



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Conference on

### **Arno J. Mayer – Critical Junctures in Modern History**

*10 and 11 May 2013*

*Forum d'art contemporain, Casino Luxembourg*

The Luxembourg Institute for European and International Studies (LIEIS) held a two-day conference on “Arno J. Mayer – Critical Junctures in Modern History” on 10 and 11 May 2013 in Luxembourg-City. About 25 scholars from the USA and across Europe – many of whom are friends and colleagues of the Luxembourg-born American historian Arno J. Mayer – joined him to discuss his work and explore key historical themes in light of his research.

The aim of the conference was to honour Arno J. Mayer’s intellectual legacy, to discuss historical phenomena and to analyse them from a variety of perspectives. The topics chosen for discussion were as follows: first of all, revolution and counterrevolution; second, the persistence of the Ancien Régime; third, the thirty-year war of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; fourth, the Final Solution; fifth, the Middle East today; sixth, the future of American power; finally, continuity and contingency in history with a special emphasis on Arno J. Mayer’s conceptual approach.

Based on a number of presentations, each session featured some responses from Arno J. Mayer and also some debate among the participants. This Executive Summary provides a short overview of the proceedings, which may also be published in a collection of essays.

### **I. Introductory Session**

The introductory session featured a number of welcome speeches and remarks, starting with the intervention of Luc Frieden, the then Finance Minister of Luxembourg. He began by saying that he was present at the conference for two reasons. First of all, to acknowledge the importance of history for the present and the future, especially learning lessons and preparing for new contingencies. Second, to express his gratitude to Arno J. Mayer and his family – an eminent historian who originally comes from Luxembourg and who always kept very strong links with his country of origin, including the language, which he still speaks fluently. He also said what an honour it was to get to know him and to share with him an appreciation of the deep ties between Luxembourg and the USA, especially at the level of academic exchange.

Claude Wey, Historian and Member of a research group on conflict resolution at the Luxembourg Ministry for Higher Education and Research, said that 73 years to the day, the Wehrmacht had started launching its Western offensive. The family of Arno J. Mayer, then a 14-year old boy from Luxembourg, decided initially to stay but some relatives were deported and died in a Nazi concentration camp, including Arno J. Mayer's grandfather. Some of the family managed eventually to flee via France, Algeria, Morocco and Portugal to New York where they settled.

Arno went to university in the USA, including the New School for Social Research, before teaching at Harvard and at Princeton where he served for over 35 years as a Professor of History. From 1959 to the present day, he has published a number of seminal books and many important articles, making him one of the outstanding historians of his generation. A conference on Arno J. Mayer and his work needs no justification. In light of his biography and books such as *Why Did the Heavens Not Darken?*, Arno J. Mayer does not only represent the academic left in the USA but he also stands for being one of the greatest European influences on American intellectual life.

In his response, Arno J. Mayer thanked the speakers and remarked that this felt like the second funeral rite in his life – the first one was organised at Princeton on the occasion of his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday! Since everyone is calling him 'Arno J. Mayer', he recounted a brief story from his early days in the USA where nobody really knew the name 'Arno' and so decided to call him by his middle name 'Joseph'. However, there were so many kids called 'Jo' in America that Arno insisted on being called 'Arno J.' – a story that has stayed with him all his life.

The next speaker to take the floor was Alain Meyer, a long-standing family friend of Arno J. Mayer's. He said that he sees him as a native Luxembourger who still holds a prestigious position as both a professor and as an unconventional thinker. It was Arno J. Mayer's outstanding personality that has always impressed him. He is rightly considered by many to be an archetypal intellectual: a meticulous scholar who ignores taboos and overturns conventional ideas, not in order to shock the establishment but to stimulate reflection. Arno J. Mayer is without any doubt one of the most influential historians and thinkers both in the US and in Europe. This conference will again demonstrate his profound influence in various fields of historical research and contemporary debate.

## **II. Revolution and Counterrevolution**

This session featured three presentations that were followed by comments from the participants, responses from the presenters and also a reply by Arno J. Mayer.

### 1. Presentations

Corey Robin whose presentation was entitled 'How to Think and not to Think about Counterrevolution', took the floor first. He started by saying that in political theory, the category of counterrevolution is barely mentioned in most discussions despite the work of figures as varied as Nietzsche or Carl Schmitt. There is Hannah Arendt on revolution, but we have no counterpart on counterrevolution. In terms of political theory, three features of counterrevolution can be distinguished. First, counterrevolution defends regimes of rule and

command, i.e. regimes in which a socially defined superior is in a position to extract obedience from a socially defined inferior. From Burke onwards what we see is that counterrevolutionaries are overwhelmingly concerned about maintaining these regimes of rule and obedience not only at the public level but also – and perhaps more importantly – at the private level: the work place, the factory, the plantation, the field, the family - where this kind of rule is experienced most acutely and where the challenges to that rule are most directly and personally felt.

The second feature is that even though counterrevolutionaries defend old regimes, one often finds a pattern whereby they loathe the more orthodox defenders of the old regime. The counterrevolutionary comes to political prominence often with the awareness that the old regime is either gone or under severe threat, and his first instinct is always to blame the custodians of the old regime for having brought the catastrophe upon themselves. For example, Joseph de Maistre famously condemned the Church and the nobility for their weakness and lack of resolve.

Third, counterrevolutionaries learn from the revolution. They understand that the old regime is gone and that it cannot simply be brought back in its prior form. Moreover, they learn from the revolutionaries more than from their predecessors, e.g. more from the Jacobins than the Church or the nobility. The learning of the counterrevolutionaries from the revolution is often unconscious: by engaging day after day with the arguments of the revolution the counterrevolutionaries slowly start incorporating many of the categories that they would have previously rejected.

The second presentation was by Philip Nord who spoke about ‘Counterrevolution in Europe’, a subject that is central to Arno J. Mayer’s work – especially the 1967 book *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking: Containment and Counterrevolution at Versailles, 1918–1919* and another publication entitled *Dynamics of Counterrevolution in Europe, 1870–1956: An Analytic Framework*. Unlike François Furet (a good friend of Arno) who argued that revolution unfolds according to an inner logic, Arno J. Mayer contends that revolution itself is unconceivable without the counterrevolution. These two are locked in some kind of struggle or dialectic, each one defining the other.

Interestingly, it is not so much the institutions of the old regime as their defenders, who represent or bear the principle of counterrevolution: soldiers, noble men, bureaucrats and Churchmen. The last group is significant for three reasons. First, it is one of Arno’s more original contributions to bring religion into the centre of the discussion, which was uncommon at his time of writing – making him something of a pioneer. Second, it is religion that enabled the counterrevolution to mobilise a mass base, to move beyond elites and to create a large movement, bringing what he calls the anti-revolution (peasants by and large) into a counterrevolutionary coalition. Third, the centrality of religion brings into focus the distinctive persecutory character of the counterrevolution, targeting either Protestants at the time of the French Revolution or Jews at the time of the Bolshevik revolution. Violence in times of revolutions is therefore the outcome not only of revolutionaries but also of a growing escalation between the revolution and the counterrevolution.

P. Nord made three more points. First, counterrevolution reshapes international conventions, organisations or alliances in order to contain revolution. This happened with the 1815 Congress of Vienna, the 1919 Versailles Treaty (imposing a *cordon sanitaire*) and

revolutionary Russia in the interwar period. Second, counterrevolution will precipitate war.

There is another form of counterrevolution. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a keen new player entered the political drama: the low-middle class, which is a swing group that may start up on the left but then ends up on the right. It will fuel a new kind of politics – populist, nationalist, fascist. This is an instance where the low-middle class gets the upper hand and is one of the central themes of Arno J. Mayer's book *Why Did the Heavens Not Darken?* As with elite-dominated counterrevolution, this form mixes terror and war. But in this case war is not just a strategy but also – and above all – an inner necessity. War is not so much about containment but more about extermination. Religion is present here as well but more as metaphor than as a set of institutions or a set of beliefs. It is in this spirit that Arno J. Mayer talks about Operation Barbarossa as a 'crusade'. So there is more than one form of counterrevolution in Arno J. Mayer's work.

Two conclusions emerged from this presentation: first, Arno J. Mayer is a great conceptual historian, as illustrated by his profound understanding of two centuries of European history – from the French Revolution to the 1940s. Second, there may be newer forms of counterrevolution: the old regimes are gone, but that does not mean that counterrevolution has disappeared from the historical theme in this particular moment.

The third presentation was by Matt Perry, on 'The Mutinies in the French Navy at the End of the First World War'. His aim was, first of all, to connect Arno J. Mayer's macro-analysis to the micro-analysis involved in the case of the mutineers in the Black Sea in 1919. Perhaps there is a connection between the French left and the Russian Revolution, which in turn is linked to French naval politics in the late 1930s and then during the Vichy regime. Second, Perry develops the idea that revolutionary ideology has a foundational character, which is about a new start. Within the French navy there was an attempt to recast an image and to reorganise the historical service to greater networking: this strategy aimed at restoring the fortunes of the French navy as a consequence, in part, of the naval mutiny. Third, there is a breakdown of legitimate authority in the period after the October Revolution, plunging the French navy into its deepest crisis. Fourth, revolution unleashes fear and resistance, but also fuels a counterrevolution and its ideology. Among the Vichy collaborators, we read precisely the kind of arguments that Arno J. Mayer identifies as the writings of counterrevolutionaries. To conclude, Arno J. Mayer's theory works at the macro as well as at micro level.

## 2. Comments and questions

The discussion on revolution and counterrevolution that followed the three presentations revolved around a number of themes. Charles Maier reported that in a recent seminar the debate focused on whether the left or the right was in some sense the more fundamental force in history and, if so, in which sense. If counterrevolution is a defence of the intimate spheres against hierarchy, then what is counter- and what is revolutionary? Moreover, since in a sense the counterrevolutionary mentality is always implicit, should we assign primacy in this terminology? If so, then what is the innovation in this terminology applied to the left and the right? What about the world outside Europe? To what extent is the Iranian Revolution both a revolution and a counterrevolution? Outside Europe these categories scarcely apply, or are scarcely distinguishable.

In his intervention, Larry Siedentop said that he was entirely in favour of using concepts to try

to make sense of historical change, but there is a danger of reifying these terms. A term that is introduced suddenly takes a life of its own, and it becomes the cause of what it was initially meant to explain. This can happen with a notion like counterrevolution. If you look at reactions to the French Revolution and to some of its major thinkers you find several different levels of concerns and the balance for these thinkers between these levels is quite different. Let us take Vico and Burke. Religious concerns are the most important, as revolution is above all a moral challenge or a moral threat. In the case of Burke, it's almost a concern about what's happening to political discourse. In political language, there is a kind of reaction of a Common law tradition against Roman law, certainly against the theory of natural rights, with a reference to liberalism and gradual progressive reforms.

In the case of Vico the concern is about sciences or reductionism, inspired by 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century physicians, and it is not only a political concern but also about individuals in society. These are quite different levels, both under the term of counterrevolution, which is why it's crucial to be careful about reifying historicised concepts. L. Siedentop concluded his intervention by saying that the impact of the counterrevolution on liberal thought was fundamental and in many ways encouraged the thinking about change. It introduced the comparative dimension in the liberal tradition and highlighted the illiberal aspects of liberal democracy.

Hans-Heinrich Nolte recalled that, by definition, counterrevolution is a coalition because revolutionaries come first and counterrevolutionaries then gather against them. In the Russian case we have many different people in the counterrevolution: we have imperialists, nationalists, socialists and various groups of social revolutionaries. At least in the Russian case, many of them did not want any dialogue. That is one of the reasons why anti-Semitism was so virulent, but it had not primarily to do with Russia itself.

In his remark, Sebastian Budgen raised a question about the Paris Commune in counterrevolution. Everybody knows that the Paris Commune plays a key role in the revolutionary tradition that was reactivated particularly by the Bolsheviks, particularly Lenin. There is a famous anecdote about Lenin dancing in the snow because the Soviet regime lasted a day longer than the Paris Commune, and the Paris Commune was this dramatic event which played a major role in the collective consciousness of the Bolsheviks. To what extent is the Paris Commune in theory understood by the counterrevolution? Successful or unsuccessful? What part does the Paris Commune play in the practice of the counterrevolution (i.e. the French navy episode)? To what extent do counterrevolutionaries learn from previous experiences?

### 3. Responses

In response to these comments and questions, P. Nord said that the starting point is to have the faith, which is what a revolution is – universalist, secular and emancipatory, especially the French and the Russian Revolution. If it did not work out that way, it is because we have to understand the dialectic between revolution and counterrevolution which brings out the terror in one case and Stalinism in the other. For the 1950s and 1960s it was an easy story: the Third World revolution was emancipatory, the counterrevolutionary force was the US. What you do in the era of the Iranian Revolution is a bit more complicated but it can perhaps be described as a national revolution or religious counter-reformation.

In his response, C. Robin suggested that there is a notion that the revolution is internationalist and the counterrevolution is nationalist, but that is not necessarily the case and we should be careful about that. Burke undergoes a kind of odyssey in the course of his opposition to the French Revolution and by the end of his career he is calling for a pan-Europe to resist the French Revolution and for everybody to think of themselves as European, which is really quite dramatic. So there is an internationalism on the part of counterrevolution, which is very important and we should not get trapped in the dichotomy. On the question about enlightenment and religion, the debate can go both ways: either in the direction of those who defended slavery based on their secular Enlightenment outlook or those who were Christian and argued for its abolition. In this sense a revolution is not necessarily progressive, just as counterrevolution need not be reactionary.

In conclusion to this session, Arno J. Mayer remarked that the singularity of the French Revolution is that it was the first one and one cannot understand the evolution of the Russian Revolution without considering this. For Lenin, Trotsky and all the actors of the Russian Revolution, the paradigm that counted was the French Revolution, and they wanted to stop the counterrevolution forces.

The question of how to transpose categories to other historical periods is very important. There was a revolution in Hungary in 1956, and few in the USA questioned the fact that it was a revolution. Academics were immediately black-listed for raising this question. So the concept of revolution changes over time, but what is astonishing is that in the last two years the Pentagon and the White House did not know what to do with the Arab Spring. The word 'revolution' is one that you did not hear very much in this context since it is not much appreciated in the US. As we know, Spring always finishes early. The vocabulary is one that now comes from Europe, and they have appropriate terms to describe it.

One thing that is annoying is that coming to terms in some ways, in particular as Europeans, with what is happening in Syria and the Middle East, is to talk about reformation and counter-reformation instead of revolution. Such implicit references to Calvin and Luther do not make much sense. The Middle East is a juxtaposition between Sunni and Shiite with divides among them too. In the European experience, religious conflict was ultimately settled with the Westphalian Treaty, especially central sovereignty, borders and self-determination. Now looking at the Middle East, borders are not clearly defined. It is not without significance that there is a state in the Middle East recognised as such and it is the first with no clear borders, Israel, probably the first in history.

### **III. The Persistence of the Ancien Régime**

This session built on the previous one and focused on the persistence of the *ancien régime*. It featured four presentations that were followed by comments, responses and a conclusion by Arno J. Mayer.

#### 1. Presentations

The first presentation was by Adrian Lyttelton and concerned 'nation-state and old regime'. He argued that for a long time aristocratic elites were a key element in social cohesion as they upheld traditions of honour, loyalty and service. Of course there was a great deal of

oppression and exploitation but relations between the aristocracy and the rest of the populations were characterised by a measure of reciprocal help and assistance. Later on, new educational qualifications and the aggressiveness of new nationalism may have served elite interests but it also extended to the wider sections of the populations and undermined the old social contract.

Norbert Franz delivered the second presentation which was about state-building in the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with a special focus on constitutions and state functions. He argued that historical breaks have been over-emphasized while continuities have been neglected, not least because events and rapid changes attract more attention. In relation to constitutional development and state sovereignty, he said that constitutions posit the ground rules according to which political societies function. At the same time, those in power also define the ‘rules of the game’. From the time of the French Revolution onwards, there was a growing dualism of monarchs and estates. Gradually, Europe saw a shift from monarchic to popular sovereignty, which accelerated following the events of the 1830s and 1840s. The dualism of monarchy and estate survived, but as popular sovereignty became more important parliamentary rule constituted the second pole along with the monarchs. So there were more continuities than abrupt changes between the *ancien régime* and the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with certain developments such as state building becoming more intense. The estates and the parliaments that emerged from these processes co-existed with the ruler who was not always a monarch.

The third presentation was by C. Robin and was entitled “How the Right Turned the Market into an Aristocratic Device”. His argument was that capitalism as an ideology seems opposed to aristocracy: privilege vs. commerce; inheritance vs. accumulation, etc. However, there is a certain line of ideas that links the Austrian school of economics to the political right in the USA. Indeed, the two Austrian economists Friedrich von Hayek and Ludwig von Mises came from the same *fin de siècle* Vienna and wanted to build a new aristocracy. Likewise, the other influential Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter viewed the entrepreneur as a hero who imposes his will on the populace. So market capitalism is entirely compatible with a dynamic, moneyed aristocracy – the rule of the few over the many. Indeed, for Hayek, the market economy is the ultimate realm of morality because it constitutes the one area where sacrifice reigns supreme. The Chicago School in the USA turned the idea of free market from Smith and Ricardo’s emancipatory device into a revolutionary mechanism to eliminate the social-democratic settlement of the post-Second World War era. In this sense, the capitalist market depends on, and promotes, a new aristocracy.

Gerhard M. Ambrosi gave the fourth and final presentation, on “The Lower Middle Class as a Contemporary Problem”, in which he made three points. First of all, both Marxists and leftists despise the *petite bourgeoisie* because it lacks class consciousness. Second, the lower middle class was never in favour of either the revolution or the counterrevolution. It did not fit neatly into any of these categories. Third, there were dangers emanating from this class in the face of economic and social dislocation in the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution, political upheaval and wars. There is a strong contemporary dimension, with the economic and financial crises and the squeezed middle class that is suffering a real income loss and struggles to make ends meet.

## 2. Comments and questions

Christopher Coker began his remarks by wondering how revolutionary a revolution is. In many ways, the independence of the USA from Britain was more revolutionary than the French Revolution – whether in terms of emigration or land acquisition. By comparison, Cromwell’s Revolution displaced the aristocracy from power, but only briefly. Second, on reactionary modernism in Germany, it was a case of feudal constitutionalism, with an emperor who wanted the army on two and perhaps even three occasions to stage a coup d’état against the parliament. Third, on the nature of modernity, it was the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset who said that the English always got to modernity first. To be modern is the ability to reinvent yourself or to revalue the values, as Nietzsche put it. It is about adaptability and versatility, which are not features we commonly associate with the old regime.

C. Maier suggested that in one sense, Nietzsche was counterrevolutionary and David Friedrich Strauss a modernist. There is always a quest for aristocratic values and virtues, e.g. academic competition or sport. Likewise, sacrifice and wagers are a central part of society, e.g. the motto ‘win big and lose big’. Modernity is also marked by decisionism: *nous nous engageons et après on voit* - a stance that seems to apply to people as diverse as Schumpeter and Carl Schmitt. So it is far from clear whether a dispute over rival meanings of modernity and modernism makes much sense.

In his remarks, Michel Vovelle argued that on the question of legacy vs. rupture, there is no fundamental element such as the new secular divide (*le partage laïc*). Here one can argue about the preamble of the US constitution and the French declaration of human rights and the citizens. Indeed, the separation of state and church was absolutely central to the French Revolution. This secular divide did not happen overnight and was not like the introduction of the metric system. Faced with the numerous and powerful forces of resistance, these were long struggles that lasted until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Now the system that emerged from the French Revolution requires critical inquiry, including a questioning of fundamental principles such as the passion for liberty and the passion for equality, and now a third passion – that of religious fervour. He concluded his short intervention with two quotes on the legacy of aristocratic values. First of all, “we are all has-beens”. Second, “kings will return, they will be but phantoms”.

H. H. Nolte spoke of the persistence of models, for example in the German bourgeoisie, the persistence of the aristocracy such as the Krupp dynasty. S. Budgen put a question to C. Robin: is the persistence of certain homologous structures a problem? Is not the persistence of market fundamentalism a function of ideology? In his response, C. Robin said that many of Hayek’s disciples could be found not only among influential academic circles but also the political and economic elites. There was also Hayek’s involvement in the Pinochet regime, which was extensive at the personal level and extended to the constitution. After the putsch, the new Chilean constitution was called Constitution of Liberty, named after Hayek’s book.

For his part, L. Siedentop spoke about aristocratic values and revaluation. Among figures such as Constant, Tocqueville and other liberal thinkers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the emphasis was on equality before the law and free associations without succumbing to state centralism. Second, the notion of ‘natural aristocracy’ (birth, old families, etc.) should not be equated with all forms of aristocracy, including the Aristotelian notion of merit and talent (knowledge,



ability, etc.). By the way, Hayek's book is very Tocquevillian in some respects, e.g. the question of centralised vs. decentralised rationality.

Fabrice Montebello argued that we are confronted with a phenomenon of ambivalence: various forms of counterrevolution and mass mobilisation, including religious ties. For example, it is necessary to note the central role of the Protestants in the French Revolution and that of the Jews in the Russian Revolution beyond the contribution acknowledged by the actors themselves. So there are at least two types of revolution: first, the idea of a 'socialist Jesus' and, second, Communist parties in Catholic countries such as France and Italy, which intended to create counter-societies.. On the French reactionary figure Charles Maurras, it could be said that "he hates primitive Christianity, the worldview of the gospels, which for him is a Jewish conception".

Margareta Mommsen contended that Jewish religion played absolutely no role in the Russian Revolution; there were many Jews but that is not the same thing. For many reasons, Orthodox Christianity could not mobilise the masses. Today Vladimir Putin would like to use the Church for shoring up his popular support but it does not work.

### 3. Responses

C. Robin spoke of Luther's priesthood of all believers. Nietzsche views religion as the problem because he attacks egalitarianism: socialism has taken over from Christianity, the slave religion. Some revolutionaries want to rely on religion but there are many agnostics and atheists, so religion is neither the distinctive mark of revolutions nor is it always present in counterrevolutionary movements. Finally, Hayek talks about dispersed knowledge but this is not a democratic conception of knowledge. Only the 'few' will be able to exercise freedom, and we just cannot tell in advance who it will be.

In conclusion, A.J. Mayer – in relation to the role of Jews in the Russian Revolution, quoted from the sermon of the Chief Rabbi of Luxembourg in 1936. Entitled 'the new anti-Semitism', the sermon featured the following: "when a Jew converts to Communism, it doesn't necessarily mean that he becomes a Communist". The reason is that no Jew can be communist because one can only serve one God. On religion and secularism, he said that in 1956, the USA changed the motto on the dollar notes from *e pluribus unum* to *In God We Trust*. God has also been brought back into the pledge of allegiance. Ultimately all sides instrumentalise religion for their own political reasons. A. J. Mayer concluded with the following: "religion is a Pandora's Box and it's just not my gig".

## **IV. The 30 Years War of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

The next session turned to the '30 years war of the 20<sup>th</sup> century' and featured three presentations, followed by comments, questions and some responses at the end.

### 1. Presentations

The first speaker was C. Coker who argued that we have to distinguish between three different 'twentieth centuries'. First of all, the twentieth century that was in continuation with

the nineteenth century. Second, the twentieth century as a unique century, creating a new society and a new man. Third, the Final Solution and the atomic bomb, which is the twentieth century breaking with itself, abolishing time and history. The writer Milan Kundera once wrote that the nineteenth-century novel is all about subjectivity, whereas the twentieth-century novel shifts the focus to people formed by history.

In the ‘first twentieth century’, technological innovation was in continuity with the nineteenth century, including military tools. In Hegel’s words, there were ‘ethically healthy nations’. July 1944 marked the end of the German *ancien régime*. During the ‘second twentieth century’, war was revolutionary and seen as a crusade. The medium was either a ‘new society’ (USSR) or war (USA) – the promise of perpetual peace after the end of all wars. The ‘third twentieth century’ was discontinuous with itself because there won’t be a twenty-first century’ as the twentieth century was blowing itself up, which was true for the Final Solution and the atomic bomb. The failure of each of these projects makes war possible in the twenty-first century. The “duality of choice is the singularity of existence”: stay or leave, e.g. in Afghanistan. The twenty-first century war could be the religious wars opposing Sunni to Shia. In terms of war and technology, we are in a moral no man’s land, as drones and robots change the nature of warfare fundamentally.

In his presentation entitled “Ordering Europe: Shaping the Continent in the Period 1900-1940”, Michael Wintle began by saying that the system of ordering Europe such as the Congress of Vienna collapsed in 1914. Thereafter a new system emerged, that of European integration, but how so? First of all, there was a profound transition and discontinuity between 1900 and 1940. After 1918, Europe suffered from a cultural crisis and a crisis of paradigms. The 1919 Treaty of Versailles made the League of Nations possible, including the break-up of four empires (Russian, Austro-Hungarian, German and Ottoman) and the rise of ideologically based systems such as fascism, nation-socialism or communism.

C. Maier gave a presentation with the title “The 30 Years War of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Uses and Limits of the Analogy”. Faced with the reality of multiple states, war and revolution are inextricably intertwined. Warfare certainly changed fundamentally between the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> century, not simply in terms of technology but also in terms of the primacy of defence vis-à-vis the primacy of attack. Here 1917 was key. Amid the general crisis, there was a more specific crisis of feudal extraction, which has economic as well as other dimensions. When everything is said to be in crisis, then this ignores a proper taxonomy of crisis. As somebody once remarked, “Whenever I hear the word crisis, I reach for my gun”. One mark of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was that the origin of world wars could be traced to particular areas of conflict (e.g. the Balkans) that nevertheless had global repercussions. There were also important continuities, more so than ruptures. For example, the use of gas in the two world wars on all sides, including in the US army in which Arno J. Mayer later served.

## 2. Comments and questions

In his short intervention, Lothar Rühl argued that the 1919 Versailles system was inherently unstable. First of all, there was a presumption against all experience and all realities (balance of power and balance of economic forces). Second, Soviet Russia was excluded from the post-1919 system and ignored by the West, leading to a Soviet-German entente. In short, a system created against the two most important continental powers could never work. Third, the promises to the Tsarist emperor in 1915-16 by France and Britain did not materialise

because of the Russian Revolution (with significant implications for Armenia and Turkey too). In this manner, the West was saved from Soviet domination of the eastern Mediterranean. Lloyd George is reported to have said to Woodrow Wilson that it was to be expected that small countries, which were given independence, would have different needs compared with the great powers. So the 1919 system marked a return to the 19<sup>th</sup> century that could not create peace in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### 3. Responses

A. J. Mayer contended that L. Rühl's account is to take a geopolitical analysis that is even pre-Clausewitzian. One cannot come to grips with 1919 unless one understands the changes within Germany and elsewhere, especially the right-wing turn after the First World War and the move away from the old geopolitics. In terms of the contemporary analogy, it's like saying that Israel takes action against Syria (and its support for Hezbollah) because they did not get the green light from Washington DC about bombing Iran.

C. Maier concluded this session by saying that historians are retrospective trend-spotters! In the end, any periodisation is arbitrary because the question is about what is latent and what is a trend. The notion of crisis is over-used, and its peculiarity is that corrective action can make things worse, not better.

## **V. The Final Solution**

This session focused on the Final Solution and featured two presentations, which were followed by a number of shorter interventions, a debate and some concluding thoughts.

### 1. Presentations

In his presentation, Laurent Moysé argued that Arno Mayer's functionalist view has the advantage of putting the Holocaust in the context of the Nazi regime as a whole. At the same time, the largely contingent factors may not quite add up. Arno J. Mayer claims that the racial laws were opportunist and that the Nazi jumped on the bandwagon, but this is not structural enough an analysis. It is true that military problems such as 1941 campaigns accelerated the move towards the Final Solution. Arno J. Mayer is also right to point out how inconsistent and non-linear Nazi policy against Jews was. But the exclusion of the Jews was one of Hitler's obsession since 1919. Arno Mayer mainly focusses on the means – which were clearly subject to improvisation, depending on the internal and external evolution of the Nazi regime – and devotes little thought to the ends of the Nazi policy.

H.-H. Nolte said that Arno J. Mayer's book on the Holocaust was written before the Russian archives opened following the end of the USSR. From today's vantage point, we know that local and regional factors were key in the timing of the Final Solution. At some point, the Nazis decided that death through famine would not be fast enough. The same was true for ghettos. This, coupled with military problems (especially in the Russian campaign) explains in large part the way the Final Solution unfolded. But Nazi leaders did not grasp the

significance of the Stalingrad defeat. They still believed that they would win the war, linking the war of annihilation to the Final Solution (*Vernichtungskrieg und Endlösung*).

## 2. Comments and questions

According to M. Vovelle, the problem of the Final Solution is not something known by contemporaries. There was a general fear of the Gestapo. In his own case, he reported that four neighbours had been deported to camps and never returned. He is not pleading ignorance but there was very little knowledge about events. The truth only emerged much later. Today people speak of a culture of silence, but the Holocaust cannot be dissociated from resistance. At Princeton in 1977, all the terror and all the horrors came to light. Our memory is partly re-constructed but not less real.

C. Maier remarked that Arno J. Mayer put in place a great framework of the European civil war, but the Holocaust is surely more specific. Arno J. Mayer's book does that, perhaps more so on a second reading. However, does not the book risk subsuming the 'Jewish question' under other, broader trends? Similarly, C. Coker argued that genocide is as old as humanity but it does have a specific character. He said that he did not agree with Adorno and Horkheimer's negative *Dialectics of Enlightenment* or Gray's dismissal of the Enlightenment as proto-genocidal. Rather, liberty, equality and fraternity are principles that inform all modern genocides up to Cambodia. For example, the Rwandan genocide was committed in the name of liberty. The quest for equality and a classless society inspired the genocide of various communist regimes. Finally, the brotherhood of one's fellow countrymen led to many genocidal campaigns. Kant himself argued in the Second Critique that Jews are no universalists because people cannot become Jewish, and Jewish exceptionalism rules out universalism. Today, evolutionary biology tells us that we are hard-wired to focus on in-group identity and cooperation, not on the out-group.

H. Mommsen wondered about the impact of Arno J. Mayer's book. He tried to avoid the isolation of the Holocaust from the rest of the Nazi regime, which was a key intervention in the debate. The problem is that this leads to an excessive focus on perpetrators, which is legitimate, but risks becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy and neglects historicity. Recent research sheds more light on the escalation of terror and violence that were perpetrated against the Jews – a historical process that was entirely contingent and not pre-determined in any way.

For his part, András Balogh said that there were three options for Jews in Europe: either full assimilation or being part of a multicultural society or emigration. Jews in Hungary were among the most assimilated Jews in Central Europe, with inter-marriage very common indeed. But when anti-Semitism struck, this model broke down almost immediately. The founder of Zionism came from Budapest, but most Jews in Hungary wanted to be Hungarian.

C. Maier contended that the myth of golden assimilation in countries as diverse as Hungary and Germany continues to be very influential but needs to be challenged. The historical reality is much more complex and inter-group living is far more multi-layered. Moreover, the notion of Shoa seems to suggest that this is largely a Jewish problem or Jewish history when it clearly is not.

### 3. Responses

In his response to the various arguments, A.J. Mayer began by clarifying that he wrote the book as a historian, not a specialist of the Holocaust. He appreciated L. Moysé's intervention but would describe Moysé's position as 'ideological determinism'. By contrast, functionalism is obviously different but he would not term his own approach as purely functionalist – unlike H.-H. Nolte. Once the Russian archives opened up, we would always know more about the 'Judeocide' but Arno J. Mayer confessed that he had not kept up with the burgeoning literature on the subject. Overall, it seems to him that too little critical work has been done on what happened in Eastern Europe (killings by Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Poles – before the Nazis got to the USSR). Anti-Judaism and Judeophobia are not the same as anti-Semitism. Eichmann was perhaps not as central as some suggested. To say that there was some 'killing instinct' at work among the Wehrmacht is excessive.

In terms of his own personal account, there remains a scar from the student guild in relation to German citizens of Jewish faith. Arno J. Mayer's own cousin refused to leave, having served in the German army during World War one and having earned an award.

## **VI. The Middle East Today**

The next session turned to the question of the Middle East today in light of Arno J. Mayer's historical research. There were two presentations, followed by a discussion and some concluding reflections from Arno J. Mayer.

### 1. Presentations

The first presentation was by M. Vovelle who spoke about various notions and terms. First of all, the notion of 'revolution' applied to the Arab uprisings of 2011-12. The objective of the first part of this presentation was to compare notions of revolution in the light of contemporary events. For some time it seemed as if the age of revolution from 1789 to 1989 had passed (François Furet). The 1979 Iranian revolution was an outlier in an otherwise non-revolutionary era. However, now we are witnessing the reawakening of revolution. Examples include the Arab Spring and some precedents (e.g. 1840, 1989, 2011) and the more general moral crisis linked to corruption, which has triggered a mass mobilisation (including women) and urban uprisings using social networks. But Spring always ends badly, so are we to expect an Arab Winter?

Second, on revolutionary passion, egalitarianism and the role of religion (Islam), he pointed to the limits of Furet's analytical framework. For instance, the time of prophets and the importance of salvation have given way to metamorphosis instead of revolutions. Even Jean-Luc Mélenchon's citizens' revolution is different from the revolutionary age. Likewise, the way of hope and revolution gives way to reform – whether more marginal or more fundamental. Others like Alain Badiou speak of riots and the awakening of History (demonstrators and rebels rather than revolutionaries). Linked to this is the theme of resistance. Overall, the impact of the Arab Spring on France was rather weak. There was some limited sense of compassion, responsibility and resignation, but little if anything has really changed.

In his presentation, Mario Hirsch remarked that the Middle East is part of Arno J. Mayer's personal history and his Jewishness. Even though violence is an objective historical necessity, it is also the case the Old Testament prioritises peace over conflict. As it says in the Book of Isaiah, God enjoins his people to follow his command and "they shall turn their swords into ploughshares". Arno J. Mayer's 2008 book on the Middle East is still very relevant and significant, for a number of reasons. First of all, on the question of the Palestinian refugees, he addresses the paradox of 'a land without a people for a people without a land'. The refugees are the original sin of the creation of the state of Israel that continues to blight its existence. As Mayer shows, this was by no means inevitable, notably discussions within the Zionist movement that was split on the Arab question. Second, maintaining such a strong, vast army deprives Israeli society of vital social services, against which there were demonstrations last year. Third, on racism and discrimination, Arno J. Mayer – as a Jew – cannot possibly be attacked for anti-Semitism but he is accused of providing arguments for the enemy and of being a self-hating Jew. All of which is outrageous and is a case of playing the man, not the ball.

## 2. Comments and questions

In his intervention, Sam Cherribi reported an interesting episode from the 1940s: when Pétain asked the King of Morocco Mohammed V to send the Jews to the concentration camp, the King said that there were no Jews in Morocco but only citizens. In other words, there was resistance to the Nazis and to anti-Semitism in the Arab world, and the Israeli-Palestine conflict tends to overshadow this fact. On the Arab Spring, there are a number of aspects worth highlighting. First of all, at the beginning there were no Islamic slogans, no anti-Israel slogans, and no anti-American slogans. But later on, many uprisings turned out to be a victory of political Islam and even Islamism. In this sense, it has been a very successful counterrevolution. Second, of course political Islam was always there, e.g. the Muslim Brotherhood had been working on the ground for decades. But the sequence was nevertheless interesting, as it reveals that political Islam was not the initiator but rather a more co-opting force. Third, is political Islam a danger? The French scholar Olivier Roy argues that we live in post-Islamic societies and that Islamists will mutate into conservative parties, e.g. the AKP in Turkey. But there are examples of fatwas and the application of sharia law as well as the rise of overtly Islamist movements that want to abolish any sense of popular sovereignty, individual freedoms and personal rights.

L. Rühl argued that from the point of view of Western governments, Arab dictatorships were factors of stability in relation to Israel's security and the reliability of the Suez Canal. Western arms' delivery to Egypt has to be seen in this light. It was also the case that the Egyptian army leadership viewed Arafat as a threat to stability. For its part, Israel (notably the former defence minister Ehud Barak) maintained for a long time that Germany could deliver submarines to Egypt but that Israel would always be able to destroy them anyway. So the Egypt uprising changes all this, because security is at stake: the protesters do not want peace with Israel. In response, what is needed is an even-handed policy towards both Israel and Egypt. Likewise, Syria under Hafez al Assad was more predictable than under Bashar al Assad. Amid growing uncertainty changes, Israel needs the US even more as an external stabiliser in an increasingly unstable world.

This was followed by a series of very short remarks. First, C. Maier commented on the optimism of S. Cherribi vs. the realpolitik of L. Rühl. This marked contrast brings us back to Arno J. Mayer's thoughts on the inextricability of war, violence and revolution. There is a thousand-mile arc of instability from Mali via Egypt to Syria, and it is not radicalisation through revolution but radicalisation before revolution that has caused this. Second, M. Mommsen referred to the term 'indignation', which is common to many revolutions and protest waves and was the main notion in the Russian demonstrations of 2011-12. But there has been no follow-up because of the systematic repression by Putin's regime. Third, Victor Weitzel noted that compared with 1968, the current protests do not lead to political changes. There do not seem to be the same, effective channels of transmission for societal change to take root. Fourth, A. Clesse asked what exactly does the West want in relation to the so-called Arab Spring? Is it democracy or barbarism? Western powers engage in the brutal killing of Saddam Hussein and Col. Gaddafi, but claim to do so in the name of freedom and democracy. At the same time, nobody among the ruling elites in the West or Israel is genuinely committed to the peace process.

In response to some of these comments, C. Maier retorted that one can be very critical of US policy (in Iraq, Afghanistan, etc.) but the USA is not to blame for it all. There are forces beyond US control. There is no successful democratic left (Blair, Clinton), and we are paying for their failure.

At this juncture A. J. Mayer interjected several questions: who is 'we'? Academics? Americans? If so, which Americans? He said that this session is supposed to be about the Middle East today, uprisings that may turn into revolutions. Looking back a few decades, it is interesting to note that Nasser was a nationalist who tried to bring about a third way between the super-powers. He was even called a fascist. We helped create a vacuum by eliminating nationalism, and the rise of Islamism is in large part a consequence of just that. The 'masses' is a notion that historians have long stopped using. The British historian Richard Cobb distinguished rather aptly the 'faceless masses' from the 'crowd of persons'. In some sense this may apply to educated urban crowd vs. uneducated rural population, which is all but invisible and inaudible. One key aspect that has so far not been mentioned is the universalisation or globalisation of the blue jeans – the seemingly inexorable spread of American culture across the world and the effects on politics. When analysing the sociology of demonstrators, protesters or perhaps revolutionaries, we need to abandon our residual 'Orientalism'.

In his remarks, C. Coker raised the question as to how important ideas actually are in revolutions. The answer is that perhaps they are not very important at all. 1989 is a poor analogy because it was an *ancien régime* reinventing itself very quickly (palace coups and coups d'état). There are two interpretations of 1989. Either popular revolts to escape the redemptionist project of the last 200 years; or else 1989 as the biggest consumerist revolution. Since then Eastern Europe has been a huge success and is no longer the basket case.

S. Budgen referred to Gilbert Achcar's book *The People Want* to suggest that the surprise is not that the Islamic parties have won but that they have not won bigger than they did. The other surprise is the emergence of a workers' movement; the real opposition force in Tunisia is the UGTT, the trade union's federation, not political parties.

Michel Legrand called for a more rigorous framework of analysis. There are many individual important elements but nothing holds them together. The following four levels need to be distinguished and integrated into an overarching perspective at the same time. First, Orientalism; second, global geopolitics and power relations; third, regional geopolitics (specific power relations) linked to the second point; fourth, what's the situation on the ground and what are the links between intellectuals and peoples?

### 3. Responses

In his response at the end of the session, A.J. Mayer bemoaned the absence of the sense of limits in Israeli politics. He argued that Israelis view themselves as Western but Western politicians are shaped by Machiavelli and Clausewitz who distinguished between limited and total, absolute war. As far as the Palestinians and the Arabs are concerned, they were a problem for the Zionists from the beginning – as Herzl recognised. According to Herzl, the notion of *Judenstaat* does not mean 'Jewish state' but 'state for Jews'. In many ways Israel is an outpost for Western civilisation in the Middle East, which should have been neutral. When the book on the Final Solution was published, there was an attempt to persuade Jewish students to boycott his courses. He concluded by describing himself as a 'non-Jewish Jew' and a 'non-Zionist Zionist' and that he refused to roll in the mud.

## **VII. The Future of American Power**

This session focused on the future of American power. Like the previous sessions, it featured a number of presentations, which were followed by comments and questions as well as a concluding response from Arno J. Mayer.

### 1. Presentations

The thesis of A. Balogh's presentation was as follows: more than 20 years after the end of the bi-polar system, the Cold War rhetoric, style, approaches and conclusions remain as strong as ever and many elites cling to conventional clichés. Arno J. Mayer's work on revolution enables us to make the point that socialism and communism are equated with fascism (Molotov-Ribbentrop pact) and that Marxism and Stalinism are seen as one. The Cold War period, in the description of many recently published books, seem void of any cooperation between East and West. What this ignores is the joint anti-fascist victory, many bilateral deals between the two superpowers, the avoidance of nuclear confrontation (e.g. Helsinki or Malta summits) and many Middle Eastern connections. However, it is also the case that this cooperative dimension has actually lacked in the past two decades. The end of the USSR was seen as a triumph of the West, rather than a collapse of a corrupt system. And the insistence on hollow values has precluded a real debate about shared ends.

F. Montebello argued that there is a proximity between Americanism and communism, which is paradoxical and provocative. Anti-Americanism in France confuses two types: first, political-conservative, and, second, cultural-progressive. In different ways, both Gramsci and Benjamin link mass entertainment to democratic awakenings. Arno J. Mayer also makes a link between art and politics, putting the emphasis not just on those who 'produce art' but also and above all on those who "consume art". Art is linked to the ruling classes and enhances



their power and domination. But art is not reducible to its political content. The eye of the camera transforms the audience, and the spectator does not become purely passive but becomes a critical auditor. Anti-Americanism is originally far-right, with technology linking it to anti-Communism. Ultimately, Hollywood carries a humanist universalism, whether more religious (e.g. Christian messianism) or more secular (e.g. Communist atheism).

## 2. Comments and questions

C. Maier asked A. Balogh whether Hungary is returning to Cold War rhetoric or to the debates of the inter-war period. Is it not shocking that the EU has failed to blow the whistle on developments in Hungary, which seems to go back to racism and anti-Semitism – to which A. Balogh said both. According to A. Lyttelton, one of the EU's greatest failures is to impose the same tough ethical norms on member-states (e.g. Italy or Hungary) as it does on candidate countries. It is not so much a rejection of technology than a political disposition or mentality. After all, there were many Communists in Europe who were and are pro-US culture. Italian figures such as Italo Calvino came out of Americanism, went through communism and came back to Americanism.

In his short response, A.J. Mayer referred to Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Perhaps it is the wrong question, perhaps the real question is why it lasted for so long. By analogy, the same could be asked about the US empire but also about what remains of the European empires (most recently actions in Libya and Mali).

V. Weitzel suggested that the EU has deliberately toned down the protests against Hungary but there are infringement procedures ongoing. What is frightening is the speed with which certain political forces go about dismantling the welfare state, nationalising certain businesses and promoting anti-Semitic attitudes.

In his intervention, C. Coker said that US power rests on three elements: first, resources; second, ideas to mobilise resources; third, managing the medium through which to exercise power. The Russians used revolution, whereas the US have used war. It is true that many US wars have failed – from the war on drugs to the war in Iraq. But there remains the American dream, which resonates universally. By contrast, the Chinese Dream which the new Chinese President has promised to deliver, is merely for the Chinese. A. Clesse contended that the American dream has turned into a nightmare for the world and that this dream was shattered when we discovered the reality of Guantanamo Bay, notably the torture and humiliation of defenceless people.

## **Conclusion: Arno J. Mayer's Conceptual Framework**

The final session focused on the conceptual approach in Arno J. Mayer's writing. In his presentation, C. Wey suggested that the mark of Arno J. Mayer's entire work is the conceptualisation of historical phenomena. Terms such as 'Old Diplomacy' and 'New Diplomacy', 'The general crisis of the twentieth century', 'Judeocide' as well as thematic notions such as 'The Persistence of the Old Regime' and 'The Primacy of Domestic Politics' are among the most significant examples of conceptualisation. But beyond these terms and

thematic notions, there is one additional concept that plays a key function in his historical approach – the word-concept of ‘counterrevolution’.

In the preface of his book *Dynamics of Counterrevolution in Europe, 1870-1956*, Arno J. Mayer insists that the “the purpose behind this heuristic concept of counterrevolution is to advance the critical examination, understanding, and debate of contemporary history. There is no hidden or subordinate desire to contribute to purely deductive social theory or to practical policy prescription, which are both the business and the bane of the social and behavioural sciences”.

According to C. Wey, all the conceptual constructs developed by Arno J. Mayer serve primarily the purpose of “the critical examination, understanding and debate of contemporary history”. In other words, as a “confirmed leftist critic” (in his own words), Arno J. Mayer uses his constructs for progressive, Marxist, but non-dogmatic historical research.

And it is probably this particular approach which enables him to provide for new perspectives on historical key turning points embedded into thematic overviews or historiographical ‘*grandes fresques*’. In addition, in some of his ‘*grandes fresques*’, Arno J. Mayer adopts a comparative approach, as brilliantly documented in his publication entitled *The Furies* – a work which Hans Mommsen considers “a masterpiece of comparative history”.

Comparative analysis and thematic overviews constitute the methodological and historiographical basis on which the work of Arno J. Mayer stands. He has stressed on several occasions that, apart from the founder of the French historical school *Les Annales* Marc Bloch, he holds in high esteem historians originating from small European countries, like the Swiss Jacob Burckhardt, the Belgian Henri Pirenne and the Dutch Johan Huizinga. All three are outstanding historians who combine global historical overviews with comparative analysis.

Beside these intellectuals representing the European historiographical field, Arno J. Mayer also owes a lot to the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci and to the sociologist and political theorist Herbert Marcuse (the Father of the New Left), without forgetting the sociologists Thorstein Veblen, Max Weber and the economist Joseph Schumpeter.

Far from viewing methods in terms of neutrality or as some kind art for art’s sake, Arno J. Mayer deployed his particular conceptuality for progressive, Marxist, but non-dogmatic historical research in order to contribute to a critical understanding and discussion in contemporary history and to a critical understanding and discussion of the world we live in.

C. Wey concluded his presentation by quoting the last sentences of Arno J. Mayer’s preface of his work *Dynamics of Counterrevolution in Europe, 1870-1956* published in 1971. Focusing his reflection on the word-concept of counterrevolution, Arno J. Mayer writes at the end of this preface that

[T]his conceptual construct is designed as an aid to the study of an era that closed in 1956; and it was formulated before the “other” side of recent developments in the United States became so stridently visible (for example words and deeds of Agnew, Reagan and Wallace). Should this construct nevertheless contribute to a critical

understanding and discussion of the unfolding situation in America, I hope that the fit of the shoe will never become too perfect.

This presentation marked the end of the conference.

Dr Adrian Pabst  
Associate Fellow, LIEIS  
March 2014



**Arno J. Mayer – Critical Junctures in Modern History**

10 and 11 May 2013

*Casino Luxembourg - Forum d'art contemporain  
41 Rue Notre-Dame, Luxembourg*

**Participants**

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**Balogh, András**, Professor, Head of the Modern World History Department, Eötvös Lóránd University; Former Hungarian Ambassador, Budapest

**Budgen, Sebastian**, Senior Editor, VERSO Books, London

**Cherribi, Sam**, Senior Lecturer of Sociology, Emory University, Atlanta

**Clesse, Armand**, Director, Luxembourg Institute for European and International Studies

**Coker, Christopher**, Professor, Department of International Relations, London School of Economics and Political Science

**de Muysen, Guy**, Former Ambassador, Luxembourg

**Feyder, Jean**, Former Ambassador; Former Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations and the WTO, Geneva

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Conference

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**Programme**

**Friday, 10 May**

08.45 Meeting at the Casino Luxembourg

**09.00-09.30 Opening Session**

Introductory Remarks: *Armand Clesse*  
*Jean-Paul Lehnars*  
*Claude Wey*  
Arno J. Mayer: A Biographical Overview

Opening Addresses: *Arno J. Mayer*  
*Guy de Muysers*  
*Alain Meyer*

**09.30-11.00 Session 1: Revolution and Counterrevolution**

Moderator: *Jean-Paul Lehnars*  
Speakers: *Corey Robin*  
How to Think and not Think about Counterrevolution  
*Philip Nord*  
Counterrevolution in Europe  
*Matt Perry*  
The Mutinies in the French Navy at the End of the First  
World War

11.00-11.15 Coffee break

**11.15-12.45 Session 2: The Persistence of the Ancien Régime**

Moderator: *Jean-Paul Lehnars*  
Speakers: *Adrian Lyttelton*  
Nation State and Old Regime

*Norbert Franz*

State Building in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Constitutions  
and State Functions

*Corey Robin*

How the Right Turned the Market into an Aristocratic Device

*Gerhard M. Ambrosi*

The Lower Middle Class as Contemporary Problem

12.45-14.30

Lunch

**14.30-16.00**

**Session 3: The 30 Years War of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Moderator:

*Claude Wey*

Speakers:

*Christopher Coker*

War and Meaning in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

*Michael Wintle*

Ordering Europe: Shaping the Continent in the Period 1900-  
1940

*Charles Maier*

The 30 Years War of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Uses and Limits  
of the Analogy

16.00-16.15

Coffee break

**16.15-17.45**

**Session 4: The Final Solution**

Moderator:

*Armand Clesse*

Speakers:

*Laurent Moyses*

Reflections on the Judeocide

*Hans-Heinrich Nolte*

Genocides East of the River Bug 1941-1945 in the Context of  
Lebensraum-politics

20.00

Dinner

**Saturday, 11 May**

08.45

Meeting at the Casino Luxembourg

**09.00-10.15**

**Session 5: The Middle East Today**

Moderator:

*Armand Clesse*

Speakers:

*Mario Hirsch*

Arno Mayer's Place in the Critics of US and Israeli Policies  
in the Middle East

*Sam Cherribi*

Framing the Arab Spring

*Michel Vovelle*

Les mots de la Révolution à l'épreuve des soulèvements  
de 2011-2012

10.15-10.30

Coffee break

**10.30-11.45**

**Session 6: The Future of American Power**

Moderator:

*Mario Hirsch*

Speakers:

*Fabrice Montebello*

Americanism and Communism

*András Balogh*

Why do we Continue Waging the Cold War Now?

**11.45-13.00**

**Session 7: Continuity and Contingency in History –  
Arno J. Mayer's Conceptual Approach**

Moderator:

*Claude Wey*

Speakers:

*Claude Wey*

Concepts and Methods in the Work of Arno J. Mayer

*Enzo Traverso*

Concepts, Entanglements, Events on Arno J. Mayer's  
History Writing

13.00

Lunch