He asked whether appealing to the reason of people is enough and expressed doubts regarding the liberal credo that people can judge by themselves what is best for them. If people do not work hard, do not have a work ethos, if the society is a materialist and consumerist one then what can be done? Is it enough to provide material incentives and not moral ones?

C. Coker supplemented A. Clesse’s emphasis on morality highlighting a different understanding of decadence in pre-modern times as well as the ideas of resilience and religiosity. When Tacitus was criticising ancient Rome for being decadent, the society was not in decay. Roman society was resilient and despite many problems the empire was experiencing its greatest expansion. What the Romans were witnessing and did not understand was not decadence, but transformation from the ancient world to late antiquity. The reason behind this belief is that decadence for the Romans was contrasted with a golden age in the past, whereas for contemporary people decadence is denial of the future (because they cannot seize it).

C. Coker continued the discussion on morality and revitalisation and stressed the issue of religiosity. He argued that in Europe there is no divisive moral debate like the issue of abortion in the US. For many Americans abortion represents decadence. In Europe this is not a political issue at all. He wondered whether this has to do with religiosity and whether its absence from public discourse is a reason of decadence. He clarified that religiosity has to do with religious

instincts and appetites such as martyrdom, spirituality, transcendence, and sacrifice which have made civilisations great because they gave people a sense of belonging. The important point about religion is that religious people are more optimistic about the future and act accordingly, i.e. they have more children and reinvest.

One participant pointed out the rising heterogeneity in Europe due to the rise of Muslim immigration and that a way out of this is to embrace heterogeneity and approach it not with prejudices but with a genuine will to understand the other, even if one differs on moral grounds. Another participant disagreed with the point that the absence of religion is a sign of decadence because he considered it as sign of progress. The debate continued with other participants putting the blame not on religion but on its instrumentalisation.

A. Clesse reacted to C. Coker's remarks and to a question addressing his critique of feminism and how to reconcile it with the right of women to fulfil their potential and whether he is glorifying the past. First, he wondered whether there is both a lack of spirituality and of religiosity and whether decadence should be attributed to religiosity or to materialism and consumerism or to what he calls the trivialisation, privatisation and proletarianisation of life. He then ascertained a rise of religiosity in the rest of the world.

Second, in relation to the question on feminism, he clarified that he does not glorify the past. Perhaps he just shows respect towards certain phenomena or attitudes to life or values. Unfortunately, he added, not only have we lost the sense of beauty and shame but we also do not try to understand or accept that others are shocked or surprised by our way of life, e.g. the Muslims. We can reject others' opinions but we should at least try to understand what people from other cultures feel about this, why they feel so, and respect their feelings; the contrary leads to Islamophobia. Perhaps, one may argue theoretically that there has never existed a sense of beauty and shame, or that they are not important or that these notions are obsolete. However, it is undeniable that these values in the past rested above all on women and not on men. Of course in the name of equality, feminists want women to get rid of this role but then we should not complain that these values are lost. The noblest qualities of western civilisation are feminine. They were brought in by women and they were entertained by women and through the existence of women. This is the civilising role of women. Do we think we can be virtuous without these virtues? We are consumed in a life of hedonism endorsing a utilitarian philosophy. Do we think we can progress and be wiser than in the past? Can we continue living depleted lives? Can we realise what we have lost? Can the understanding of this loss be given artificially or not? It is not enough to visit the cathedrals and admire art to have a civilisation. If we cannot change our nature, can we at least confine it?

C. Coker responded to a series of questions. In relation to Byzantium and whether its unique religiosity could inform our ideas about reinvigoration, he contended that Byzantium's decline was due to its inability to deal with Aristotle, who became a grammarian rather than a philosopher, at the very moment when in Western Europe the Catholic Church was revaluing itself by integrating Aristotelian ideas through St. Thomas Aquinas and others into Catholic theology.

In relation to questions doubting the waning of religiosity and asking whether it has been transformed, he mentioned that religion has not perished as many thought but instead has re-emerged in different forms such as "political religions" and ideologies that have been organised like religions. Also, we now live in a post-ideological world – we have taken God out of politics – where no political party promises redemption; they promise consumption. They have turned

citizens into consumers. Consumerism is another form of religion. As far as science is concerned and its effort to demystify the mystery in life he clarified that this is not science but scientism. People like Dawkins are a typical example of scientism because although they are atheists, they try to explain everything through science and then to convert people to their beliefs as if it were a religion, hence being equally guilty of religious fervour.

Finally, he connected these ideas with A.Clesse's arguments about the trivialisation and lack of mystery in the relations between the two sexes and referred to Max Weber's concept of disenchantment; that is taking the magic and the mystery out of life. This has happened because of materialism. Similarly, in our age we try to explain everything scientifically. This is impossible though, because we cannot take fully into account the interactions between the DNA and the social environment which is history, political life and culture. Therefore, people who think so, who argue they can manipulate change, have a totalitarian vision of politics.

## **11. Rethinking Europe's role in the international system**

A. Clesse opened the debate on Europe's future role in the international system by wondering what should be Europe's *differentia specifica*. Can it perhaps forget its past of imperialism, exploitation and domination and move on to something new? What should be Europe's priorities for a stronger or more decent role in the international system? Can Europe become a model for the world and if so what kind of model?

One participant suggested that perhaps the time has arrived for Europe, after centuries of violence, to recede. Perhaps there is an equalising force that makes societies, after centuries of development, when they have matured, to leave space for other powers to rise.

G.M. Ambrosi compared the EU with the Hanseatic League, mentioned that the basis of the EU is a customs union and pointed out that it is paramount for the EU not to be divided when negotiating important issues such as WTO issues. Perhaps the EU should aspire to become a passive power that will not be manipulated by greater powers.

A. Clesse then asked C. Coker for his prediction about the EU in the coming decades. C. Coker expressed the view that by 2020-2035 the EU will indeed look like the Hanseatic League. The EU will probably be an actor in the international system but will not be an agent that is someone who makes history. Also, by 2050 it is unlikely that any EU state will be a top-10 economic power and the EU population will merely represent 5% of the earth's population.

As far as the possibility for the EU to have an international role by focusing on peace building operations this is also not a plausible scenario. The peace-building period was a short period part of the "unipolar moment". However, China is now rising and it has its own view of peace-building which is different from the European one. Besides, the EU is not determined to take seriously this mission and perhaps a union, in comparison to a nation, is not supposed to have this kind of will. In Afghanistan for example, the EU was about to reform the local police force, which is essential for the exit strategy, but the member-states were not willing to spend the appropriate amount of money; hence the Canadians had to contribute. In addition, it is doubtful whether an actor that does not have the ability to do war, that does not have the confidence to use force, can do successfully peace-keeping.

One participant asked whether the EU is falling by the wayside and whether that means its “Swedisation”; that is a former great power that survives with a diminished status. A. Clesse expressed the view that Europe has been “Scandinavised” and neutralised. He stressed that Europeans think of a calm existence with welfare, peace, and security but no one has any dreams of great heroic deeds. C. Coker referred to Cioran and his “A Short History of Decay” where the author argues that once you become nice you become historically irrelevant. He then underlined that this is what the Europeans have aspired to become: nice.

### **Concluding Remarks**

In his concluding remarks A. Clesse revisited the almost twenty-year history of the summer school, highlighting the main underlying idea and expressing his concerns about our future. The main idea has always been to bring people together, to generate momentum and create some dynamic. This was an idea shared from the very beginning with Professor Malitza along with whom they started this yearly effort in 1994. The themes of the summer courses have been diverse and every edition reflected both contemporary concerns and broader societal questions.

This year’s seminar focused on the rise, decline and future of Europe. A. Clesse was not optimistic but urged the participants to be open-minded and recognise the problems of our society. A society is decadent when what is ugly is hailed as beautiful; what is shabby is hailed as noble; what is perverse is hailed as natural; what is vulgar is hailed as subtle. Regrettably, we now live in an age of narcissism and society is ruled by people themselves “as if” there was freedom. This must be realised and altered, otherwise we will have no one to blame but ourselves for living as “mutilated” beings.

Change can come, he emphasised, by avoiding certainties. Society must be willing to revolt against repression, academics ought to be cautious and be ready to have their theories shattered and to talk about regularities and not about laws, and finally intellectuals have to be morally reliable but intellectually unreliable.

Last but not least, A. Clesse specified that he favours radical change, and if he did not deeply believe so, he would not have been conducting the summer school and engaging with the students for so many years. This kind of seminar, by creating some dynamic, may generate some change or (as a subject of this year’s sessions was) revitalisation.

Alexandros Koutsoukis *with inputs from:*

Aziliz Le Roy  
Catalina Moisescu  
Adrian Pabst  
Paul Wrobel  
Camille Zanuttini

## Appendix I

### Report by working group 3

#### Revitalising the European Union

##### Introduction: the crisis of the European Union & the problem of essentialism

The current woes of the EU can be traced back to an identity crisis that started in 1999 with the NATO Kosovo War and Serbia bombings and became visible again with the Eastern enlargement of 2007. The individual nations started questioning one of the building blocks of the European project, the sense of community and belonging. Europe<sup>1</sup> has followed the road towards a “happiness society” through both welfare and individualism, but this has been accompanied by a demographic deficit: the more educated people became, the higher the living standard, the higher the degree of criticism and the lower the birth rate. This in turn meant that immigration became a necessity. Europe’s inability to incorporate its immigrants into its social, cultural and political life has rendered Europe’s sclerosis highly visible. What was once European anti-Semitic *essentialism* (from the Middle Ages until the post-World War Two era) has been replaced in more recent times by East European phobia and Islamophobia (which is not so much a phobia as it is prejudice).

European society has been marked more than any other by secularism. It is not merely the division of the public and private realm that allows religion to flourish in the latter, as one conceives American-style secularism; it entitles more a marginalization of religion to the private sphere, a decline in religious beliefs altogether and carries thus with it an exclusionary characteristic<sup>2</sup>. This leads to the treatment of *Muslims as a distinctive minority to be tolerated (in the liberal orientation) or restricted (in the nationalist orientation) depending on the politics of the day*<sup>3</sup>. The failure of “the others” to accept the separation of private belief from participation in governance as an abstract citizen is the main problem envisaged by European secularists in this issue and the changing of the other’s culture is seen as the only viable prerequisite for integration.

This new-found individualism, combined with the consumerist society Europe has become, has led to questions regarding the legitimisation of the European project. Faced with one of the most severe crises in decades, Europe has found it hard to come to grips with the hard choices it has to make, questioning its own utility.

With this approach Europe is at a standstill, as such radical change is hardly probable. What Europe seems to be putting aside, more or less consciously, is the need for deep and continued reflexivity and putting a stop to its intellectual closure. Europe cannot keep thinking it will fight irrationality and keep its own norms intact.

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<sup>1</sup> We use EU and Europe interchangeably in order to avoid repetition not to conflate two distinct terms.

<sup>2</sup> Jose Casanova, “Secularization Revisited: A Reply to Talal Asad”, in David Scott and Charles Hirschkind (eds.), *Powers of the Secular Modern: Talal Asad and His Interlocutors* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006)

<sup>3</sup> Charles Taylor; “Western secularism” in Craig Calhoun et al. (eds.), *Rethinking secularism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011)

### **Defining Revitalization**

The revitalization of Europe is the process of revaluing its values through the creation of new norms that correspond to contemporary challenges.

### **Problems**

#### **Introversion**

*Introvert = a person characterized by concern primarily with his or her own thoughts and feelings*

Essentialism + ID crisis manifested as:

- polarisation of the society
- loss of stamina
- no bravery
- trivial institutional debate
- no active role in the international arena
- no civilian capabilities for a civilian mission
- rise of extremism and xenophobia
- rise of inequality

#### **Amoral consumerism**

Consumerism is a social and economic order that encourages the purchase of goods and services in ever greater amounts manifested as:

- degradation of the environment
- lack of higher ethical ground
- materialism
- mediocrity
- commodification of life
- media democracy: media sets the political agenda and steers policy towards a short-term approach
- utilitarian approach to life:
  - equate cultural progress with technological advancement

#### **De-legitimization of the European Union**

Characterised by:

- Democratic deficit
- Unsustainability of the European social model
  - demographic reasons: low birth rate, ageing
- Diminishing national role: Copenhagen summit: US-China
- No vision
- Mediocre political class
- The European project is quickly losing its appeal
  - 68% of Poles don't want the euro;

- Lack of civic spirit at the national level

### **Revitalising the European Union**

#### **Extroversion**

To be achieved by:

- greater involvement in international affairs
  - Act, not react: stronger will to make history
- Solving the institutional debate
  - Institutions should be there to implement a long-term vision, not just for immediate survival
- Seeking adjustments and engaging rising powers by making them stakeholders in the global order
- Seeking intra-European solidarity
- Reducing the role of nationalism in its own understanding of history

#### **Morality and Consumerism**

To be achieved by:

- Shifting towards a paradigm in which contentment comes from more than consumption (taking into account the Easterlin paradox)
- Rethinking the norms in order to avoid fake happiness induced by consumerism
  - Further developing and refining alternative metrics for human development: a stronger break with the tradition of seeing economic growth as GDP growth and the move towards more complex indicators, encompassing environmental and social dimensions of life
- Seeking long-term goals that go beyond (immediate) survival

#### **A Union with a Vision**

To be achieved by:

- Seeking to solve the inter-ethnic conflicts inside the EU
  - Assimilating immigrants
  - Becoming an attractive model for the rest of the world
    - From an economic point of view
    - From a moral point of view: stronger reassertion of the EU's position regarding human rights
  - Changing of the European social model
    - Focus on sustainability, not entitlement
  - Larger focus on cutting-edge research
- It can rise from its ashes, or perish like all other historical civilizations.

If Europe is to revitalize itself in this regard, it must rise to the challenges by accepting mutuality, connectedness and eventually change. As both first and second generation immigrants try to adapt to European standards (seen for example in the work of many Islamic intellectuals who are elaborating new interpretations of Islam as compatible with democracy and human rights), so must Europe at least consider adaptability in both directions and it may do this by leaving aside any remnants of essentialism, "other"-ing and self-enclosure (introversion).

Developing a viable ethics of disagreement is one of the responses Europe should be opened to as it represents a true possibility for the development of a new *modus vivendi*. The ethics of disagreement<sup>4</sup> means not only accepting pluralism per se but understanding it, understanding the other, where they come from and how their line of thought is structured, being able to see things from their perspective and working to create a public realm which can fit various interests. This integrated understanding of the other will not only harmonize societies with a large percentage of immigrants, it will provide nations with the mindset to deal with their neighbours and further cultural integration.

If EU continues resting on the laurels of past glories, it will become a museum civilisation without vigour, without any sense of direction, with a counterproductive worship of its own history. The way out of this in an age of economic crisis and of rising challenges from the coming world order is an assertive EU seeking its own place under the sun as the power of prudence, morality and higher vision for a better society that can be inspirational once more. The EU is in the midst of a crisis where past solutions are inadequate. Realising that it has reached its dawn will signal the beginning of its reinvigoration. Redefining its purpose by designing a road map will remove it from this gloomy situation. Implementing immediately the necessary changes will indicate the rise of a new era - different but more promising for Europe's peoples.

**Members:**

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Hagima Ovidiu

Koutsoukis Alexandros

Matei Nina Marina

Moisescu Catalina

Nastase Alexandra

Rusu Alexandra Victoria

Special thanks to Professor Coker for his advice.

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<sup>4</sup> Bulent Senay, "Islamophobia: Europe's Identity Crisis – Roots Behind, Routes Ahead" in OSCE Review Conference, Warsaw, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2010.

## Appendix II

### “They died not all, but all were sick...”

When European issues are being debated, I often think of a forerunner of the United Europe, David Mitrany, a young Romanian established in London. We would see him work in turns at the Romanian Embassy and the Foreign Office in London. This would happen after WW1 when the League of Nations and international cooperation were the burning questions of the day. Mitrany felt attracted to the subject; he would reflect on it, and come up with a vision: a cooperation that would work neither vertically nor top down, but in parallel areas of different fields. Let ministers meet each other in order to solve the legal problems relating to the main activities of the society. He called this solution a “functional approach”, thus laying the foundations of a new philosophy, functionalism. Later on, another researcher, Ernst B. Haas, took over his idea and laid down the theory of neo-functionalism in international relations.

Mitrany’s legacy is considerable. The question is whether Europe today has kept anything from his functionalist approach. Hardly, I would say. Instead, a radically opposed philosophy has been enthusiastically adopted, the structural approach. The gulf between the two approaches is huge: functionalism answers the question, “What is being done?”, while structuralism seeks to find answers to the question, “How is it being done?” Emphasis would not be laid on the sort of activities that are carried out and the problems they may solve. Instead, structuralism highlights the kind of institutions that are set up and the kind of regulations they abide by. Just have a look at a EU presentation. You will find detailed descriptions of sections, departments, services, you will learn about the system that regulates them, about the common laws that govern them, and maybe, after going through 200-300 pages of structural description, you will eventually come across a list of projects, or rather of project organization charts. The lawyers’ zeal has thoroughly replaced the specific concerns of economists. Similarly, a slogan relating to structure stands in for the functionalist approach. “Decline” and “demise” in the title of our seminar imply that Europe does not command too high a respect worldwide. Take for instance the last page of *The Economist*. You will learn that most regions in the world have a raised GDP rate: some of them over 7 per cent, many others between 3 to 7 per cent; a few are striving for a 1 to 3 per cent raise of their GDP. Meanwhile, the eurozone is turning to a loss of -0.4 %. The economic crisis that wears it down has not come to an end. Europe shows symptoms of depletion. At the same time, as many observers have pointed to, Europe has a record-breaking formalism, rigidity, bureaucracy and lack of coherence.

It would be easy to call them all “road accidents” or “temporary failures.” The analysis of the world crisis, after having toyed with euphemistic formulas, has reached a clear-cut conclusion: we deal with a systemic disease. The car does not have a flat tyre, it needs a check-over. Not in a repair shop, but in the factory where it came from. Not in order to be overhauled, but in order to be redesigned on the engineer’s drawing board.

So here are two sets of criteria to judge Europe’s problems: a construction diagram of the kind suggested by Mitrany, and the consideration of what the technical progress of political thought has accomplished ever since. The case of Europe is connected to the global crisis. It started in the 1980s, with Reagan’s words, “the state is the problem”. The anti-state rage brought forth neo-

liberalism which is the source of the great crisis, with all its extremisms: maximal gain as the sole goal, shortfall risk, fraudulent financial schemes, excessive consumerism, the weakening of the state to a degree such that it cannot respond to public interest claims relating to education, medical care, environment, living conditions, resource conservation, food, etc.

Europe hates the idea of state. If states are irresponsible, we will integrate them. We are going to make new laws for them, to include their economy in our large singlemarket; we will replace the patriotic language with a regional one. A new philosophical literature has backed up the campaign. The collective mind has been subjected to trends that abolish truth, reason and even the reality that cannot exist otherwise than through and for the man. Consequently, what man can do is to adopt a cheap hedonism while keeping alive the cult of “seizing the day”, of the immediate, without a history and without a future. This man will not be a citizen, but a mere consumer.

If we take into account that once fixed to the collective mind a stain can hardly be removed, we will have to think in terms of whole generations lasting about 25 years each. Between 1980 and 2005, the termite invasion; between 2005-2030, destruction, misery, but also reawakening; around 2030, the big shift accomplished by the people of a new generation who have learned from the sins of their predecessors.

No doubt that mankind will continue to have continents and regions interlinked by a useful solidarity and by multiple and active forms of cooperation that will keep at bay violent conflicts. No doubt that Europe will be one of the five possible areas that will share the benefits of progress in civilization, with a constellation of forces freed from the obsession of hegemony. But until then, man’s journey into the vast cosmic infinity and into the infinitesimal one of the cell, his genius to solve his brain’s or mind’s puzzles will provide coming generations with fascinating subjects, with new topics of research, and with many surprises that will make their lives pleasant and worth living.

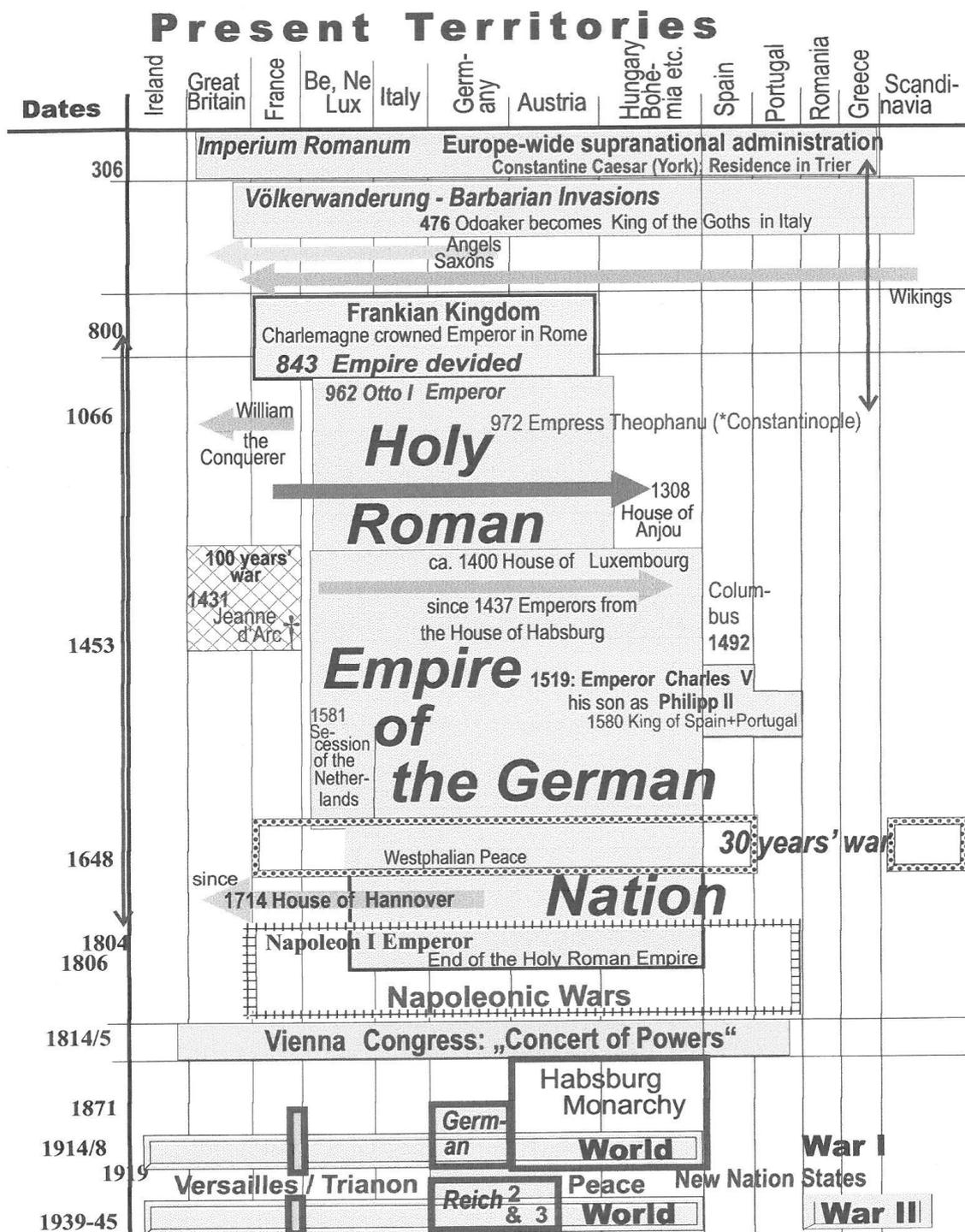
Prof. Mircea Malitza  
Bucharest, July 2012

### Appendix III

According to the participants these are the most important dates in European history:

306 (Constantine the Great becomes Emperor)	1918 (end of WWI and beginning of decolonisation)
800 (crowning of Charlemagne)	1945 (end of WWII)
1492 (discovery of America)	1949 (Council of Europe)
1514- (colonisation of America)	1950 (Schuman Declaration)
1648 (Treaty of Westphalia)	1951 (ECSC)
1713 (Treaty of Utrecht)	1989 (end of Cold War)
1789 (French Revolution)	1992 (Maastricht Treaty)
1894-1906 (Dreyfus affair)	1999/2002 (EMU)
1917 (Russian Revolution)	2007 (Romanian integration into the EU)

### Appendix IV



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## Appendix V

# AGENDA

<b>Monday 23 July</b>		
18.00 - 20.00	<b>Session 1:</b>	Explaining the rise and decline of countries and empires
<b>Tuesday 24 July</b>		
10.00 - 11.00	<b>Session 2:</b>	Europe's ascent, pre-eminence, stasis and descent
11.00 - 12.00	<b>Working groups</b>	
18.00 - 19.00	<b>Session 3:</b>	What made Europe so strong and what brought about its decay
19.00 - 20.00	<b>Session 4:</b>	From a Eurocentric to an Asiatic world?
<b>Wednesday 25 July</b>		
10.00 - 11.00	<b>Session 5:</b>	Strengths and weaknesses of present-day Europe
11.00 - 12.00	<b>Working groups</b>	
18.00 - 19.00	<b>Session 6:</b>	Comparing the European Union with the US and China
19.00 - 20.00	<b>Working groups</b>	
<b>Thursday 26 July</b>		
10.00 - 11.00	<b>Session 7:</b>	Living with a diminished international status
11.00 - 12.00	<b>Session 8:</b>	Can civilizations reinvent themselves?
18.00 - 19.00	<b>Session 9:</b>	The relevance of traditional power assets in the upcoming international system
19.00 - 20.00	<b>Working groups</b>	
<b>Friday 27 July</b>		
10.00 - 12.00	<b>Session 10:</b>	Can political integration stop or even invert decline?
18.00 - 19.00	<b>Session 11:</b>	Is a revitalization of Europe conceivable? Feasible?
19.00 - 20.00	<b>Working groups</b>	
<b>Saturday 28 July</b>		
10.00 - 11.30	<b>Session 12:</b>	Rethinking Europe's role in the international society
11.30 - 12.00	<b>Closing session</b>	