

Moderator's introduction to the workshop

Over recent years, the world has gone through great changes. Major events, such as Brexit, Trump's presidency and the "America first" policy, Sino-US trade war and the COVID-19 pandemic, have all significantly changed the public's view on Europe and Sino-European relationship. Where is the European integration process heading? What is the future of the European economy? What will the EU do in legislation and other aspects? How to reconcile the differences between Eastern and Western Europe? How will Sino-European, Russian-European and US-European relationships develop? To review, summarize and reflect on these questions, the Institute of Area Studies at Peking University (PKUIAS) and Center for European Studies at Peking University jointly held a Broadyard Workshop (博雅工作坊) titled "Europe and Sino-European Relations in an Era of Great Changes" on October 15, 2021.

The workshop brought together interpretations from political, international relations, legal, philosophical and other perspectives, and speakers made presentations on issues including the dilemmas Europe faces in integration and democracy, Europe's role in the world, US-European relations, the diplomatic policies of European countries and the political transformation in Eastern Europe. Featuring both macro-level analysis and micro-level observations from diverse perspectives

and supported by rigorous argumentation, the presentations are of important academic value. With a focus on the past, present and future of Europe amid great changes, the presentations of the participating experts played a pioneering role in defining the European studies for the Chinese academic community. The workshop also introduced the concept of “Politics of European Integration,” which promises to become a new growth point in the discipline.

From the perspectives of nationalism, trade and economy and US-European relations, the workshop analyzed the changes in political mentality in Europe amid the changing world situation, as well as the consequent changes in diplomatic policy, which will be conducive to our understanding of Europe and Sino-European relations in an era of drastic global changes. The waning dependence on the US, the back-and-forth swing in integration, the political right-leaning tendency, and the development of democratic politics have increased the possibility of Europe becoming more pragmatic in its foreign policy. Appropriate appraisal of international situations is the cornerstone of policy making and helps to prevent strategic misjudgments. In this sense, the workshop has important reference value for the studies of China’s foreign policy toward Europe, China-US relations, US-Europe relations, among others.

As a rigorous and specialized academic seminar as well as a meeting that can reach the broad public, the workshop has

demonstrated communication effectiveness and great potential for public communication. In the context of diplomacy in the new era, China needs to proactively seek to “go global” in political, economic and cultural spheres, and assume its responsibilities as a major power. By closely aligning current affair issues with public concerns and actively responding to the public interest in relevant knowledge, the workshop has constructed a new academic discourse for public communication and promoted continuous progress in the public intellectual community in China.

Duan Demin

October 25, 2021

The 47th Broadyard Workshop

Europe and Sino-European Relations

in an Era of Great Changes

October 15, 2021

Prof. Li Qiang, director of Center for European Studies at Peking University, pointed out in his remarks that the world is now confronted with great changes unprecedented over a century. Europe, specifically, confronts unprecedented changes over three centuries. Europe walked onto the world stage at the end of the Middle Ages and rose amid the emergence of modern nation states. After the industrial revolution in the 18th century, it became the leader of modern civilizations in the world and expanded worldwide to establish colonies and export its cultures and institutions. As the pioneer of modernity in the entire world, Europe is the earliest architect of today's modern life and modern order.

Today, Europe is facing huge difficulties and long-term challenges. The development of human beings, especially the fundamental development of a major power is built, to a large extent, on population; however, European population is shrinking. Politically, after the Protestant Reformation in Europe, religion has lost its authority in political mobilization and organization. Due to the differences in history, religion and culture in different

countries, Europe, as a whole, lacks a strong cohesion. Economically, as Europe has rapidly entered the post-modern society, the practice of a welfare socialist regime greatly holds back its vigorous progress. Taken together, the difficulties will persist for a long time in Europe, and European civilizations have not shown any signs of rejuvenation.

Academically, European studies is of great significance to our understanding of some fundamental issues in human society, economics and politics. A great civilization that has been glorious for 300 years is now facing huge challenges. Where will it go? Though Arnold Joseph Toynbee argued that civilizations arise, grow and decay, a decaying civilization may rally as “even an ancient nation like Zhou still regards self-renewal as its mission.” Therefore, whether Europe can re-emerge from the challenges is a long-term issue worthy of our attention. Li Qiang is not pessimistic about the future of Europe, but believes that Europe does need sweeping and fundamental reforms, which only come in times of huge crisis. Whether Europe can develop a strong sense of crisis to inspire the awakening of its civilizations is worthy of careful studies and observations.

Feng Zhongping, director of the Institute of European Studies at Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, gave a presentation titled “Changes of Europe-US Relations and the Impact on Sino-European Relations”, which focused on the changes of the relations between Europe and the US over the

seven decades since the establishment of NATO in 1949 and the future development direction of Europe-US alliance. He believes that NATO is a strong tie to unite Europe and the US. Macron once pointed out that Europe and the US share the same historical, cultural and political values and the alliance between Europe and the US is an alliance of values. Transatlantic economic exchanges are frequent, as trade and investment can only develop in depth with a deep understanding of culture.

Yet at the same time, the Europe-US alliance also faces a series of problems, the biggest of which is Europe's waning dependence on the US for security. After the Crimean Crisis, NATO shifted its first priority from anti-terrorism to collective defense, which is different from that in 1949. Since Obama proposed the Pivot to Asia strategy, the US's strategic priority was not Europe any more, which is the biggest challenge encountered by NATO and Europe-US relations. Trump's "America First" policy intensified the tension between the US and Europe. He even publicly called the EU "enemy". All US presidents who attended NATO meetings in Europe would routinely reaffirm the US security guarantee to Europe, but Trump did not, which caused deep concerns to European political leaders such as Macron, Merkel and Tusk, who had to respond with European strategic autonomy. After Biden took office, the transatlantic alliance has somewhat recovered with Biden's constant emphasis on the US security commitment to Europe and the consensus

reached with Europe on issues such as the Paris Agreement.

Feng Zhongping pointed out three possible development trends of Europe-US relationship. First, increasing estrangement in strategic focus. The US bypassed Europe to negotiate with the Taliban, and bypassed the EU to strengthen the partnership with Australia and the UK through AUKUS. Such actions may mean that the US has abandoned Europe except the UK to focus on countering China with its Asian allies. Second, revival of the alliance to counter China and Russia. Biden stated at the NATO summit in June this year that “China is our systemic challenge.” Although Macron responded at a press conference the next day by saying that “China is not in the North Atlantic”, Europe and the US have recently reached many consensus on containing China’s economic growth and practicing values-based diplomacy. Third, partnering as it goes on case-by-case basis, which is the most likely development trend in the future. Europe and the US have cooperated extensively on China issues. Europe will do everything possible to avoid choosing sides between China and the US. This situation will not change in a few years, because the global strategic focus of the US is no longer Europe, and Europe does not have to follow suit. Europe is well able to keep up with the changing times. Although devastated in World War II, Europe still astonishingly made a reality the reconciliation between France and Germany and the European integration. The test for Europe lies in whether the European leaders in the post-Merkel

era can keep to the pragmatic path. At present, only a few leaders such as Macron are still advocating Europe's strategic autonomy. Josep Borrell, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, also indicated during a meeting with Blinken that Europe should go its own way. However, other countries are not keen on the autonomy, showing a lack of sense of crisis.

In short, in the current chaotic situation, a new trilateral China-US-Europe relationship has emerged. The game between China and the US determines that both sides need the support of more partners, especially that of influential partners. Europe is now paying close attention to what is going on between China and the US. The interaction between China, the US and Europe will shape a new international landscape in the future, as the relationship between the three largest economies in the world is of great significance to the global landscape in its own right. Cui Hongjian, director of the Department for European Studies at China Institute of International Studies, made a presentation titled "Europe's Perception of the Era and its Strategic Choice". He believes that Europe's perception of the current era entails the following aspects. First, it is a turbulent time. In *A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy (2016)*, the EU believed that the world would re-enter an era of competition between great powers with degenerating global order and undermined multilateralism and international organizations. However, from China's perspective, an era of great changes and

restructuring may also bring great opportunities. Second, rising powers such as China are “revisionist” forces that threaten the West. “Revisionism” is not only manifested in being competitive in material strength, but also in the power of discourse. When Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi made it clear during the Anchorage talks that the US is not qualified to talk to China from a high position, and China does not buy it [the US way] at all, the Europeans reacted strongly. Since China also noted that it would not set up a new order as it has benefited the most from the current order, such an attitude confused the Europeans. However, what is certain is that the world order conceived by China is different from the international rules dominated by Europe and the US. Therefore, how to understand the differences and commonalities is a significant question.

Based on the above perception, Europe is strongly nostalgic but keeps alert to wake-up calls at the same time. Since 2016, the EU has been contemplating making strategic shift in the new landscape, and has come up with various strategic proposals, or even “over-strategic” proposals. In general, Europe faces the following five constraints when making strategic choices: First, strong path dependence. Europe insists on being a leading creator of international order and a normative power. Second, limited strength. Europe is no longer strong enough to be one pole with its hard power, so it will still rely on its soft power and economic strength to reinforce the path dependence. Third, resource

constraint. The construction of Nord Stream 2 clearly reflects the extent to which it is restricted by resource constraint when making strategic choices. The recent energy shortage in Europe is an important real case. Fourth, space constraint. The competition between China and the US will remain the key axis of major power relations for some time in the future, which will inevitably subject Europe to certain constraints in making strategic choices. Recently, the German frigate “Bayern” requested a port visit to Shanghai as it passed through the South China Sea for a patrol, hoping to avoid offending either China or the US, but neither sides bought it. The UK made an effort to break its space constraint with AUKUS, which shows it is leaning toward the US on regional issues, but it will try to maintain a balance between China and the US in the long-term strategic competition. The UK’s approach should be taken note of in the long run. Fifth, the lack of motivation. The EU feels the pressure but lacks the motivation for strategic transformation. The EU has not yet reached the critical moment of life and death, and member states have their own judgments on the situation. To maintain its strategic autonomy, Europe needs to strengthen the integration at the continental level, which some member states believe would undermine their sovereignty, making deepening integration a strong paradox.

In conclusion, Europe is still in a trial-and-error stage to form its strategic choices. In the short term, Europe’s

shortcomings are exposed, but in the long term, Europe is trying to solve its internal problems and formulate a new strategic approach. A French think tank noted in a recent exchange that Europe should first protect itself in the face of great changes in the global order by enhancing its defense and comprehensive strength. Europe is obviously enhancing its defense but has limited capabilities to increase its comprehensive strength. Meanwhile, instead of keeping a low profile, it is eager to join the competition between major powers. Under the current situation, the importance of Europe is self-evident. It is natural process that international order and landscape change as the world shifts between turbulence and orderliness. Unfortunately, we are in a turbulent era and we hope order could be restored after this round of competition between major powers. It is in this context that we understand the strategic choices that are taking shape in Europe and the strategic role they are going to play in the future.

Chen Xin, research fellow from the Institute of European Studies at Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, made a presentation titled “Adjustment of EU’s Foreign Economic and Trade Strategy Amid Great Changes,” which focuses on the challenges brought by the changes in global trade to the EU’s economic and trade policies and the EU’s measures to address the challenges.

Chen Xin pointed out three challenges the EU is facing in the changing global trade landscape. First, Europe currently has

its greatest competitive edge in trade and economy, but it is no longer a resolute champion of multilateralism. The US has benefited from the multilateral trade framework after WWII, but its trade deficit has been widening since the 1970s. The US has shifted its interest from multilateral to bilateral arrangements since the 1990s and from bilateral to unilateral arrangements when Trump was in office, which has profoundly impacted the global trade system advocated by the US. At the same time, Europe has also benefited from the postwar multilateral trading system. The European integration started from a common tariff zone designed to eliminate internal tariff barriers, and has gradually produced spillover effects with the establishment of an internal unified market, through which the EU has become an important global economic force. However, Europe's position has now shifted as well. Into the 21st century, especially after China's accession into the WTO, Europe has shifted from actively advocating a series of multilateral trade negotiations to promoting multilateral and bilateral negotiations at the same time, including promoting a series of regional and bilateral free trade negotiations. China has long benefited from the expansion of international trade under the multilateral system, and has gradually integrated into the global industrial chain, which has promoted the take-off of its domestic economy. However, the world is now seeing a trend of anti-globalization. The US and Europe believe they are benefiting less from globalization, and their industries have been

increasingly hollowed out. The COVID-19 pandemic has further fueled this trend, which is set to drive a new round of cyclical adjustment to the industrial chain.

Second, in regard to industrial policy, Europe is accusing China of subsidizing its companies and distorting market competition. However, in the late 1960s, European countries scrambled to forge their own leading enterprises and make them bigger by providing subsidies or state support. The large-scale subsidies were only phased out after the oil crisis. Recently, it seems that Europe and the US have come back to adopt intervening industrial policies. The US Innovation and Competition Act will drive huge investment into related fields, and the EU's €750 billion economic recovery plan will help enterprises to stay afloat amid the pandemic with state subsidies, and promote the development of green economy and digital economy.

Third, trade policy has becoming increasingly encompassing. As trade in services is increasing in proportion, values have also become part of trade policy. In 2015, the European Commission conducted a trade policy review, mainly at sectoral and geographical levels, which specifically examined the digital revolution of global industrial chain, the rise of emerging countries, and the TTIP negotiations led by the US. The 2021 trade policy review mainly examined globalization, technological development, digital transformation, among others, and climate

change as a new addition. The biggest difference is the direct reference to China in the section about the rise of emerging countries.

Chen Xin pointed out that a series of challenges have led the EU to adjust its foreign policy. First, it proposed in the Trade Policy Review 2021 the core measures to achieve “open strategic autonomy,” including resilience and competitiveness, sustainability and fairness, and assertiveness and rules-based cooperation. Second, the EU adjusted its policy toolbox. From around 2017 to 2018, the EU has started a “three-step process”: The first step is to adjust trade policy by amending the Anti-dumping Law and allowing some countries to circumvent the non-market economy status; the second step is to adjust investment policy by formulating and implementing the Foreign Investment Review Regulations; the third step is to adjust the competition policy related to the European integration, such as the legislation on foreign government subsidies. Third, it expanded its policy toolbox. In supply chain-related legislation, some member states started earlier than others. For example, Germany has been reviewing the Supply Chain Act. The European Parliament and the European Commission have also begun the discussion on its supply chain act, which would not allow companies involved in values-related labor or environmental issues to be part of the EU’s supply chain, as a response to the challenges brought by the rise of China. Fourth, it

has been seeking power in geopolitics by, for example, establishing the transatlantic Trade and Technology Council (TTC) to jointly address the “strategic challenges” from China, and proposing the EU’s Indo-Pacific strategy.

Prof. Wu Qiaoling from PKU’s School of Economics gave a speech titled “Changes and Constants in Sino-European Relations.” She pointed out that since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, some European countries have shown unprecedented hostility toward China’s achievements in fighting the pandemic and wantonly discredited China. The China-EU Comprehensive Agreement on Investment reached in December last year has a great impact on the European political and business communities and even the society in general. However, in early March this year, the European Parliament sanctioned China over the so-called Xinjiang cotton and human rights issues. Since China established diplomatic relations with many Western European countries in the 1970s, China-Europe relationship has gone through various stages of development which have not always been smooth. The way that some European countries have acted since the pandemic can be ultimately attributed to their ideology, and everything they have done is to curb the rise of China.

Merkel once noted that Europe has more in common with the US in ideology, but has closer trade and economic engagement with China and that the EU will not really “choose

sides.” During the pandemic, Europe has followed the US in ideology, but in economy and trade, China has replaced the US as the EU’s largest trading partner. Economic and trade relations have been the ballast of China-Europe bilateral relations. If this momentum does not change, China-Europe relations will not deviate from the right track in the future despite the difficulties.

Wu Qiaoling believes that maintaining China-Europe economic and trade relations reflects the mutual needs in the era of globalization. Mutual benefit and win-win results are the essence of China-Europe economic and trade relations due to its strong complementarity. Although it has reached certain consensus with the US on the issue of containing China, the EU has entered an eventful period over the past decade or so when it has confronted challenges such as the sovereign debt crisis, refugee inflows, and Brexit. As the world’s second largest economy and the largest trading nation as well as an important market for European companies, China is crucial to the European economic development and a solution to the problems in Europe. Under such circumstances, the problems encountered in China-Europe political relations in the past may also come back in the future. Nicolas Chapuis, former EU ambassador to China, regarded China as a “systemic rival”, an opinion that Wu Qiaoling does not agree with but understands his mentality. China should do its own part well, as economic and trade cooperation will be the ballast of China-Europe relations in the long term.

Qu Bing, associate research fellow at the Institute of European Studies of the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations, made a presentation titled “Analysis of the ‘Cakeism’ in the UK’s China Policy.” The word “Cakeism” originated from a British proverb in the 16th century -- “you cannot have your cake and eat it.” Boris Johnson claimed, as British foreign secretary, that the UK could “have our cake and eat it” with Brexit, which means that after leaving the EU, the UK could enjoy the various benefits and treatments that an EU member is entitled to, and avoid the consequences of staying in the EU at the same time. Cakeism is manifested in the UK’s China policy in the following aspects: On the one hand, it adheres to a tough stance against China in terms of values, and on the other, it hopes to enter the Chinese market and do business with the Chinese government. In March 2021, the UK released the *Global Britain in a Competitive Age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy*, in which it not only defines China as the biggest external threat to the UK’s economic security, but also calls China a systemic competitor.

Qu Bing pointed out three reasons for the UK’s “Cakeist” approach to China. First, it is a result of the UK’s diplomatic inertia as a former major power, reflecting its self-confidence and even conceit. As a former global superpower, the UK took pride in its sophisticated diplomacy, which boosted its self-confidence so much so that it still believes it could “have our cake and eat it”,

despite its declining power today. Second, the UK think it has economic leverage in its hand. As one of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, and home to one of the world's leading financial centers in London, the UK believes that China needs its support for internationalizing RMB. Third, it involves historical experience. After Cameron and Clegg met the Dalai Lama in London in May 2012, the political relationship between China and the UK was at a low point for more than a year, during which period the economic and trade cooperation between the two sides, however, still maintained good momentum, which made later British politicians believe that politics can develop in parallel with economy.

Qu Bing believes that the UK's dual-track approach in diplomacy with China will not work. First, dual-track diplomacy is backed by strength, and therefore can hardly succeed simply by opportunism. Given its declining strength and without the EU's support after Brexit, the UK has less leverage in striking deals with other countries. Second, the Johnson government intends to draw a clear line between economic diplomacy and political diplomacy. Unfortunately, this British-style division is not acceptable to China, because many British practices have repeatedly touched China's bottom line. It is clear that the political relations between China and the UK has taken a sharp turn for the worse this year, which has directly affected the development of bilateral economic and trade relations. Third,

China has come to realize the fact that values, national security, trade and other elements are all intertwined, and can hardly be set apart from one another, and therefore it is difficult to deal with them separately in practice. Fourth, there is strong domestic opposition to the dual-track diplomacy in the UK, which argues that Johnson is weak toward China, and that the UK government's political and economic policies toward China are incoherent and unclear. For example, Liz Truss, the then Secretary of State for International Trade and incumbent Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, argued at the International Trade Committee of the House of Commons in May that the UK had long been weak toward China on trade issues, and that Western democracies are in a battle against China for the future of global trade. Another report released by the upper house of the British Parliament in early September this year argued that the current British government had no China strategy and had not set out a clear position on China. The report recommended that the UK government uphold values, such as human rights and labor protection, and place these values at the front and center of policymaking. Fifth, the pressure from the US and Japan's efforts to befriend the UK.

Finally, Qu Bing analyzed the prospect of "Cakeist" approach in the UK's China policy. First, the Johnson government is reluctant to give up the "Cakeist" approach at present because the approach maintains certain room for strategic choices for the

UK and maximizes its interests. As China is indispensable to the development of the UK, Boris Johnson proposed the “Global Britain” vision which advocates deepening relations with Asian countries, especially China. China will contribute more to global growth over the next decade than any other countries, and both China and the UK can benefit from the bilateral trade and investment. The UK also needs to work closely with China on climate issues. Michael Howard, former Conservative leader of the Conservative Party, once argued that the UK would not be able to reach an effective global agreement on climate change if it did not engage and find common ground with China, the world’s largest carbon emitter. Secondly, in addition to “Cakeism,” the UK has been trying to ally with like-minded countries and create various circles of friends. The current foreign secretary Liz Truss delivered a keynote speech at the Conservative Party Conference in October, in which she pointed out that the UK should build a network of liberty and that “I want our allies to know that Britain stands with them and that together we will stand up to our adversaries and promote the cause of freedom.”

Qu Bing believes that the “Cakeism”, in addition to being an approach with British characteristics, also reflects a mind-set shared by Western countries when dealing with China. The EU has multiple labels for China, such as a partner, a counterparty in negotiation, a competitor, and a systemic rival, which means that the EU will shift between these labels when it deals with China

as a competitor and China as a partner. Therefore, the Sino-EU relationship may encounter frictions and contradictions, but will also find room for cooperation in the future.

Fei Haiting, an assistant professor from PKU's School of Government gave a speech titled "Research on Political Oligarchy in Central and Eastern Europe". In his view, it is impossible to bypass Russia in European studies where Russia seems to be a shadow over Europe or an absent protagonist. Europe does not accept Russia but cannot get away from it either, not only in geopolitics, but also in political theory and system. Many Central and Eastern European countries that started their democratic transformation by learning from the Western European system have, after many years, been switching toward the former Soviet or Russian system.

After the transformation of political party politics, a unique phenomenon of "power party" emerged in Russia, where a political party is dependent on an executive leader, who provides patronage and mobilizes administrative resources to support the party. The situation is different in Central and Eastern Europe, where there are no such powerful executive leaders to rely on. However, it is observed that, regardless of the regime changes in these countries, many potential "power parties" still exist, a phenomenon that can be tentatively described as "political oligarchy." It refers to a tendency where a political party which relies on individuals, families or a very small group of elites can

neither form its own will nor control the political elites, and has only nihilistic and abstract platforms, and once such an opposition party comes to power, it may quickly start the process of nationalization and control the entire administrative body.

Political oligarchy has the following four specific manifestations. First, a political party may not outlast its political elites. Political elites often create a political party for an election and when they do not go well in the election, they may disband or reshuffle the party and come back in the next election in a new identity. Second, a political party may not outlast the election cycle. Such a political party does not represent the interests of any certain social groups, but entirely serves as a tool for political elites' campaign. Third, political elites, upon coming to power with the help of a political party, will quickly start the process of "nationalizing the political party" and control administrative bodies by using political parties, constitutional amendment and other tools. Fourth, there exists the possibility that strongmen outside the system and wealth groups co-found political parties, as can be seen from typical representatives such as Bidzina Ivanishvili in Georgia and Andrej Babis in the Czech Republic.

The above phenomenon raises a question -- what is the relationship between elites and organizations? It is generally believed that in a political party, it is the organization that restricts the elites, but in Soviet-style political parties, it was often the elites who changed their organizations and were not constrained

by organizational rules and procedures. For example, why was the powerful Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) unable to stop Gorbachev's reforms even when they were going in the wrong direction, or hold him back? Why does the change of elites alter the position and nature of political parties?

Fei Haiting sought to explain the above phenomenon with several models. One is the "Lord-of-the-Flies pluralism by default" model, which suggests that in a direct political competition between multiple parties where no party is strong enough, every party has to accept a relatively fair rule and consequently favor a pluralistic democratic system; the other is the "king of the jungle" model, which suggests that, with the four forces (reformers and conservatives within the system and radicals and moderates outside the system) at play, relatively stable reforms can only take place when reformers within the system and moderates outside the system dominate their respective sphere. The first model suggests that, even if a political elite is strong enough, it is impossible for him/her to win an election simply with personal charisma, but instead he/she needs the acceptance and support of an elite group. The second model suggests that, an elite group also needs to elect individual political elites as its representatives to participate in an election and competition, and the ability the elites win support is by itself important political capital of the elite group.

Fei Haiting selected five cases for his case study of political

oligarchy. He began with the positive cases. Hungary and Poland are the best fit for the above theoretical models. Both countries were role models in the early stage of transformation, but are currently experiencing de-democratization. The main political parties are the FIDESZ in Hungary and the Law and Justice Party in Poland. The political elites are Viktor Orban in Hungary and the Kaczynski brothers in Poland. The construction of electoral democracy in Hungary was not completely successful. The elites in the system who advocate maintaining the status quo or slowing the reforms are dominant as the “king of the jungle.” The transformation on a whole has begun to develop toward corruption and individual rule. Poland has shown the same trajectory. The Czech Republic is slightly different from Hungary and Poland. The Czech Prime Minister Babis is a representative of the group formed by elites outside the system and Czech billionaires. The case of the Czech Republic proves again that even moderates who originally support the democratization process would turn into hardliners who suppress the democratization process once they come into power.

Therefore, the two aforementioned theoretical models overestimate the role of the opposition forces outside the system. At the same time, they also prove that the transformation should not be simply equated with the establishment of electoral democracy and other specific forms of democracy, but should be regarded as a long-term process during which all parties

repeatedly game with one another until a stable situation is finally reached where they accept and will not attempt to challenge the current rules. The third case is a negative one. In Ukraine, where Tymoshenko, Kuchma and Yanukovich engaged in a three-way competition without the presence of the principle of fair competition preset in the “Lord-of-the-Flies pluralism by default” model, parties have been mostly dominated by political oligarchs. In contrast, Slovak Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar, a political strongman, voluntarily renounced authoritarian rule. The challenge mounted by Slovak Democratic Coalition to Mečiar was somewhat successful, making political oligarchy less evident in Slovakia.

Through the analysis of the above cases, Fei Haiting came to the following conclusions. First, political oligarchy may indeed be an important explanatory factor for democratic deconstruction or democratic regression, and democratization is often held back or reversed as a result of the degradation and weakening of organizational rules of a political party. Oligarchical parties may give political elites greater incentives to change and overturn the rules of competition, which explains why Ukraine did not move toward the “Lord-of-the-Flies pluralism by default” model. Second, political oligarchy may occur at any stage of the transition. Oligarchy is a great temptation for political parties, but it is also an act of drinking poison to quench thirst. In Fei Haiting’s view, the de-democratization phenomenon in Central

and Eastern European countries is largely a result of ignoring the internal construction of political parties, and the lack of well-defined organizational procedures, clear party guidelines and strict party regulations.

Xu Xiaohong, lecturer from the University of International Relations, spoke on *Devolution in the UK and Separatism in Scotland: Present and Future*. She pointed out that Scottish independence had long been on the agenda of the British government since the rise of the Scottish National Party (SNP). The 2015 independence referendum put the issue to rest, but Brexit took it back on the agenda.

The legitimacy of Scotland's pursuit of independence can be defended from two perspectives: identity and belonging and practical considerations. From the perspective of identity and belonging, Scotland has long been dissatisfied with the hegemony of England in history, which has been aggravated by the contradictory stances on the EU membership where Scotland wanted to remain while England wanted to leave. At the same time, the traditional ties between Scotland and the rest of Britain have weakened. With Protestantism's diminishing role as a unifying force and the disintegration of the empire after the WWII, the shared sense of pride formed with the imperial dominance has faded and disappeared over time.

Third, Scotland retains its national characteristics and the tradition of local autonomy. Distinctive religious, doctrinal and

legal systems have been preserved and passed down through education in Scotland. Fourth, Scotland has kinship with continental Europe in history, institution and culture. It fought against England as an ally of France in various occasions. Scotland's legal system in general was heavily influenced by Roman law and belongs to the continental law system. Academic and intellectual exchanges between Scotland and continental Europe remain frequent, and the earliest universities in Scotland all have continental European background. Fifth, Scotland also identifies with the EU.

In terms of practical considerations, first is necessity. It is necessary to defend what Scotland advocates as "pluralist democracy." The Scottish National Party takes supporting Scottish independence as a ground for its existence. It is necessary to protect Scotland's economic interests, such as those in the North Sea oil fields. It is necessary to secure the EU's agricultural subsidies and regional development support for Scotland.

Second is possibility. The number of people in favor of leaving the UK is increasing. People who were unhappy with the Conservative Party led by Boris Johnson and Brexit are turning to support independence. Among the voters who backed the SNP in 2016, the proportion of those who supported leaving the UK were 6 percent higher than those who were against, while the most recent poll showed the proportions as 57 percent in favor to 39 percent against. In the 2021 Scottish Parliament elections, the

pro-independence SNP and the Scottish Green Party won 64 and 8 seats respectively, taking a majority of the seats. Hence, there exists a considerable possibility that independence-related bills get passed in the parliament.

Xu Xiaohong believes that Brexit impacted the Scottish independence in a way that it aroused a nationalist sentiment in Scotland on one hand, and provided practical lessons for the independence supporters on the other. The rise of nationalist sentiment can be interpreted in three aspects. First is the democratic deficit on Brexit. Scottish independence is back on the agenda because 62 percent of Scottish voters chose to stay in the EU in the Brexit referendum. Since then, independence has been brought up frequently by the SNP. Second, the support for the Conservative Party and Prime Minister Boris Johnson has been declining. A 2019 survey found that 61 percent of respondents trusted the Scottish government to work in Scotland's best interests, while only 15% trusted the central government. Nicola Sturgeon has been praised for her effective leadership, particularly her handling of the pandemic, in sharp contrast to Boris Johnson. Third, Scottish people are aware of the importance to remain in the integrated EU market.

Brexit also holds lessons for the independence supporters in Scotland. First, they have learned the importance of not walking away from a well-run alliance. England and Scotland have been united for 314 years. They share political structure, public space,

parliament, news media system, business environment and even political party system for a long time. It would be even harder for the two sides to part ways than it was for the UK to leave the EU.

Also, being independent would mean losing the support and protection provided by the previous alliance. The UK regained some sovereignty over its borders through Brexit, but lost the access to the European common market and the opportunity to influence EU policies. An independent Scotland would also lose the UK's integrated domestic market and the protection offered by the existing monetary and financial policies. Third, the UK does not have a well-defined development plan for the post-Brexit era, which is also a wake-up call for the Scottish independence supporters.

Xu Xiaohong believes that Scotland is still facing many challenges in seeking independence. First is the fact that fighting the pandemic remains the top priority for all parties. Second is the legislative compliance requirement. It needs London's approval for its independence, as London retains the legislative power over constitutional matters. Third is the practical challenges after being independent, such as the work on the terms of withdrawal from the UK, delimitation of borders, and state building as an independent sovereign state. Fourth is the difficulties to join the EU and gain international recognition. To sum up, both the Scottish and the British governments have to weigh the pros and cons. Scotland will not willfully declare independence, nor will

the UK stop it arbitrarily. Both sides will have to battle for support in the construction of identity and conception by the Scottish people.

Zhai Han, an associate research fellow at Wuhan University's School of Law, gave a speech titled "Say No to the EU: Doctrines with 'Constitutional Characteristics' in EU Member States and Their Historical Institutional Implications in the Process of European Integration." In her view, since the beginning of the new century, there has been a trend of re-convergence between constitutional and political studies in the field of comparative constitutional studies in the English world, where the studies of the EU public law is a typical example. Last year, the EU introduced the "COVID-19 bonds" to revive production during the pandemic, but the German Constitutional Court firmly opposed it, arguing that the EU's fiscal and tax package scheme would change the rigid structure of Germany's federal fiscal and tax regimes, and would constitute an infringement of member states' national sovereignty.

In August 2021, judges of Poland's Constitutional Tribunal clashed with the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), as Poland had set up a disciplinary chamber for judges, and required that presiding judges seek judgment opinions from the chamber when dealing with major cases, which effectively subjects judicial authority to the will of political leaders. CJEU believes that the disciplinary chamber was against the principles

of EU law on the rule of law and democratic institutions. Ultimately, Poland had to temporarily suspend for three months the disciplinary chamber's authority to review cases.

Zhai Han pointed out that the above cases show the conflicts between the EU public law framework and the constitutional sovereignty of EU member states. The EU public law framework refers to the relevant authorities at the EU level, including the European Council, the European Commission and the European Parliament, which supervise the democratic and legal processes of member states. The above cases reveal that constitutional courts of EU member states are trying to challenge the EU's political authority in many fields. So far, the EU law has not prevailed over member states' national laws to directly impact individuals or independent entities.

What to make of the European public law framework and its constitutional concept after the abortion of the EU Constitutional Treaty? The academic community is now most concerned about the resurgence of authoritarianism. In fact, the rise of constitutional court as a political organ after the WWII could be attributed to the fact that the Western democratic regime regarded itself as lacking in defense mechanism and found it necessary to enhance the mechanism out of the most essential motivation to disband extremist parties through the judgment of a constitutional court. When such concept of constitution is applied to the EU, what practical implications will the special constitutional

doctrines have on the EU public law? How will the power structure and tension in the public law framework be impacted? The Lisbon Treaty is in fact a simplified version of the aborted EU Constitutional Treaty.

The Lisbon Treaty had been supposed to be ratified in Germany, but was rejected by the German Federal Constitutional Court, which argued that once Germany signed the treaty, it would effectively create another federal system on top of the German federacy, thus undermining the German federal basic law. In fact, in the early stage of the European Community before the 1960s, the bargaining between member states and the Community was mostly at political level. After the 1960s, the challenges by member states to the so-called political authority at the Community level were basically included into the interactions in the public law sphere. Therefore, it is very important for researchers in European studies, or even in European political studies, to pay attention to the relationship between the structure of public law and constitutions of member states.

Zhang Lei, an associate research fellow at the Institute of European Studies of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, presented on “The European Parliament and China-EU Relations,” which mainly covered the relationship between China and the current European Parliament and the prospect of China-EU relationship.

After the 2019 European Parliament elections, the new

European Parliament is playing a role in China-EU relations with the following features. First, although the current European Parliament has adopted some resolutions that are conducive to promoting China-EU relations, such as the China-EU Agreement on Geographical Indications and the Agreement on Civil Aviation Safety Between China and the European Union, a large number of resolutions still involve sensitive issues related to Xinjiang, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Second, the current European Parliament has attached greater importance to human rights and linked human rights to economic and trade relations. During the negotiations on the China-EU Comprehensive Agreement on Investment, the European Parliament called for consideration of various human rights situations in China, including the Hong Kong issue. In March 2021, the European Parliament threatened to suspend the review process of the China-EU investment agreement unless China lifts the sanctions against some members of the Parliament, and even suggested that leaders and officials of the EU and its member states boycott the Beijing Winter Olympics.

Third, the current European Parliament is more proactive in calling for proposals by the European Commission to restrain China, such as the one on supply chain to strengthen export controls on products for civil and military uses, Internet surveillance tools and other technologies. Fourth, major parties in the European Parliament have reached some consensus on issues

of common concern to China and the EU, emphasizing that the EU should not compromise with China on values. In March 2021, the European People's Party (EPP) adopted a position paper on China, which suggested the three kinds of China-EU relations: cooperation, competition and confrontation, and that the EU should not compromise on values during its practical contact with China, which reflected the position of a majority of members of the Parliament.

Zhang Lei believes that three reasons have contributed to the Parliament's hard line on China. First, the European Parliament is increasingly fragmented in its political composition, as many marginalized parties were voted into the Parliament. Second, assertive parliamentarism has been enhanced. In the process of integration, the European Parliament has expanded its power faster than other EU institutions. On one hand, it exercises the power provided by various EU treaties and related rules; on the other hand, it uses various unwritten rules to its own benefit in practice to achieve its legislative purposes.

Moreover, the current Parliament has become more critical of other EU institutions as well as other governments. Third, the European Commission, the Council of Europe and other institutions have changed their attitudes toward China during the COVID-19 pandemic, and have further highlighted their role as human rights defenders. Meanwhile, the public perception of China has also changed in Europe. A survey conducted by a think

tank under the European Council on Foreign Relations during the pandemic showed that some European countries tend to have a negative view about China. Fourth, the US influence matters. After Biden took office, the US and Europe have further coordinated their positions on China, and the European Parliament, pushed by the US, has backed sanctions against China.

Zhang Lei looked into the future of China-EU relationship. He believes that China-EU relations will face more uncertainties and inevitable confrontation and conflicts in the future. The European Parliament may become even more fragmented in the next elections with the comeback of some center-left parties, such as the Green Party, putting strain on the relationship between China and Europe. The European Parliament will not halt steps toward power extension. Amid the tensions between China and the US, the stance and actions of the US Congress will also prompt the European Parliament to take further actions.

Second, in respect of the prospect of the China-EU Comprehensive Agreement on Investment, it is believed that the European Parliament will have a negative impact on the negotiations of the agreement, which will be put on hold in the short term, and the possibility of being rejected cannot be ruled out in the long term. Even if it gets approved, the European Parliament will be a constant source of noise during future negotiations. Nonetheless, the China-friendly forces within the European Parliament should not be ignored, and China should

seek cooperation with them more proactively.

Liang Xuecun, an associate professor at School of International Studies of Renmin University of China, spoke on “Theoretical Reflections on Integration: Why Does the EU Need Nation-states?” He noted that nationalist and populist parties won 112 seats in the 2019 European Parliament elections, which was not in a majority but effectively undermined the pro-European voter base in four major European countries -- the UK, France, Italy and Poland. The political resonance between the US and Europe also makes it more urgent to refocus on nation-states both in political reality and in theory.

According to Liang Xuecun, existing research literature offers explanations from the perspectives of economic factors and trends of political thoughts for the obstacles to the EU integration. In fact, however, downward economic pressure has the potential to unravel consensus as well as promote the development of integration, as it was for the European Coal and Steel Community which was born in crisis in the 1940s. However, no further explanations have been given from the perspective of trends of political thoughts as to why nationalism remains strong even 70 years into the EU integration. For a long time, the relationship between integration theory and nation-state has provided a relatively stable theoretical expectation for researchers, namely, nation-states will become irrelevant or even be completely replaced as integration deepens. It is a linear process that the

increasing interdependence is prompting nation-states to surrender part of their sovereignty.

Looking back at the European history, one can find the two visions of integration. One is the vision for a cosmopolitan Europe, which was manifested as the military coordination in Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries. According to some historians, the fact that European countries made some statements in the name of the whole Europe at that time proves that the concept of a cosmopolitan Europe had already existed. Recently, cosmopolitan elites are gaining strength in Europe. These transnational capitalist and technocratic elites no longer see the need for nation-states, but believe the boundaries between nation-states are rapidly disappearing.

On the other hand, amid the phenomena of Scottish independence and the resurgence of authoritarianism in Eastern Europe, among others, the commitment to nation-state is declining in Europe. Even those “integration engine” countries which used to regard nation-state and nationalist ideology as taboos sometimes have to choose between “being French or German.” In 2018, Société Générale suffered a serious financial crisis and wanted to seek acquisition by capital or strategic investment. In response, the French Prime Minister said the bank would remain a French bank under whatever circumstances and would be open to bids by French companies only.

A recent view holds that EU members are ceding their formal

sovereignty to the EU in order to retain de facto sovereignty when facing the competition from emerging markets so as to better cope with external competition. Thus, in a dialectical sense, while legal sovereignty may have been reduced, de facto sovereignty is in effect enhanced. In Liang Xuecun's view, the studies on the EU should no longer take the functionalist perspective.

In 1943, David Mitrany pointed out in his book *A Working Peace System* that an integrated Europe should not attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of member states like federalists, but instead should be consciously aware of the boundaries in the interactions with them, and that the development of European integration was not a linear process. When Mitrany wrote the book, he intended to emphasize the peace-promoting effect of integration, instead of the mere efforts to integrate Europe into one country. The development of welfare state also involves the nation-state element, as a welfare state is built on a community, and it is member states rather than the EU that are the main providers of social benefits. Welfare states have to have boundaries, as welfare cannot be extended indefinitely.

On the other hand, however, the EU also needs nation-states. First, nation-states play a homogenizing and politically unifying role. Just as welfare states need borders, so do democracies. It is the combination of democracy and nationalism that has shaped today's societies in European countries. Second, the current alternative to nationalism in social theory in Europe is

multiculturalism. However, the integration of immigrants remains in fact unaddressed.

David Cameron said in a speech in 2011, “Under the doctrine of state multiculturalism we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and apart from the mainstream... We’ve even tolerated these segregated communities behaving in ways that run completely counter to our values.” As a result, countries still need nationalism to build domestic consensus. In short, one important premise for a healthy democracy is the assumption of good will in other people. In a mixed population which is divided, alienated and even resentful, the goodness in others is shattered or destroyed, making it impossible for healthy democracy to exist. Thus, nation-state provides a safeguard for domestic democracy in European countries.

Duan Demin, a tenured associate professor at Political Science Department, School of Government, Peking University, spoke on “Democratic Deficit and Identity in European Integration.” He believes that Europe’s perception of integration is a very important theoretical issue, and important questions, including those on democracy, identity, distribution and justice, are worthy of further discussions.

John Stuart Mill devoted a chapter in his book *Considerations on Representative Government (1861)* to the relationship between nationality and representative government,

and he concluded that “free institutions are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities.” Duan Demin believes that to answer such a question at the level of the European Community, it requires a discussion on the relationship between different identities and democracy in Europe, and how to strengthen the identity at the European level.

Most European countries believe that it is necessary to strengthen the identity at the EU level, but such an identity is definitely of different nature from the nation-state identity. In their view, the establishment of the European Community actually drew lessons from nation-states. They believe that the large-scale wars were all related to strong nationality in nation-states, given the exclusivity of nations. The EU’s identity should not be an exclusive one, nor can it be built while members make an enemy of each other.

In the view of many European intellectuals, strong national identity is a negative and outdated theory. Jürgen Habermas put forward the so-called “constitutional patriotism,” which argues that the European identity should be a universal and inclusive identity based on a set of legal system or rights system. His theory is far too idealist for reality. Over the past decade, the EU has been turning from an inclusive community to a conservative one where the refugee crisis has incited various right-wing populist and nationalist forces.

Duan Demin believes that the democratic deficit in Europe

is becoming increasingly obvious. Democracy is defined in a broad sense here, or is related to issues such as who makes the decisions, whether the decisions are made by European people, or whether the decisions are made for the interests of European people. Many accuse Brussels of short of discussion with member states when making important decisions, which has led to inadequate representation of the interests of member states. In fact, the problem of democratic deficit has a long history in Europe and has been part of the European integration process from the very beginning.

Miriam Sorace from the University of Kent outlined six key elements of the EU's democratic deficit, including the entangled institutional set-up, the "de-parliamentarisation" in legislation and policy making, inadequate influence of members of the European Parliament and other problems at institutional level, as well as the more fundamental problem at identity level, namely "no European people, no European democracy." In fact, the issues at institutional level contradict with those at identity level: the stronger the influence of the EU system, the higher the level of democratic deficit, as many EU institutions are not adequately representative, nor do adequate number of people identify with the EU.

Since questions have been raised about democratic deficit, the EU has been stepping up its efforts to reform. However, accusations against democratic deficit have been rising rather

than falling. Democracy is, in essence, a kind of majority rule, which requires certain identity and recognition of common rules to implement. The EU is neither a democratic state nor an international organization in a traditional sense. Unlike in the US where a high level of national identity, an identity that gradually came into being during the long colonial history and the fight against Britain, had already been in place when the federal regime was first established, similar identity has not yet been established in the EU.

In the famous “Maastricht Judgment” in Germany, a German citizen accused the German government of violating the basic democratic rights of German citizens by signing the Maastricht Treaty and ceding various sovereign rights to other institutions without the consent of German people. The German Constitutional Court ruled that the treaty itself was not unconstitutional. If the treaty were ruled unconstitutional, Germany would not be able to enter into other types of international treaties or join other organizations thereafter.

The “not unconstitutional” verdict is not surprising, but the fact that a constitutional court of a country decides whether the government’s action is constitutional or not is in itself an indication that the democracy at the European level has yet to take shape. Democracy at the EU level can only be a true democracy when there is “the European people.” In other words, without “the European people,” there will be no EU democracy and the

democratic deficit can never be solved.

Sorace's theory drew a lot of criticism, and was regarded as being outdated by the mainstream views, which argued that Sorace simply applied the traditional nation-state model to the EU so much so that it seemed Europe had to become a nation-state before it could really be integrated and establish democracy. Jürgen Habermas believed that democracy at the European level can be achieved without a high degree of popular identity, but what he proposed as identity through shared values also failed to stand the test of reality. Therefore, democratic deficit is a real problem in Europe, which is rooted in the lack of a collective identity at the EU level. The nationalist tone that exist alongside the expansion of a collective identity is at odds with the modern democratic values the EU is trying to promote, making the EU's attempts to address the democratic deficit caught in structural trouble.

Lü Xiaoyu, an assistant professor of the School of International Studies, Peking University, gave a speech titled "The European Crisis With A Regional Approach." In his view, by taking a regional approach, one should examine not only political mechanisms within a country, but also problems at higher levels, such as analyzing the EU as a single entity.

For decades, the EU has been regarded as a model of modern regionalization and an effective response to globalization. But why is it facing such a serious crisis now? Taking Brexit as an

example, various British prime ministers pointed out that Brexit offers the right chance to build a more modern UK. In this context, how can Europe continue to be an effective response to global crisis? As can be seen from the current political movements across Europe, the EU mainly faces criticism on two fronts: being over protectionist or over liberal, both of which have to do with the attitudes for or against globalization.

The EU is also facing challenges on two fronts. One is at the governance level, namely, how can a multi-tiered governance system respond effectively to globalization. Another is at the normative level, how can the EU, as the norm maker in the region, adjust the norms to meet the challenges in the new situation. Key points to consider for solving the crises include how the EU handled crises in the past and where its political legitimacy comes from. The EU's attempt to move beyond the nation-state framework requires a re-examination of the principles of "democracy." However, there have been no clear answers to these questions.

Starting from 2010, both Europe and China have been facing political challenges, which has led them to a similar situation where both need to rely on the spirit of "crossing the river by feeling the stones" to explore a way out of crisis.

Luis Cordeiro Rodrigues, an associate professor with Yuelu Academy, Hunan University, spoke on "European Capuchin Missionaries, the Problem of Evil, and Decolonization of

Philosophy of Religion.” He believes that the European theological concepts of “good” and “evil” are not just a metaphysical discussion about god’s mind and will. On the contrary, the concepts sometimes feature certain social functions in a way that a set of hierarchical order is constructed among Christians, whites, and other religions and races. One of the effects of such functions is to depict black African women as evil as white people can imagine.

Such religious construction justifies behaviors such as colonialism and slave trade. For example, in the 17th and 18th centuries in Angola, Franciscan missionaries from Europe distorted Christian theological doctrines to denigrate African women with the concept of “evil.” They depicted Nzingha, Angola’s national hero who led the struggle against Portuguese colonists and slave trade, as an evil cannibal in order to defend Portuguese colonization in the region.

The current racial and religious prejudice and discrimination against certain communities in Europe can also be attributed to such religious views. Discrimination against black people is the conceptual basis of discrimination of various forms in this era. According to such views, different religions and races are to be measured by “rationalist” standards, and placed on a scale of value to be rated as superior or inferior. Superior religions and races need to civilize inferior ones. It is obvious that some heritage of European religious philosophy needs to be

decolonized in today's world.

Enrico Fardella, a tenured associate professor with Department of History, Peking University, gave a speech titled "Italy's New Centrality in the EU and Transatlantic Relations and its Impact on Sino-European Relations." He analyzed the impact of the changes in Italy's diplomatic relations on Sino-European relations.

Since World War II, Italy's diplomacy has maintained "two anchors and one baseline," which refer to the EU, NATO and the Greater Mediterranean region. The opening-up to China from 2015 to 2019 partly changed its traditional alliance relationship, but Italy's foreign policy has been widely criticized for its anti-US, anti-EU populist tendencies. Mario Draghi's rise to power in 2021 marked a shift in Italian foreign policy and a retreat of right-wing populist forces.

Draghi has a lengthy career as Governor of the Bank of Italy and President of the European Central Bank, and he obtained his PhD degree in the US. Brexit and Merkel's retirement have both provided good opportunities for Draghi to boost his standing and prestige in the EU. Given Italy's favorable position in the EU's COVID-19 relief fund, if Draghi pushes through effective reforms with the fund, it is likely to strengthen Italy's international position and make a positive impact on the EU and its role in the transatlantic competition.

Draghi recalibrated Italy's foreign policy and strengthened

its central role in EU affairs after he took office. He prioritized the roles of the EU and NATO, and consolidated Italy's traditional alliance with France and Germany. Amid the US's increasing inclination to unilateral actions (such as withdrawal from Afghanistan and forming AUKUS), the recent flurry of diplomatic interactions between Italy, France and Germany reflect the growing EU solidarity. The diplomatic actions of the Draghi administration have profound implications for transatlantic relations and the EU, and will also allow China-EU relations to develop toward a more pragmatic direction.

During the Q&A session, participants discussed various topics including "Cakeism."

Cui Hongjian: "Cakeism" intends to separate political issues from economic ties and deal with China in a different way. We do not think this is right. We can talk about competition between China and the EU, but competition comes second to cooperation. We only talk about competition and differences on the basis of cooperation and consensus. However, international relations is an interactive process. If we don't come up with something better, we will eventually have to get along with each other under a mutually acceptable behavioral pattern. The pressure to make relationship innovation is on China, and we have to play a better game than the EU.

Li Qiang: China is against politicizing economic and trade relations, and to some extent accepts "Cakeism." When it comes

to trade sanctions, we have been tit-for-tat against most countries, but not the UK. The UK has imposed quite a few economic and trade sanctions against China, but China imposed much fewer sanctions against the UK. This shows that China's central government regards the UK as still playing an important think tank role in the Five Eyes Alliance (FVEY), although it appears to be a declining empire. The UK is sophisticated and farsighted in diplomacy, and we should not always think that it follows suit with the US. In fact, the UK has certain influence on the US on some issues.

Feng Zhongping: "Cakeism" is a very vivid theoretical analysis. In fact, the UK chooses between China and the US. I think it is feeling empty psychologically after Brexit, as there is a vacuum period after leaving an organization. Biden and Johnson are two different kinds of people. Biden publicly called Boris Johnson a "physical and emotional clone" of Trump. In the long run, the UK is not bound to side with the US. It left the EU but it cannot leave Europe. China still needs to cooperate with Europe and the US when necessary.