EUROPE’S NEW DESTINY
Is there any European End of History?
Towards the Commonwealth of Nations

The challenging title of the conference calls for us to look for the final target we would be able to accept as attractive enough to aim at. The target attractive enough to aim at means such a point of the organisation of the Europe where there would be neither enough reasons, nor important enough reasons to look for further deep changes but only small re-arrangements, matches and amendments.

Generally speaking I do not think that the events of 11th September in New York and Washington have changed the European Destiny. Maybe it will have impact on the pace of enlargement and the deepening of integration up to the final stage of a Commonwealth of Nations united under the idea of human rights rooted in the cultural heritage of the three pillars: Greek Philosophy, Roman Law and the values that were redeemed 2000 years ago.
1. The Middle Europe March to Freedom

In contrast to other continents, there has not been a Middle or Central Europe for a long time. Instead, especially Western, politicians, journalists and unfortunately scientists had the habit of using the term 'Eastern Europe'. Because of this, the term is worth commenting on in a contemporary historical perspective.

Eastern Europe in the sense commonly used was neither a cultural nor a political entity but merely the mental creation of Western authors who obediently followed their politicians and were oblivious to the actual cultural reality.

The term ‘Eastern Europe’ was created as a consequence of the Teheran and Yalta agreements when the heads of two Western powers ceded the nationally and culturally diversified regions of Central Europe to the control of Soviet Russia. A tortuous cultural dividing line, which followed the division between the Byzantine and the Latin cultures with Russia belonging to the former, had been neglected. This division is not quite consistent with the famous Curzon Line in the northern part of Central Europe and continues through this day across Ukraine, Romania and former Yugoslavia.

It was a mistake to assume that ‘Eastern Europe’ could be created in one moment by three signatures, but intellectuals seem to have assumed it was so.

2. Western Europe Hesitation: Between Glorification, Fear and Disdain

Here I refer to a specific ambiguity I found among western political scientists concerning the mentality of the Middle-Europeans and their ability to create a really democratic society able to conform western standards of citizen behaviour.

With the obvious failure of the totalitarian model of society as a proper description for nations of Central Europe, sociologists and political scientists moved towards ‘civil society’ and ‘political society’ models.

Civil Society is a glory for those Middle-Europeans who spontaneously developed growing resistance to totalitarian regimes. That very process of growing resistance was described as being a ‘civil society against the state’ where a ‘new social realm is carved out of the state’, with institutional spaces for the new society provided by private homes, clubs, cafes, educational institutions, and the Church forming the real base for increasing social resistance. The rising of civil society against the communist regimes might be perceived as a concentration of different social movements, groups of interests and individuals around one prevailing idea – to destroy the regime, to change the European post War status quo.

But glorification ended before it was well perceived, digested and popularised. Civil society in the Central European region, it was said, would not necessarily lead to democracy, that is to say, to a ‘political society’. There was anxiety that ‘a strong and united civil society may be strategically harmful to democratisation’. The extremely influential ‘The Economist’ seemed to share the prejudice eagerly and warned Westerners in an astonishing way: ‘In the region that before 1945 had mostly authoritarian – rule, removing communism will not alone bring democracy... No past to be proud of. Except for Czechoslovakia, communism’s fall in Eastern Europe did not restore democracy’. Indeed a lot of insolence and a deep feeling of impunity were needed to write, ‘before 1945 the Region had mostly authoritarian rules’.

In spite of this prejudice, once the common enemy has been defeated, the ‘normal’ state of existence of the society emerged, namely ‘the political society’, in sociological terms, at least inside Central Europe’s Latin culture zone. A political society emerges as the result of a democratic transition of the civil society. In political society ‘political parties, elections, electoral rules, political leadership, inter-party alliances and legislatures, form the institutions through which the society can constitute and monitor a democratic government’.
In the case of Poland this 'united' civil society split its support between the plenitude of parties that took part in the first, for fifty-two years, free elections of October 1991. However the structure of the political organisation of the Polish people is still in process, which reflects the search of Poles for the proper representatives of their interests, as the recent election outcome showed.

Thus despite artificial anxiety and open prejudice we have restored a democratic system. Have we met with words of apology from our mis-interpreters? Was it said that now we Middle-Europeans are O.K.? In no case. Instead we learned from an American sociologist, Adam Przeworski, that democratisation restores the direct, real sense of verbal expression and liquidates the 'regime of ritualised speech' so common under communism. Thus: 'to say we are a nation, with our own culture under Communism was to speak against Soviet domination' (of course it also meant what it meant). However he warns, 'to say it in a democracy may mean that those who reject this culture have no right to speak'. Is that fair? Is there any other nation in Europe or the world at all that would put up with such a suggested implication?

The prejudices are served mixed with a kind of disdain, and, because of that, we are required to justify our decisions to our Western partners, whose historical memory and geographical imagination do not often match historical and geographical reality.

3. Looking for the European End of History.

3.1. The final social order: ownership, free market and rigid ethical protective belt.

In 1989 Francis Fukuyama proclaimed that 'the end of history' came as communism failed, and he reminded us that the beginning of the end took place in 1806 in the Battle of Jena, when Napoleon's victory meant the victory of liberalism. In our days, mankind has reached 'the end point of mankind's ideological form of human government'. Probably he is right, insofar as the general evolution and the universalisation of Western liberal democracy as the final liberal-democratic organisation of states and societies are concerned.

However, once the 'red nightmare' disappeared, and we have a new world, the question of mutual links between freedom, the foundation of liberalism, and property rights and ownership, building stones of liberalism, has emerged. Perhaps this question has already launched history again. The question whether 'there is no freedom without ownership' is more obvious and more urgent in those countries that are transferring ownership from the state into private hands. People, in former communist countries, who were deprived of both property and freedom, seem to realise that their long fight for freedom cannot be successfully completed without ownership and property rights.

If Fukuyama was right when writing that the 'World-wide ideological struggle ... will be replaced by economic calculation, the endless solving of technical problems', then historic socio-economic problems seem to be shifted from the state to the firm level.

Some interesting economic and technical questions emerge here. Do these types of firms where employees share the equity, abolish the 'principal-agent problem'? Are they able to compete with the pure 'managerial firms'? What are the principles of market sharing and what is the market equilibrium under 'multi-private-property patterns' of economic institutions?
These problems, contrary to Fukuyama’s prediction, will guarantee that boredom is not likely to be the sad prospect for centuries in a post-historical world. I suppose that a small history, embodied and decided in the context of modern liberalism, is already developing.

Maybe the start has been finally defined in Poland, the country pushed deeply in debt by the former, imposed, detested power of communism; the country with a lot of past to be proud of, where, when the fight for freedom approached the finish, the tired, repressed, despised ‘civil’ society provided an enlightenment: ‘Freedom without ownership is not freedom after all’.

It is a good challenge, well settled in the context of modern liberalism. Hopefully it is a problem resolvable in this context, and within the ‘the state that emerges at the end of history, [which] is liberal insofar as it recognises and protects through a system of law man’s universal right to freedom’. But, what if it doesn’t?

Is there any important social contradiction, not between civilisation as Huddington wants, nor between races and religions as Fallicci paints, but ‘here’, inside Western liberal societies, that is urgent but neglected by sociologists? To discover whether this is so, I refer to the ‘model of the structure of a global society’ elaborated by the Polish sociologist professor Jozef Balcerak in the late seventies. Professor Balcerak maintained that he was reflecting ‘the very essence’ of the world’s reality. To simplify: the model had two dimensions – social structures and international politics. In the very essence of social structure he saw two main actors: the world of bureaucracy and the world of employees.

The eternal fight for domination between those two worlds has determined the reality. The ‘very essence’ approach led Balcerak to the proposition that there was – I beg you to be careful, we are talking about the seventies – only one social order in the world: ‘Capitalism’. Balcerak distinguished between the countries of developed capitalism and the countries of peripheral, dependent capitalism that included also countries of communist block (sic!).

Professor Balcerak foresaw that under the pressure of society, the bureaucracy – to preserve its domination – first would sacrifice the trade unions which were under bureaucracy control, next the communist party would be dissolved, and finally the world of bureaucracy would enter into agreement with foreign capital and would sell the national stock to foreigners. It would be the end of the so-called communist system but bureaucracy would preserve its domination over the world of employees.

According to Balcerak, ‘property rights’ is the crucial point. Bureaucracy would not give up property rights to society because it would mean an emerging of a totally self-managed system and the end of bureaucracy domination. That is Balcerak’s end of the history of social order.

To conclude – What are than the benchmarks for the final social order: the first is property rights for employees, the second free market as the best way to proper resources allocation and the third is a principle of Rawls’ Social Utility Function \( W(u_1, u_2, u_n) = \min (u_1, u_2, u_n) \) as the leading idea for the economic policy. That all might be approachable if, and only if, we have implicitly: \( U_1 = u(X, \min (u_i)) \) which is meaningful as far as everybody’s is brought in the consciousness that the any harm for anybody brings disutility for everybody, or in other words that pleasure of neighbour is my own pleasure or to simplify: You will love your fellow-man as yourself.

Europe is well ahead on this path I think, despite all the liberal attitudes of selfishness and internal pressure for the individual career. That means, in some way, that a ‘big history’ is developing, as reflected in the eternal debate between Settembrini, the advocate of bourgeois liberal ways of thinking, and Naphta, arguing in favour of rigid moral rules and absolute truths and being capable of that type of behaviour that lies beyond the liberal rational understanding of the world.
3. 2. Looking for Final European Political Order. Polish heritage inspirations

If we, Europeans, despite the centuries of conflicts, have anything in common, which may form a firm foundation for integration, it is a consciousness, the common space of sensitivity, which enables us to distinguish good from bad according to rules that were redeemed 2000 years ago. Those rules tell us that the love for our own nation should not be greater than Christian esteem for the dignity of any human being. Those rules have ever been a programme in the 1 mln square kilometres large Poland, the country always devoted to the Latin political culture with its specific balance between the secular (civil) and spiritual powers. It was one of the reasons why Poland avoided religious wars, so common in Europe. It also contributed, together with the principle of the election of the king, to why Poland was called - in deference to ancient Rome - a Republic, not a Kingdom. It was also why Poland was in fact, since the end of the XIVth century the first, small European Union (of Poland and Lithuania) and developed within one hundred fifty years into one state organisation of coexistence of different nations and religions in peaceful co-operation. There were different and equal nations and ethnic groups with freedom for cultural development and for self-government, as well as for their own jurisdiction however subordinated to Royal Court and with kings elected from different nations origin starting with France finishing with Sweden and Germany.

This country - having proportion in mind - a country which lasted till the end of XVIII century seems to be a good point of reference for an EU looking for ways to overcome the contradictions of interests and contradictions between the diminishing role of the national states and the desire of each nation to preserve its own identity and develop its cultural heritage. Just follow Poland, 'the backwoods of tolerance and a White Angel in the Middle of Europe'.

Now in our eyes the subsequent attributes of the nation-state – the borders, the national currency, the defence, the jurisdiction are diminishing. The well-known predictions of General Charles De Gaulle on the temporality of states and eternity of nations are coming to fruition, and the role of the nation states seems to be limited to preserve and to develop national culture only, on the virtue of the legal developments of the EU.

Thus now we can see on the horizon of Europe's future the final end of its warrior history: A Commonwealth of Nations governed by a commonly elected president – no matter whether French, Swedish, Pole or Portuguese – and by the two chamber Parliament with, on the one hand, its Commons more or less reflecting the Nice patterns of shares of seats to be taken by each nation and, on the other hand, its Senate with equal numbers of seats for each nation. It is not an unrealistic dream, since we Europeans have a good point of reference: the first Polish-Lithuanian European Union's principle: Nations might survive and develop within the horizon of freedom, circumscribed by the rule that somebody's love for his nation may not be stronger than the Christian esteem for the eternal dignity of each and every human being as man.

It might be the principle shaping the European End of History, when there would neither be enough reasons, nor reasons important enough, to aim for further deep changes but only for small re-arrangements, matches and amendments. And once again, I think, that Western Europe is well ahead along this path, and we Poles, from the Middle (or Centre) are physically well prepared to join it, since the European Future is, in some way, something like coming back to our glorious Past.

And what if it isn't? Which gives an alternative for Poland and the other Central Europeans that are still perceived and described as not ready for stepping 'into' Europe.
4. An Alternative Outcome of History. The Peninsula Europe

The vision of integrating Europe sometimes does not offer a good place to Poland and other applicant countries. This situation can be noted in new concepts, according to which Europe seems to be very close but suddenly it starts to recede. These concepts are both political and economic nature.

In the political aspect Europe's escape from its geographical centre is manifested by recurring attempts to develop the Western European Union and its military forces built on the general slogan of 'European Security and Defensive Identity.' The idea itself may not be that bad but it implicitly entails constraints on the role of the United States in the Atlantic basin, and equally implicitly calls for the French nuclear umbrella as a guarantee for security. This military and political thinking causes (because it must cause) goose flesh when we Polish hear about it. This is due to the fact that we tested enough French guarantees during the 20th century. Fortunately, in many cases the military and political integration processes have reached more for the Centre and the North of Europe. They can be manifested by the Weimar Triangle (Warsaw is accompanied by Berlin and Paris here) and this idea is considered permanent by the Germans (at least it was considered permanent during the Christian Democrats' rule there). Secondly, the Polish-Danish-German corps with its headquarters in Szczecin seems very attractive from the political point of view. The establishing of the corps gives even more hope than the alliance between Mieszko the I and Denmark of X century, sealed by the marriage of his daughter Swietosława /Sigirda according to Scandinavian sagas/ and a Danish king.

Summa summarum, all of those concepts that tend to weaken the Atlantic ties do not seem attractive for us with experience of burning European homes. The Polish concept of Europe is broader and more global than the French one – it is the concept of Euro-America.

When however economic factors are taken into consideration, 'core Europe' has revealed itself as 'Euroland'. Even joining the EU, which is being postponed, will not mean total integration or defence from double standards (e.g. we are expected to lift duties on the EU's dumping agricultural products but the EU can impose duties and determine quotas of goods chosen by chance). In other words, they do not want us in their united economy too much or, in the best possible instance, they say they will want but they do not know when exactly. They do not know that, because the Union itself must prepare better for its own enlargement and carry out necessary reforms of the organisational and economic structures.

What would thus happen if we Poles were to forget the 'old, venal Europe', from which in fact we cannot learn very much, and, taking advantage of our 500-kilometre long coast, part of the Baltic Bay of the Atlantic Ocean, reconstructed NAFTA into NAPFTA (i.e. North American Polish Free Trade Organisation)? Mexican enthusiasm, Polish imagination and individualism, American science, dynamics, the spirit of enterprise and innovation put together... A Silicon Valley in the Vistula Valley, expertise, the spirit of expansion and ultrasonic aircraft produced in Mielec, able to carry us to California a few hours before we have had departure from Poland, in cases we have an urgent appointment there... We would not mind that... It would be enough to receive just a small handful of a few hundred billions of dollars as initiative capital and find a dozen or so million Polish hands and heads ready to work sensibly, without Brussels bureaucratic standards. Then the White Angel would shine in the middle of Europe again and the vision of Poland and Poles described by another novelist Andrzej Brycht in the beginning of seventies, i.e. 'the nation that is as the young grass, that had no time to grow up' because it was damaged for two centuries by the herds of cattle run from the West to the East of Europe and back', would be forgotten. Such a Poland would form not the land bridge – as some want – to run for, but the pillar of rest for the East and West of the secure European structure.