

## Introduction. Double Allegiance as the Central Political Issue

*Fernando GUIRAO*

The 39<sup>th</sup> issue of the *Journal of European Integration History (JEIH)* presents a combination of old and new research which is not common in this and other journals. Accompanying three articles presenting new research in the field, this issue contains four papers that were written by Alan S. Milward some time ago, which were not originally intended for publication and had thus, to the best of our knowledge, remained unpublished. In September 2013, Frances M.B. Lynch, the legal heir of Alan Milward and the owner of the copyright to his work, offered the *JEIH* the opportunity to publish them since, unusually for Alan Milward, they are short pieces which summarise his views on important, crucial issues on which he had worked and published a great deal. The Liaison Committee, as the Editorial Board of the *JEIH*, accepted the offer at its Paris meeting, on 20 September. They felt that these items were of inherent historical value and warranted publication in their original form, with minor editorial adaptation. This process was carried out by Dr Lynch in collaboration with the co-ordinator of this volume.<sup>1</sup>

Their publication offered Guirao and Lynch an opportunity to present a summary in English of their own introduction to the complete works of Alan Milward. The peer reviewers agreed that the fact that a version of 'The Intellectual Legacy of Alan S. Milward' had originally been published in Italian was no impediment to its publication in this issue.<sup>2</sup> In fact, one of the missions of the *JEIH* is to promote the knowledge of important findings and arguments originally published in a language which is not accessible for the majority of readers in the field of European integration history. One of the purposes of the introduction was to position Alan Milward's history of European integration within the context of his life-time's research into the economic development of Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Central to his work was the argument that there was not a single path to development which less developed countries should follow; that development did not stem from the more rapid growth of one leading sector of the economy, the industrial; that markets did not operate independently of the state; that recourse to war was a normal and often successful policy choice, and when pursued by Nazi Germany few nation-states in Europe were able to resist the challenge of fascism; and that what rescued them after the end of the Second World War was their decision to integrate a number of policy areas within a new supranational institutional structure. The surrenders of national sovereignty which this entailed were all for the purpose of strengthening the capacity

---

1. I have been sharing with Frances Lynch my views on the works of Alan Milward for the last four years. This brief text is thus undoubtedly indebted to our countless exchanges. I would like to express my deepest appreciation to her for her intellectual generosity.
2. F. LYNCH, F. GUIRAO, *L'eredità intellettuale di Alan S. Milward*, in: *Memoria e Ricerca*, 41(2012), pp.181-206.

to pursue national policies. Whether that rescue of the nation-state would prove durable depended on its ability to secure the continuing allegiance of voters. Ultimately it was the political choices based on democratic interest building which determined the durability of economic and political outcomes. Welfare programmes, the expansion of public education, health and pensions, the commitment to full employment, state intervention in industry and agricultural protection constituted important features of the political programme by which Western European states re-established themselves after 1945. The formulas for integration implemented in a number of policies in the 1950s served precisely to improve the nation-states' *comptes de résultats* vis-à-vis their electoral constituencies in the search to renew and enlarge the basis of allegiance towards the post-war democratic nation-state.

This might sound odd today, after years of mounting criticism of the European Union's policies, institutions and overall purpose, as shown by the Eurobarometer since the summer of 2007, when the international financial crisis originating in the United States financial system hit Western Europe and in a few months led to the greatest crisis ever in European integration history. As we interpret Alan Milward's thinking, whether or not the main assets of integration are to be preserved depends on the ability of policy-makers to secure the continuing allegiance of voters. This, Alan Milward wrote in the inaugural article of the *JEIH*, is "the central political issue of the whole story".<sup>3</sup> For this, they need to use the still extensive powers of the nation-state and the European institutions to find solutions to the present social malaise, rather than relying on the power of the market. The future of the European Union and some European nations – at least as we know them in 2014 – will be determined by their capacity to redefine a valid political and economic base for survival. Without the active support of the majority of the population, neither the nation nor the supranation will survive in the end.

This is the central issue in Alan Milward's 'Politics and Purpose in Fifty Years of European Integration'. This paper was presented in Athens during the first semester of 2003, on the occasion of the Greek presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU). The text can be read as dealing with the situation as of today. It provides what Alan Milward considered to be the five main purposes for the kind of integration that had been accomplished from 1950 to mid-2000s, which most scholars would be willing to agree with: national security, in the classical sense of the word as meaning territorial security, mainly vis-à-vis Germany, and 'security from the vagaries of economic change' through the welfare state and state interventionism, essentially in the late 1940s and early 1950s; collective management of commercial liberalization within a progressively interdependent ('globalised' in today's jargon) world economy in the 1950s and 1960s; and finally the definition of a new set of norms and the configuration of rights to anchor democracy since the 1970s. In fact, when in 2003

3. A. MILWARD, *Allegiance. The Past and the Future*, in: *JEIH*, 1(1995), pp.7-19 (quotation in p.19); available at [http://www.eu-historians.eu/uploads/Dateien/jeih-1-1995\\_1.pdf](http://www.eu-historians.eu/uploads/Dateien/jeih-1-1995_1.pdf); last accessed on 14 April 2014, as is the case with the other URLs mentioned hereinafter. This was republished as *The Springs of Integration*, in: P. ANDERSON, P. GOWAN (eds), *The Question of Europe*, Verso, London/New York, 1997, pp.5-20.

Alan Milward wrote that the EU was facing its largest expansion ‘with nothing to power it but the spent fuel of earlier ideologies’, he argued in favour of a strong reformulation of the politics and purposes of European integration if the EU and its member states wished to retain the allegiance of the majority of their citizens.

Ten years later, opinion polls are recording record low levels of ‘trust in the EU’ and a ‘total negative image of the EU’.<sup>4</sup> Fundamental rights of free circulation and public demonstration had to be temporarily suspended for the inaugural ceremony of the Greek presidency of the European Union for the first semester of 2014, which took place in Athens on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January, given the fear of massive protests. The prospects for the forthcoming elections to the European Parliament are also dominated by the rise of both abstention and representation of populists, xenophobes and opponents to the EU. Both parties – the abstention party and the coalition party of the populist anti-EU phalanxes – are expected to obtain historically high shares of the vote in the May 2014 elections. Would anyone in Spring 2014 disagree with the *Milwardian* assertion that the EU is facing the future with little more than ‘the spent fuel’ of its past achievements?

The consolidation and durability of the supranational structure have never been issues without importance. Some degree of popular support has always been necessary, without necessarily implying the emergence of any European demos. Although allegiance to the supra-nation has never been very high, withdrawal from the EC/EU has never been contemplated by a ruling government, essentially because EC/EU membership was considered to be useful from the perspective of at least one of purposes mentioned above.<sup>5</sup> The relevant issue that Alan Milward addressed in 2003 is that such support could come to an end and endanger the viability of integration, in a prediction that has been confirmed ten years later. According to Milward, the decline could come either from the decline in the quality of national democracies and in the population’s confidence in the State as the provider of security and welfare for the majority, or from the widespread perception that the EU is becoming increasingly less responsive to the demands of the majority of the people. The latest Eurobarometer shows clearly the weakening of overall allegiance to the state as much as to the EU, as well as the reduction in the total number of citizens feeling double allegiance, to the state and the EU. This remains, no doubt, the central political problem of the EU as a whole as much as of its member states.

---

4. Standard Eurobarometer 80, *Public Opinion in the European Union*, Autumn 2013, first results, sections I.1 & I.2, pp.5-6; available at [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb80/eb80\\_first\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb80/eb80_first_en.pdf).
5. In this respect *NExit Assessing the economic impact of the Netherlands leaving the European Union. A report by Capital Economics for Patij voor de Vrijheid*, London, 6 February 2014 (available at <https://www.capitaleconomics.com/data/pdf/NExit.pdf>) is an interesting exercise with no policy impact whatsoever. Moving in precisely the opposite direction is the GENERALITAT DE CATALUNYA, *Les vies d'integració de Catalunya a la Unió Europea* ['Paths for Catalonia's integration in the EU'], Consell Assessor per a la Transició Nacional, Barcelona, 14 April 2014; accessible at <http://www10.gencat.cat/gencat/AppJava/cat/actualitat2/2014/40414lesviesdintegracidecatalunyaaluneuropaea.jsp>.

The fact that many attribute the present socio-political malaise to ‘globalisation’ makes the brief ‘Governance in a Global Environment’ an interesting position summary. Milward argues that European governance in a global environment remains firmly national. This point is currently hard to argue with, especially if the reader is in Berlin, Frankfurt or Karlsruhe, but also if the reader is in any of the countries that were bailed out by the combined forces of the European Council, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Had it not been the interests of some individuals and institutions confined within specific national boundaries and defended by specific national executives, which had led to the bail-outs and to the specific conditions which had been applied to them? Five years ago, on the occasion of the June 2009 European Parliament elections and the planned entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty, it was announced that the European Parliament would acquire great importance in a supranational Europe. Five years on, since the end of 2009 when the international financial crisis became an institutional crisis for the European Union, nearly all EU action has taken place outside the supranational method, with the European Council as the main character in the play, and therefore with the predominance of the heads of state and government of EU member states, without any dialogue with the European Commission and Parliament. There seems to me little doubt that the European governance in a global environment remains firmly national.

In this paper, Alan Milward also argues first of all that interdependence at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was not very different from the situation prior to World War I (with Spain as an exception to the rule). Second, he says that there was no constant, linear and continuous path of interdependence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Third, he argues that no matter how strong interdependence was in the 1990s, it did not represent a new threat to the nation-states (one which might have required integration). The only exception is the military-strategic technology, which was far from being a new phenomenon, no matter how threatening it might have appeared. The main differences in the 1990s compared to the past were the relative importance of big corporations and the size of financial transactions relative to gross national product. Financial transactions could have been restricted if the states had so wished. What Alan Milward argues is that monetary integration, as decided in the 1990s, was not the inevitable response to an increase in ‘globalisation’, but a decision adopted by the participating states because they expected it to bring them material reward. It was thus a decision with an important degree of electoral support but by the same token, the decision could be reversed if that support was absent. The situation in Greece and the increasing levels of those who reject the euro and European Monetary Union (EMU) in some countries of the Euro zone should alert policy makers to the fragility of an integration which has failed to deliver ‘the promised material reward’. The final paragraph of this short note should be required reading at the next European Council meeting of heads of state and government.

In ‘The Life and Death of the Great European Boom’, Alan Milward explains in detail the direct link between allegiance to the post-1945 nation-state and the ‘material reward’ brought by the changed role of the state in post-war democracy and its contribution to the economic boom. The contents of this paper should sound familiar to

the readers of *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (Routledge, London, 1992). Although undated, this paper was drafted in 1996, as revealed by the reference at the end of it to Perry Anderson's 'Under the Sign of the Interim' which was a review of *The European Rescue* published in the *London Review of Books (LRB)* in January 1996.<sup>6</sup> In fact, this piece, as well as Milward's reply to Anderson's 'Sign', tries to draw the readers' attention towards the causes for and the consequences of the drastic change in political economy that took place in the early 1970s.

In my reading, Alan Milward attributed the end of the boom to the breaking down of the socio-political coalitions that had sustained the political economy of the golden age in Western Europe since 1945. Their replacement could not be anything but gradual, in contrast to their quick emergence. There was no sudden collapse that could be dated with some precision, but instead a set of policy decisions that progressively eroded the cohesiveness of this democratic interest-building coalition. These decisions were essentially the response of governments to the rise in inflation which led to an excessive concentration of policy on price stability after 1968 (through wage moderation first, and then exchange rate stability) and the increasing budgetary burden of welfare due to rising levels of unemployment. By 1974, all the governments in Western Europe had adopted policies which contravened the sort of political economy that had supported the great boom, and all were determined to sustain the new policies in the long-term. What Alan Milward hints about the end of the boom is new and highly valuable. It reveals an ambitious research programme which could improve our collective understanding of the present crisis a great deal.<sup>7</sup>

There were three major impulses behind the widespread popular support that in many countries the EMU project enjoyed (with Germany being a case apart, which dragged the Netherlands along). First of all, there were the dominant teleological narratives of a process of European integration which would drive the European populations to a paradise of permanent peace, prosperity and social harmony, which had great influence during the second half of the 1980s. The single currency enjoyed uncritical popular support in many countries – particularly on the periphery of the European Community – because their citizens had come to believe that EMU was either the logical next step or the inevitable, unavoidable step towards progress in European integration, which they had come to associate with peace and prosperity. This was the truth revealed in the words of the Jacques Delors Commission – the *One market, one money* report is the perfect example – and which most governments

---

6. Alan Milward finished writing this paper after 4.1.1996 (the date of Perry Anderson's, *Under the Sign of the Interim*, in: *LRB*, pp.13-17) but before March-April 1996 (the date of publication of Alan's answer to Anderson in the form of *Approaching Reality: Euro Money and the Left*, in: *New Left Review*, 216(1996), pp.55-65).
7. The reasons why this approach that Alan Milward was proposing did not receive scholarly attention is explained in M. NEWMAN, *Allegiance and the European Union*, in: F. GUIRAO, F. LYNCH, S. RAMIREZ (eds), *Alan S. Milward and a Century of European Change*, Routledge, London/New York, 2012, pp.481-498.

propagated among their constituencies.<sup>8</sup> The ‘single market, single currency’ campaign started when the single market had yet to be generated and before it could provide any materialisation of the promised material reward. In his recently published memoirs, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, Spain’s former premier, argues that ‘el relato histórico’ (the historical narrative) underpinning the Treaty of Maastricht was so attractive that in 1990-92 there was no point considering the actual details of the EMU!<sup>9</sup> That regional unemployment rates of 2.6% in Oberbayern (the Federal Republic of Germany) and 36.3% in Andalucía (Spain) could co-exist and that financing conditions could differ significantly across Euro area countries were some of the ‘details’ of the single market and the single currency which did not receive the attention they warranted because, in theory, they should have been avoided by the mechanisms supposedly operating within the single market and currency!<sup>10</sup>

No one denounced the dangers of teleological narratives as forcefully as Alan S. Milward before, in and after 1992. He tried to increase the general public’s awareness of the many errors of historical interpretation this position had implied, and the potential risk of EMU for those countries which would be unable to act according to the actual implications of a monetary regime designed along German principles, for which, for instance, the structural high levels of unemployment could not be accommodated via expansionary measures. Unfortunately, the governments of countries with structural problems of growth and convergence, such as Greece, Italy, Ireland, Portugal and Spain, but also France, had come to the conclusion that German monetary discipline would force trade unions into wage moderation and labour flexibility (which these governments had not been able to obtain in the previous fifteen years) and would therefore avoid recurrent monetary devaluations. However, once the Treaty of Maastricht had been signed and ratified, the resulting potential threat of internal devaluations in terms of lowering wages and unemployment should have represented an imperative for major structural reforms in labour markets and other fields for the governments in Madrid, Lisbon and Athens, as well as in some other countries. The fact was that the extraordinary levels of credit that EMU unexpectedly

---

8. COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs), *One market, one Money. An evaluation of the potential benefits and costs of forming an economic and monetary union*, European Economy report 44(October 1990); accessible at [http://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/publications/publication7454\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/publication7454_en.pdf).
9. J.L. RODRIGUEZ ZAPATERO, *El dilema. 600 días de vértigo*, Planeta, Barcelona, 2013, p.328.
10. Unemployment data taken from *Unemployment in the EU28 regions in 2013*, in: EUROSTAT, *News Release*, 60/2014; available at [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_PUBLIC/1-15042014-BP/EN/1-15042014-BP-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/1-15042014-BP/EN/1-15042014-BP-EN.PDF). The unemployment rate is defined as the percentage of unemployed persons aged 15-74 in the economically active population. The most recent data on financing is provided by EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK, *Survey on the access to finance of small and medium-sized enterprises in the euro area, April 2013 to September 2013*, Frankfurt, November 2013 (<https://www.ecb.europa.eu/pub/pdf/other/accesstofinancesmallmediumsizedenterprises201311en.pdf?&afclff8de81a1d9e6fd0d9d3b38809a7a0>) and the INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND, *Global Financial Stability Report: Moving from Liquidity to Growth-Driven Markets*, Washington, April 2014 (<http://www.imf.org/External/Pubs/FT/GFSR/2014/01/pdf/text.pdf>).

brought pushed any reformist temptation to one side.<sup>11</sup> A new era of (apparently) unlimited credit led to the largest macro-economic disequilibria in the recent history of most of these countries. Alan Milward anticipated that such reforms were not going to happen, that the kind of reforms and transformations that wear well rarely take place when imposed from abroad, and that they need to be endogenously generated by the dominant socio-political coalition. He also anticipated that the level of social tension that such asymmetric adjustment would generate – social asymmetry within nations and socio-political asymmetry among the members of the EMU – would endanger the single currency and that Germany would have to relax anti-inflationary discipline to the extent necessary to avoid social chaos and the breakdown of the single currency. This is exactly what has happened!

At the same time, Alan Milward understood that there was a genuine constituency for price stability in most member states of the EU, which exercised great influence over governments to move towards the single currency. This third constituency of voters, this time in the North, who saw a single and sound currency as being in their material interest, had emerged progressively and started to be decisive in the 1980s. If governments after 1974 had adopted deflationary policies, this was a political choice based on changes in electoral coalitions. Alan Milward wrote in 1998:

‘There are other reasons, too, why voters may prefer it [EMU]. Increasing proportions of them are over sixty, living off fixed incomes and savings. They constitute a very strong anti-inflationary lobby, are not averse to higher interest rates and are mostly indifferent to the problem of unemployment. The shift towards indirect taxation, coinciding with a sharp reduction in formalized long-term industrial employment, reduces the force of demands that wage settlements be uniform and in line with a cost-of-living index. The “unemployed” become as hard to define as the “employed”. Has one person in four of the work force in Spain really been without any work at all over the past decade?’<sup>12</sup>

It was possible, he speculated, that the Treaty of Maastricht was an outcome of this very change in political economy. This genuine constituency interested in enshrining anti-inflationary policy in treaty form (the Treaty of Maastricht first, the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union – also referred to as the Fiscal Compact – today), those living off savings, and not on negotiated wages, has an increasingly greater influence on governments and on public opinion in general. Since it represented a clearly defined constituency in electoral terms, and one which could only increase given the rapid ageing of European populations, governments paid increasing attention to its interests. Alan Milward’s project on taxation during his last period at the European University Institute in Florence might have derived from this perception. This constituency has also had an increasing

---

11. An analysis of how the adoption of the Euro postponed rather than accelerated economic reforms and led to a systemic institutional deterioration in some countries in the periphery of the Euro zone is J. FERNANDEZ-VILLAVERDE, L. GARICANO, T. SANTOS, *Political Credit Cycles: The Case of the Euro Zone*, in: *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper*, no. 18899; accessible at <http://www.nber.org/papers/w18899>.
12. A.S MILWARD, *Bad news for the downtrodden*, review article published in: *The Times Literary Supplement*, 25.09.1998, pp.4-5.

impact on the terms of public opinion, given its presence in the conservative mass-media and academia. Alan Milward argued that the euro would be bad news for the poor, the unemployed and all those referred to as “the downtrodden” as long as they remained in a minority in electoral terms. But what would they vote once they have become a large electoral constituency? Will their interests then be taken into account? The principal risk to the European Union is not xenophobic parties, but the lack of an effective response from the political institutions (the Union and its member states jointly) to the request for ‘security from the vagaries of economic change’ which is vociferously expressed by many on the streets of Europe.

‘The United Kingdom and the European Union’ shows precisely the alignment between a national population’s perception of reality and vision of the future and its government’s policy towards the EU. It is a very interesting piece indeed, and very relevant given the official British position on the EU as of today. There seems to be a general opinion that the relationship between the United Kingdom and its EU partners is a reluctant and at times hostile one. Is Britain an ‘awkward partner’ and if so, why is this? Alan S. Milward explains the attitude of both the British population and government towards European integration more in terms of precisely defined problems and strategies to solve those problems than due to any special idiosyncrasy which would make them ‘awkward’. Britain’s differences with other members of the European Union can be explained by particular circumstances and real political choices about Europe’s place in a globalised world. They are not related to cultural distinctions or insularity. The United Kingdom is a wholly European society, which holds views of policy and visions of the future which differ from other members of the European Union, but these differences should not be interpreted as making Britain less ‘European’ than other countries. Most of the arguments that Alan Milward presents in this paper remain valid today, apart from immigration and environmental policies which have become very sensitive domestic issues in Britain and elsewhere leaving no ground for a common policy EU-wide. Once again, the United Kingdom is not an ‘awkward partner’ on these issues either.

Prime Minister David Cameron’s promise to convene a referendum on Britain’s EU membership in 2017, provided he wins the 2015 general election, has generated much debate. In the midst of this confusion, however, I like to recall Alan Milward’s view of the United Kingdom as being a cautious but above all committed member of the Union. In his view, the European Community/Union was and remains essential to the United Kingdom’s foreign policy and overall position in the world, to the advancement of several policies which would be of little use if they were confined to the narrow frontiers of the United Kingdom itself, and above all to the stability, prosperity, and peace of the continent to which this country belongs. Not surprisingly, Mr. Cameron’s recognises, in his ‘EU speech at Bloomberg’ on 23 January 2013, that “the central story of the European Union” is “healing [the] wounds of our history” and preserving “the shift [...] from war to sustained peace” which happened in Europe “because of determined work over generations”.<sup>13</sup> Undoubtedly, the European Union

13. Full text available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/eu-speech-at-bloomberg>.

must change “both to deliver prosperity and to retain the support of its peoples”, as Cameron suggests, but no less than the United Kingdom and for the same purposes! Prime Minister Cameron should perhaps not forget that 17% of British 15 to 24 year-olds consider the EU as well suited as their national government for tackling the present economic crisis.<sup>14</sup> It is only through both channels of action, at the national and supranational levels, enhancing a double allegiance to the nation and the supranation, that the British population might successfully confront future challenges. Even if the UK Independence Party won the next general election and was able to implement its ‘Only outside the EU can we start to solve the problems our country faces’ programme, Britain could not escape future problems of security and lack of prosperity in continental Europe!<sup>15</sup>

The work by and on Alan Milward, a pioneer in European integration history, co-founder of the *Groupe de liaison des professeurs d'histoire contemporaine auprès de la Commission européenne* in 1982, forerunner of the *EU Liaison Committee*, and of the *JEIH* in 1995, is accompanied in this issue by the evidence that multi-disciplinary and multi-faceted research on the history of European integration is going from strength to strength. Sandro Guerrieri’s ‘Le Parlement communautaire en déplacement. La session de Rome de l’Assemblée commune de la CECA (5-9 novembre 1957)’ [‘The Community Parliament meeting far from home. The Rome session of the Common Assembly of the ECSC’], Silvio Labbate’s ‘Energy and transatlantic relations: The attempts to establish a European energy policy on the eve of the 1973 oil crisis’ and Veit Damm’s ‘Das „Europa der Arbeitnehmer“: Gewerkschaften, grenzübergreifende Arbeit und europäische Integration in den 1970er Jahren’ [‘A Europe for Workers. Trade Unions, Cross-border Labour and European Integration in the 1970s’] are proof thereof. The work of the three authors highlights fundamental long-term continuities in European integration.

Prof. Guerrieri’s article shows that the main problem of the representative assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC; CECA in the French acronym) in 1957 was not different from that of the European Parliament today, i.e., the lack of public recognition for its work and, in general, the lack of interest (in public opinion terms) in the Community institutions. The topics of parliamentary debate at the end of 1957 – social policy in general, including migration, and the coordination of national policies within some sort of common guidelines – could well be on the agenda of the post-May 2014 European Parliament. The reader will also see that confrontation with the Council in favour of more pro-integrationist policies is part of the DNA of the Community’s parliamentary institution. The six ministers attending the special parliamentary session in Rome, in November 1957, were reproached by the leader of the Christian-democrats in the Common Assembly, Emmanuel Sassen, for their lack of pro-integrationist spirit. Using the image of the indecisive Roman Senate while Saguntum was first long besieged by Carthage and then

14. 22% is the average score among EU citizens for the Standard Eurobarometer 80 question C3a ‘The most effective level at which to tackle the financial and economic crisis’.

15. Official site of UKIP, *What We Stand For*, <http://www.ukip.org/issues>.

destroyed without mercy, Sassen pronounced a solemn *Deliberante concilio perit Europa*, while the Council of ministers of the Community deliberates, Europe – meaning the Community – is in danger. Fifty-seven years later, we could also say that the action programme being carried out by the European Council does not seem to satisfactorily respond to the social challenges of the day while a new Hannibal's army, in the form of populism and xenophobia, is *ante portas*.

In his article, Dr. Labbate analyses the problems of establishing a common energy policy and the changes in transatlantic relations caused by the oil crisis of 1973. Based on European Community and US archives, this author observes the lack of any willingness towards effective co-operation among the Six in the energy sector, which in turn impeded any effective co-operation with the US government in that field. Despite the fact that integration in Western Europe started in the energy sector (coal), in the early 1970s the members of the European Communities remained reluctant to abdicate their sovereign prerogatives in a sector that was – and is – perceived to be strategic. As is the case today with the European Union of 28 member states, the EC member states relied on bilateral dealings, most of which were secret, rather than on a common approach and strategy, to guarantee their energy supply. Vladimir Putin's policy on Ukraine, for instance, would certainly be different if the European Union had a common energy policy, instead of as many different energy policies as member states, as in 1973, and if it had designed a long-term common approach vis-à-vis their worldwide energy suppliers.<sup>16</sup> The Federal Republic of Germany's myopia in this respect is paramount.

In his article, Dr. Damm also deals with a subject that has been of ongoing interest for European integration scholars, across disciplines, since the 1950s: the role of trade unions in generating a shared ground for collective action across the common market. This study opens up new avenues of research in this specific field, by focusing on the micro level of trade union action: the inter-regional councils. Historical research in the field of intra-EU trade union action has focused mainly on the macro level, and the attempts to co-ordinate national unions across industrial countries in order to generate a shared basic framework for labour relations and working conditions. At the macro level, the record has never been extensive. According to Damm, the new model of labour co-operation at the micro level spread rapidly in the 1970s, and since 1976 has been able to complement the work of the European Trade Union Council at ground level. The article shows that inter-regional councils played an important

16. The predominance of opaque bilateralism and the “fragmentation of the internal market” in this field was observed by the EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *On security of energy supply and international cooperation. The EU Energy Policy: Engaging with Partners beyond Our Borders*, COM (2011) 539 final, Brussels, 07.09.2011; available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0539:FIN:EN:PDF>. More recently, the EU has refused “to replace bilateral cooperation established by Member States”. *Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee Implementation of the Communication on Security of Energy Supply and International Cooperation and of the Energy Council Conclusions of November 2011*(COM (2013)638 final), Document 52013DC0638, 13.09.2013; available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52013DC0638>.

role as platforms for the exchange of views and thus increased reciprocal knowledge between national unions. Nevertheless, their impact at Community level remained limited – perhaps on the same scale as the common labour market or social regulations. The on-going economic and financial crisis has – at least temporarily – narrowed intra-state and inter-state trade union differences, which this article describes well for the 1970s. We are today witnessing to a rare moment of pan-European trade union marriage in an attempt to condition the exact profiles of the now dominant principle of ‘flexicurity’ and the incoming ‘participation society’ which the post-1945 welfare state is ‘slowly but surely evolving into’, as the Dutch government expressed it in King Willem-Alexander’s Speech from the Throne 2013.<sup>17</sup> How long would this holy alliance last in defence of a ‘social Europe’ which in fact means different things in each of the 28 member states of the Union?

In the immediate post-Second World War period trade unions managed to become a core party in the socio-political coalitions that gave birth to the successful democratic regimes of Western Europe. The reader should not forget that the golden age in Western Europe was the fruitful combination of constant growth rates, increasing levels of social cohesion and unprecedented levels of political stability which lasted for almost a quarter of a century; a situation in stark contrast to the present circumstances in most EU members. Today, when the frontier between employed and unemployed labour is blurring and labour activities with weak trade union affiliation are on the rise, the role to be played by trade unions is uncertain. The very nature of the coalition of interests currently ruling our nations and the European Union is equally uncertain. The only thing which we could say that remains fixed – ‘the central political issue of the whole story’ – is that without generalising prosperity such a coalition will not retain the support of the people and is thus doomed to failure. How long will the European Union ultimately endure its present record levels of popular distrust? We need to interiorise the possibility of failure, of backtracking, and of the break-up of the European Union in order to understand its genuine and not merely circumstantial value, together with the responsibility and sacrifices it requires at a collective and individual level. “What, what, what!”, cried Caius Marcius *Coriolanus* when the pestilence struck all trades in Rome. “I shall be lov’d when I am lack’d”.<sup>18</sup>

Fernando Guirao  
Ad personam Jean Monnet Professor of History  
Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona

---

17. ‘Speech from the Throne 2013’ to the members of the States General, The Hague, 17.09.2013; available at <http://www.koninklijkhuis.nl/globale-paginas/taalrubrieken/english/speeches/speeches-from-the-throne/speech-from-the-throne-2013/>. More on ‘flexisecurity’ in COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions towards common principles of flexicurity: more and better jobs through flexibility and security*, COM(2007) 359 final, Brussels, 27.06.2007.

18. W. SHAKESPEARE, *Coriolanus*, Act IV, Scene 1.

