

No. 3, December 15, 2006

The Changing Globality of the Atlantic Hemisphere

Gert Schmidt

University of Erlangen-Nuremberg
Institute of Sociology

Abstract: At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the European Union (EU) and the US are presenting different positions in an increasingly globalized world. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, the emergence of a “New Europe” as a potentially powerful global region encouraged the hope that a strengthened Europe would counterbalance the remaining superpower. However, the end of the Cold War has made the United States the foremost global power and put the “New America” in opposition to the “New Europe.” This article discusses some of the issues that separate the US as a global nation from the EU as a global region.

The “New Europe” - A Global Region

(1) There is hardly any doubt: with the beginning of the new century a “New Europe” has stepped onto the stage of world affairs. The keyword “New Europe” is historically attached at least to three topics of serious reasoning and it is linked to an irritating polemic by the former United States Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld:

(1.1) First, the notion of a “New Europe” is attached to the notion of an “Old Europe,” the Europe that was the leading world power, the economic and cultural center of the nineteenth century. [1] The “Old Europe,” in which so many movements of modernity leading up to the present time started, was more or less the center of the globe and also in many respects the platform for the United States. However, it is also the Europe that created communism and fascism not only as worlds of ideas, but also as modes of social praxis. Furthermore, it was the Europe that had started the two World Wars, laid the ground for the Cold War that for many years had designed the world politically and economically.

(1.2) Second, talking about “New Europe” should then easily be connected with reminders of the rebuilding of Europe after World War II. The “New Europe” is built on the tradition of divided Europe after 1945: the

rebuilding of Europe upon the background of the conflict between the West and the East, symbolized by the Marshall Plan, the Iron Curtain, NATO, the Warsaw Pact, and Comecon. To talk about Europe in that historical context is to talk about the impacts of the soft hegemony of the United States on the one hand, and the less soft hegemony of Soviet power on the other hand.

(1.3) Third, there is the most recent historical scenario of course: the momentum of the actual Europeanization process after the end of Soviet hegemony and the particular global power constellation after World War II, leaving the United States as the unmatched military world power. This “New Europe” on the one hand recalls the options and horizons of pre-World War I Europe, while on the other hand it is searching for Europe’s appropriate place in the twenty-first century global geo-political scenario. It will be this “New Europe” that this paper will focus on.

(1.4) It is exactly this “New Europe” that has been the target of an irritating labeling attack by Donald Rumsfeld. When some core nations of Europe, like France and Germany, refused to participate in the second Iraq War, whereas others, like Italy, Poland or the Czech Republic did join the so called “coalition of the willing,” the US Secretary of Defense polemically posed *his* distinction between “Old Europe” and “New Europe” trying to put a wedge into the European formation.

(2) The “New Europe” came into being after the long multifaceted progress of the twentieth century’s Europeanization processes, and as the effect of a historical event. The modern Europeanization process began in the 1920s as a reaction to the great European catastrophe of World War I (Aristide Briand and Gustav Stresemann having been famous representatives of that period). It proceeded through the fifties and the seventies in the aftermath of World War II and as an element of the “Cold War scenario” (with Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer as most important leaders). Until 1990, this process increasingly put Western Europe, represented by a set of institutions and agencies like the European Union (EU) or the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), into the position of a new actor on the globe in terms of economics and politics, while the Eastern European societies as members of the “Second World” were stuck within the structure of Soviet hegemony. The surprisingly abrupt end of this hegemony opened the commitment for a “New Europe” by expanding the Western Europeanization, but also by transcending the European idea and realities of the post-World War II period.

(3) In trying to grasp the status of this “New Europe,” a comparative point of view should be helpful, focusing on the two other big and relatively integrated regional complexes of global scope and scale, i.e. the United States on the one hand, and the emerging configuration of highly developed Asian societies on the other hand. Three dimensions of comparative analysis invite a closer look at

- resources: economic strengths, manpower, industrial structures, military assets
- institutional arrangements and societal structures, such as the pattern of institutionalizing identity, forms of regulations and norms
- dominant ideologies, worldviews, ultimate values, ideas and ideals.

Three rather different cases of structuring and integration as global regions have to be pointed out. The differences are important on the level of resources of course, but more important are the differences on the level of the institutional arrangements and ideological integration. The United States is a nation-state; though it is called “the United States,” it is,

compared to Europe or the Asian configuration of states, a very highly integrated nation. The “New Europe” is in many respects a challenging new figure of a multi-nation-state, exposing a peculiar type of globality in terms of inclusion patterns and exclusion patterns concerning economy, legal systems, and representative political action. The “New Europe” is a partly state-like configuration composed of different nations. These nations do form in some respects a kind of supra-nation, but there is no doubt that there is a qualitative difference between the United States of America as nation and the European Union as a configuration of nations. The “New Asias” is the third regional setting of global impact, and represents some different conditions of globality. The “New Asias” may be grasped as a more or less loosely connected network of different nations (and different types of nations), a network identified by common economic interests of a huge region, and by some common cultural understandings. In the near future, this network is not likely to produce an institutional and ideological integration and identity on the level of the United States of America or even on the level of the emerging “New Europe.”

(4) On the one hand, the “New Europe” is characterized by a strong dynamic economy, which regarding many important variables (gross national product and trade figures, for example) may soon show up as number one in the world. On the other hand, the “New Europe” is characterized by a relatively low-g geared institutional integration pattern. It still has a relatively weak status as a political unit, and its internal differences concerning its socio-economic structure, its culture, and its politico-ideological landscape are tremendous. As the institutional and politico-ideological integration of “New Europe” deepens, it will also develop as a political actor on the level of world affairs, but it will probably not develop an actor status in world affairs comparable to that of the United States in the coming decades. Regardless of its structural weakness, “New Europe” will become a voice to be heard in many arenas in a multilateral world.

(5) There is no serious controversy in the debate: whatever a New World Order will look like, the “New Europe” will not merely be a junior partner of a dominant USA, rather it will be an autonomous actor. “New Europe’s” emergence already made itself noticed as a dramatic redefinition of the Atlantic Bridge, that is, the coalition that was built after World War II to counter the Soviet hegemony of Eastern Europe. Within a couple of years, the relationships between United States and Europe have changed substantially. The aforementioned voice of an American Secretary of Defense regarding his special notion of “New Europe” is only a sign of this important change. The current Atlantic Debate should not cause the new hope regarding Europe in the European historical and geopolitical context to fall into oblivion: after two disastrous wars and forty years of Cold War, the vision of a politically and economically united Europe is strongly tied to the hopes of peace, economic strength and prosperity for many. [2] Without a doubt, however, the issue of “Eurohope,” that is, the worldwide expectation that the “New Europe” should function as a leading “soft-power” that enhances the values of enlightenment and human progress is also an answer to the changed world power scenario after the post-World War II period. “Eurohope” is particularly articulated as reaction to the “New America” after the fading of the Soviet regime. The combination of the end of the Soviet threat, the emergence of the US as the only military superpower, and the diminishing role of the US military as a shield protecting the European half-continent against the Eastern enemy puts the political unit of Europe into a new position. Furthermore, the expansion of Europe into the regions of formerly Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe underlined the growing importance of the “New Europe.” A number of politically important shifts accompanied the end of the

post-World War II threat constellation. The West no longer spoke with a single voice, and a new awareness for the ultraregulating potential of transnational institutions like the United Nations, representing principles of universal values and procedures of consensual control of world affairs, soon evolved in opposition to the auspices of a superpower dominated New World Order.

(6) Europe's chance and challenge was to identify itself in the global world as an influential independent soft power enforcing principles of international law and justice via strengthening transnational institutions and agreements. Blending traditional European intellectuals' motives and arguments critical of America and Americanization (focusing on an alleged lack of culture, on materialism and consumerism) with opposition to the "New America," identified as George W. Bush's brutishly acting superpower, the "New Europe's" self-image is nurtured by the idea of normative and moral superiority. Particularly regarding the basic problem of war and peace, Europe addresses itself as being more educated and sophisticated than the US [3], thanks to its own history and geo-political situation. In addition, regarding the new global ecological threats many experts and intellectuals see Europe in a progressive political and moral position in contrast to US policy. Clearly, the hopes regarding the "New Europe" are closely bound up with hopes for a new globality in terms of quality of global policy. According to many observers in Europe and the US, if the US as the only military superpower is not able to shift from its soft-hegemony leadership role of the post-World War II scenario into good leadership in a new global age, the "New Europe" has to step in as an independent global actor, promoting the issues of global civility.

(7) After having elaborated on the hope regarding the "New Europe's" role in world affairs, we should turn towards some observations, from which the position of the "New Europe" looks less promising, and from which some connotations of articulated "Eurohope" may even be decoded as short-sighted counterproductive propaganda formula:

(7.1) The "New Europe" regarding its self-definition as a global actor deserves a closer critical analysis. The "New Europe" does have the problem of being essentially an *incomplete* global player. The declared actual autonomy from and the proudly presented opposition to the United States are based on a rather peculiar combination of comfort and weakness. As long as Europe is not forced to show up as an able hard power-unit, basically relying on the US military arsenal, and as long as it does not need to be real tough in the world [4], it can play the rather luxurious role of the soft power agent. Europe plays the role of the friendly global social worker, and leaves the role of the nasty global police officer to the Americans. However, this game could be put to an end by the White House, whereby Europe would be drawn into the stream of American global policy. In short: "Eurohope" might be a phony formula, a formula of strong moral rhetoric (at the costs of another party), promising something that cannot be maintained against realpolitik.

(7.2) As long as the relatively comfortable low-gear process of social integration does not stir up problems of basic imbalances and cultural controversies within the region, the picture of the "New Europe" looks quite a bit nicer than it could potentially turn out to be. To put it another way: right now the "New Europe" is still in a relatively comfortable phase of integration processes, that are not yet producing the unintended consequences of latent structural problems that could surface during further phases of integration, and as consequences of steps towards integration already taken.

(7.3) Problems for the next steps of European integration cannot be put

aside easily, problems deriving from the fact that the “New Europe” is growing from relatively rich regions towards incorporating poorer regions. The economical and socio-political challenges will be tremendous (as the process of German reunification has documented clearly). One does not need excessive imagination to foresee serious problems for Europe coming up with labor mobility, religious and ethnic conflicts in the Balkan area, and with the empowerment of Muslim groups in some of the East/Southeast European candidate states for integration. The fragility of the “New Europe” on political and cultural levels has been documented only recently, when polls clearly showed, that the acceptance of the “New Europe” went down dramatically in some of its core societies.

(7.4) Aside from the centrifugal energies within the region of the “New Europe,” it is questionable that a consolidated European foreign policy on the same qualitative level of foreign policy made by the United States or the People’s Republic of China will be seen in the near future. Again, the formula “Eurohope” evokes an “imagined” identity (a collective, and an institutionalized unit of action) that is backed by a weak and precarious reality.

(7.5) In the global age, the handling of immigration is one of the crucial social problem areas of realizing a political region’s claim to representing universals of humanity, and meeting the standards of enlightened social philosophy. Compared to a nation-state like the US (with a tradition of being perpetually confronted with the problems of amalgamating foreigners), and notwithstanding substantial labor migration processes in many European societies in the past as well as a long history of post-colonial migration into Great Britain and France, Europe had only minimal experience with immigration and the challenges of assimilation until the end of the last century. It is therefore less prepared to internalize a cosmopolitan globality, that is, to establish a global society and nation within its borders, along the lines of the US. Migration processes within Europe will necessitate much bureaucratic and political-ideological attention. Immigration from outside Europe into the region of the “New Europe” is likely to start serious conflict and debates. In this respect, the European Union will be forced to catch-up, and this process is going to be costly and harmful. [5] Thus, “Eurohope” may be just a lofty promise.

(7.6) In spite of the Madrid bombing and the recent terror acts in London, Europeans still lack the very specific collective experience that is comparable to what 9/11 has affected in the United States. The complicated positioning of the Madrid event within the cross-Atlantic Iraq discourse debacle did initially soften the awareness of the character of terrorist war in Europe (the background argument running somewhat as follows: going with the US makes your country vulnerable, opposing the US makes your country safe). However, the London explosions and the discovery of terrorists’ plots in other European countries afterwards brought Europeans closer to 9/11. The challenge for Europe to develop a political position and strategy to adequately respond to the new quality of conflict that is bound up with globally acting religious fanaticism and/or poverty driven terrorism, lies still ahead. In brief, the vision of “Eurohope” is still not fully facing the peculiar challenge of the new quality of terrorism.

(8) Synthesizing these arguments, I would like to suggest the status of *ambivalence* for the “New Europe”: Europe is obviously now an independent world power in some respects. Yet when things get tough its status as a world power becomes precariously weak, as the Balkan crisis in the 1990s exposed.

(9) Emerging as a Western power independent from the US, the “New

Europe” can be seen as a power center next to the US or even a counter-veiling power that can stand up against the American nation and government in global affairs. [6] A number of intellectuals on both sides of the Atlantic envision a seemingly unavoidable degradation of the US in the long run (not only as moral authority, but also as economic power and political leader). They hope that America’s decline will be accompanied by the rise of the “New Europe” as a central agent of a historically new mode of multilateral global societal networking built on soft-power resources and institutionalized peace enforcement on a global level. This special “Eurohope” is based on some highly problematical anticipation. “Eurohope” is faced with the following: for next few decades, the “New Europe” will be a problem area in process (and not always *in progress*). Far from developing a quasi-nation status on the global stage, it will produce severe internal political and cultural problems that will define its limits as an actor on global level. In short, the globality of the “New Europe” is of the second order in the ranking of global power relations.

(10) Reviewing Europe’s position concerning many problems of global scope and scale on the level of UN consultation and decision processes shows no solid proof of a normative and moral supremacy of Europe over the US. European ecological positions are not less economically interested than those of the US, and Europe’s handling of the problems of the poor and the poorest in the world is also rather pragmatic.

(11) The project of the “New Europe” is one of the major historical achievements of our time, yet it is ridden with problems. The economic resources and the political potential of the European region are enormous. However, the prospects for conflicts and contradictions are immense too. The talk about a “New Europe” has been nurtured to a good deal by the worldwide negative response to George W. Bush’s “New America,” yet the “New Europe” is unable to determine the global policy of the Western world. [7] Moreover, Europe will probably continue to play second fiddle in the alliance militarily and economically for many years to come. [8] Still, the world political scenario seems to ask for a strong “New Europe” and for Europeans as co-engineers of the global age. Whether the “New Europe’s” engineers will do a better job than others is an open question, however. The visions for a “New Europe” are on trial.

The “New America” – A Global Nation

(12) It is not easy to qualify the triple nature of the USA’s supremacy adequately in the present world theater: hegemony, empire, and superpower. There are debates and quite a lot of writing on any of these formulae, some scientific in character, others polemical. To my understanding it would be meaningful to develop the notion of a *global nation* to position the USA in the emerging global age, and to characterize her particular status of globality.

(12.1) The USA is representing global power in terms of economic and military resources based on national grounds like no other unit. Germany, Japan and other strong economies are also global actors as nations, and globally acting firms like Siemens, Toyota or British Petroleum (BP) do represent enormous global power. However, only supra-national institutions like the European Union or a forthcoming Asian association, or eventually a new significantly empowered United Nations, would theoretically be able to match the USA.

(12.2) For the time being, the USA is the only integrated global nation, that is, the only actor that can act relatively autonomously from all other units to defend or promote its particularistic interests. Thus, as the *only* global nation the USA is in many respects dominant among the global powers.

(12.3) Given the political complexity and the internal clumsiness of organizations like the United Nation or the European Union, and given the military weakness of all other globally relevant actors, for many more years the USA will be the *only* global power able to enforce universal value standards and international political consensus backed by the United Nations, or other institutions representing global society. Last but not least, for better or worse for the rest of the world, the USA is the *only* militarily capable global actor. [9]

(13) As military superpower the USA is substantiated via the technological standards and sheer quantity of its assets, troop as well as transportation capacities and software logistics available around the globe.

(13.1) Its outstanding status as economic factor is first of all qualified not as producer for the world but via the volume and performance of US consumer spending. This lays ground to high dependency of the producer economies Japan, China and the Europeans on the ups and downs of this huge single market.

(13.2) Regarding culture the USA is a superpower not only with reference to pop music and Hollywood soap operas, but also via excellence in many fields of science and the arts, and via the soft-power influence of specific lifestyle elements concerning individualism, mobility, leisure time behavior patterns, dress and food; in sum, the worldwide success of the “American Way of Life.”

(13.3) A most important challenge bound up with American national globalism is given by the tension generated via the overlapping of particular national interests with the needs and problems of the global age, the consequence of which is a pseudo-legitimation of particularistic goals as global necessities by the single global nation, the USA.

(14) The emergence of the “New America” and its positioning as superpower is essentially the result of two historical circumstances: the dissolution of the former Soviet Bloc and the Soviet Union as a world power, and the events of the 9/11 terror attacks destroying the World Trade Center in New York City and damaging the Pentagon in Washington, DC. The collapse of Soviet hegemony laid the ground for redesigning and upgrading the American program to manage the world. [10] We may recall, during the 1990s the US almost more or less automatically took over the role of the leading power in the world, sometimes acting within contexts of international management of affairs, but also showing up as a self-interested actor not always in smooth concert with its allies or with the institutions of trans-national global responsibility. The Balkan crisis, the first Iraq War, the debates and decision processes regarding the Kyoto protocol, and some minor economic confrontations, are clearly displaying the ambivalence of universalistic versus particularistic globalism characterizing the political actions of the global nation USA.

(15) Quite a few people in Europe were not pleased to experience this “New America.” The label *Pax Americana*, and wordings like the *New World Order* did not go down well with most liberal intellectuals. Yet whatever critical attitudes that had been developed during the post-war decades against the soft hegemony of America, basically the image of the United

States had been positive throughout Western Europe and many world regions outside the Communist Bloc (and even within the Communist Bloc, in which for many the label “America” stood for hope and promise). However, the “New America” did not succeed in sustaining its former image as a soft-power leader. A new bullying America started to show its face during the Reagan and first Bush presidencies, especially regarding the handling of economic tensions with Europe and Japan, but also facing the United Nations. Clinton’s presidency in some way presented a more sophisticated version of the leadership ambitions of the “New America,” and consequently did not meet the interests of many of those in his own country, who felt they were the winners of the Cold War. The pre-9/11 administration of George W. Bush seemed not to be anxious about the fading international reputation of the USA, exposing a quasi-religious American meliorism, while on the other side of the Atlantic, the critics of the “New America” soon became somewhat simplistic and did not consider adequately America’s new position in a changed global world scenario after 1989. The tensions and damages produced were many. The status of the United Nations and of other international and trans-national institutions and agreements were at stake. Ecological challenges and the handling of poverty in the Third World revealed rather different ideologies and interests among representatives of the First World, and the explosive situation in the Near East also stressed differences in views and interests between European governments and the US administration. The topic of uni- versus multi-lateralism became an issue, leaving many Europeans and some Asians with wishful thinking for a multi-polar world, instead of enduring bullying American handling of world affairs. In short, the single superpower USA after the demise of the Soviet Union did not gain much positive acceptance as the ideal world leader by the rest of the world.

(16) 9/11 radicalized and empowered the “New America.” The emerging new world power constellation (the balancing game between the US as the global nation, the New Europe as a new world power, and the United Nations as an institution of global influence) was hit most effectively by 9/11. After a short period of worldwide sympathy and shock, it soon became evident that the “New America” facing a new quality of international conflict was not going to turn towards mobilizing and organizing police action and policy building on the level of the international community. Instead the Bush administration declared the, or more precisely, *its*, “War on Terror,” asking the international community for partisanship. The cases of Afghanistan and the second Iraq War showed that the superpower America was looking for partners, but that it did not hesitate to use its military supremacy on its own. In November 2004, with the reelection of George W. Bush, it was evident that *this* “New America” was rather solidly grounded in the social infrastructure and political culture of American society. In short, the *Pax Americana* was potentially positioned against a *Pax United Nations* – and the concept and the idea of global nation USA was put against the concept and the emphatic idea of global society.

(17) In 2006 the “New America” is already historical reality, and yet it is also a project still under construction. In the words of Samuel P. Huntington: “Americans can embrace the world, that is, open their country to other peoples and cultures, or they can reshape those other peoples and cultures in terms of American values, or they can maintain their society and culture distinct from those of other peoples.” [11] These are the options Samuel Huntington discusses in the final chapter of his book *Who Are We? – The Challenges to America’s National Identity*: cosmopolitanism (incorporation of multiethnicism, multiracialism, and multiculturalism), imperialism (using the national power to shape the world, and building an American empire), and nationalism (preservation

and enhancement of the classical American identity, focusing on Anglo-Protestant culture and religiosity).

(18) It is my thesis that the USA as a global nation is exposing simultaneously all three of Huntington's alternatives: cosmopolitanism, imperialism, and nationalism. As to the concept of global nation, the alternatives laid out by Huntington do not refer to different options (or choices), but should be understood as variables of a global nation's strategies. The status of a global nation necessarily includes all three.

(18.1) Cosmopolitanism is built into modern global sociality and culture, and it cannot be totally neglected by any party taking part in the emerging global age. Modern communication technology, and the cultural dynamics linked to it enforce participation of all global actors in cosmopolitan issues and discourses (exchange of ideas, acceptance of discourses about universal values etc.). Not equally accepted and realized by all global players, cosmopolitanism has emerged as a kind of basic consensus of international communication and interaction. And there is no doubt that the USA especially has taken part in cosmopolitanism for decades, and in many cases it has been a promoter of it.

(18.2) It would be naive to expect a global nation to survive as a global nation without imperialism. Therefore also the United States by the very nature of its global nation status cannot refrain from imperialism, that is, without exercising power in the sense of Max Weber's basic concept of power. There are, however, different levels and instruments of imperialism: military force, holding crucial political positions, or exploiting economic opportunities. History shows that it is unavoidable that some kind of imperialism is required to sustain asymmetry. And sustaining asymmetry is one of the major aims necessary to the interests of a global nation. The necessity to control and manage uncertainty of the relevant environment (regarding crucial resources like water, oil or markets), reacting to international frictions (ethnic wars in sensible areas), and strong particularistic demands (pushed by certain domestic industries, or by influential religious groups etc.) are sources for enforced imperialism by a powerful global nation.

(18.3) A global nation is a nation. Historical signification and functional as well as symbolic exclusion versus inclusion mechanisms are basics of any type of collective identity, particularly regarding nations. The status of global nation does not transcend these basics. This distinguishes for example global nation from empire. [12][13]

(19) Is the superpower-global nation USA, hardly born, already in decay? Not only journalists or amateur macrohistorians but also serious scientists are sometimes inclined to turn to past grand history and biology as resource for understanding and explaining the present, and for forecasting the future of cultures and nations. It is little wonder that the USA as a world power after 1989 is compared with ancient Rome, the British Empire of the nineteenth century, and its lifecycle status is observed and debated with interest. It is remarkable—just as the USA is emerging as the *only* military superpower, and begins to settle into its new role, for many critical experts the country seems already to be headed downhill. [14]

(19.1) The dynamics of the global environment seem clearly to indicate a relative loss of US supremacy during the coming decades in terms of economic strength. New economic superpowers like China and India will enter the arena, and Europe will increasingly become an autonomous regional actor with regard to many aspects of global economic affairs, unquestionably acting independently of American economic and political policy.

(19.2) Regarding politics, the USA will not only face stronger opposition by other nation-states and political alliances, but also via the influence of transnational institutions that will become less controlled and dominated by US government. The USA certainly will be an enormously important element in emerging structures of global governance, but the US government itself, notwithstanding the power it may have in the future to influence and block certain initiatives, will have less potential to dictate decisions in the future than today. The deteriorated reputation of the USA, the tremendous loss of soft power during the last decade, documented via labels like “Abu Ghraib” and “Guantanamo,” is one of the most important developments of world history at the beginning new century.

(19.3) The status of US supremacy has been also reflecting internal economic and social structures and processes. One major source of strength should remain quite unchallenged for at least the near future: its importance as a consumer market for a wide spectrum of goods. Regarding other aspects of economy the auspices seem to be rather mixed: in spite of the size of its economy the USA is not generally first in export (especially not in many fields of industrial production), and regarding technological leadership US firms often rate second to Japanese and European competitors (for example: automobiles and consumers’ electronics). The American economy has displayed admirable innovative potential and flexibility in the last decades, but at high social cost in terms of socio-economic polarization and negative consequences for employees and families (rising poverty rate, shrinking middle class income, forced mobility, and increasing number of extremely low paid jobs). [15]

(20) For many observers, and not only for standard foes of America and scorers of American lifestyle-culture, the following impression is strong: the “New America” looks rather old-fashioned, trying to stabilize asymmetry in many respects for its own national interests. The USA is displaying itself as a global nation with high scores on imperialism and high scores on nationalism too, but low scores on cosmopolitanism, emphasizing primarily military supremacy and political arrogance dangerously “supercharged” via a quasi-religious message.

(20.1) The US seems to be lacking cosmopolitan potential and acceptance in the world for legitimate leadership in the emerging global age. On the other hand: there is no historico-functional alternative in sight to “New America’s” role as a global power being able to enforce global consensus (for example in case of proliferation of nuclear weapons).

(20.2) It certainly would be misguided reducing the outlook to negative scenarios for the United States. Especially in reference to the process of globalization, there are interesting positive and even fascinating options for America in a non-American century that one has to take into account. Whatever the emerging global age will look like, the economic and cultural impact of America will be crucial despite the possible loss of its privileged status of being the *only* global nation. In sum, the auspices of today’s world without American leadership seem not too bright.

(21) Superpowers are normally not prepared to be constructively receptive to criticism and advice from outside. Also in the case of the USA today, while hoping for change for the better, we may have to rely on internal changes of the political system and culture of the US. The history of the Vietnam conflict proves this formula: this war was terminated not by military defeat or by international political pressure, but via mobilization from within.

(21.1) The short history of the “New America” delivers ample topics for

internal innovation indeed, as the first two decades of America's new supremacy produced the need for rethinking the project of America, for rebuilding "New America" reacting on external pressures as well as on internal necessities. First of all, the US government and the American people will be forced to step down from the idea of creating a "New World Order" based on American definitions of democracy and economic rules, and face new realities of globalization. America's missionary impetus will have to be curbed substantially. In addition, as it turned out with some brutality after "Katrina," coming to grips with the social frictions and ethnic cleavages within its own society is the other task. The capability of American society to produce changes should not be underestimated, as the New Deal, the Civil Rights Movement and the termination of the Vietnam engagement have shown. The "New America" may be on the verge of such change again as a result of the worsening of the Iraq engagement fiasco, and backlash from the "Katrina" debacle.

(21.2.) The present crisis of the "New America" rephrases old themes of American foreign policy and society building: aggressive meliorism, arrogance, hypocrisy, racial and socio-economic imbalances. However, there are also new challenges concerning ecology, world poverty, and the global battle regarding basic resources of reproduction – like drinking water, oil, gas, and clean air.

(22) Regarding the external dynamics we may conclude, a degradation of the USA from hegemony to just one important power center among others in a multi-polar global context is likely to happen, and especially for the "New Europe" such a development should not only be a chance to perform as an global actor partly independent from the USA, but also a challenge to organize itself as a *real* global power. However, the deterioration of US hegemony will not make the world more predictable or peaceful.

(23) Regarding the internal factors, the nature of the US global position is highly problematic too. As Norman Birnbaum has said, "Americans will have to decide if they want to be citizens of a republic or members of a huge protestant parish." [16] Undoubtedly, the implications of such a choice for the future globality of the USA will be immense.

(24) Regarding positioning in the emerging global age, the question of an adequate option for the USA is still under investigation, and a stable profile of the "New America" is not realized yet. It would be naïve to predict a grand revolution of American society. However, at least a new social movement seems to be needed that would eventually creatively combine the irritation about what is done *in*, and *to*, the world in the name of America. During the 1960s, American society experienced a social movement that began to overturn the ugly traditions of racism and the neglect of poverty in the country. At the beginning of the new millennium, the US needs a social movement to grasp the responsibilities of the US as the only global nation in a world scenario of new and unprecedented qualities and challenges of globality. [17]

A final remark

(25) Notwithstanding internal conflicts and tensions, the Western alliance has shaped history in the second half of twentieth century, especially during the East-West controversy. It is not easy to decide what has been more decisive in ending the post-World War II period of modern history: the collapse of the Soviet Empire, or the economic and cultural dynamics

of globalization. But there can be no doubt that since the beginning of the twenty-first century the “Atlantic Bridge” is no longer what it used to be. Globalization and the vanishing of the bipolar scenario has not only repositioned Europe and the United States as world regions in themselves, but also changed substantially the relationship of these two regions, and thereby the political and economic nature of the West. Besides the impact of the emergence of the “New Asias” configuration on the stage of global history, the re-emergence of Europe as a world power on the one hand, and the status of the United States as the only global nation on the other, are going to define the first decades of the new century.

Notes

The first part of this article is based on a paper for the first “Global Futures of World Regions Conference – The New Europe,” April 14-16, 2005, at Stony Brook University, and the second part on a paper for the second conference meeting on “The New America,” September 22-23, 2005 at the *Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung* (Social Science Research Center Berlin).

I am very indebted to Wolf Schäfer and Hansen Hsu, who both helped immensely in clarifying many arguments, and in developing this paper in the direction towards decent American English. For all remaining defects and problems I take responsibility and blame.

[1] Wolf Schäfer, “From the End of European History to the Globality of World Regions: A Research Perspective,” *Globality Studies Journal*, www.stonybrook.edu/globality/Articles/no1.html (accessed October 15, 2006), no. 1, June 5, 2006.

[2] For many millions of people, “The New Europe” is a strong promise of progress towards normal standards of western civilization regarding democratic structures, economic culture close to what one may label: “soft capitalism,” enjoying some mixture of capitalistic efficiency and social welfare state effectivity, and integration into the global society. This European dimension of “new hope” regarding Europe will not get adequate discussion in this article. I will focus on the foreign policy aspect of it, and its positioning regarding America in particular.

[3] According to the “new world view” on the issue of peace and war after the end of the East-West confrontation, any kind of preemptive war should be ruled out, and use of military power be only acceptable on basis of transnational institutions like the UN or a new construction of NATO.

[4] The first Iraq War and the Kosovo affair have shown the inability of the Europeans to engage effectively in even only minor military action. This not only for technological and logistical reasons, but first of all for reasons of integrated policy orientation and ideological mobilization.

[5] Regressive measurements of the US government after 9-11 have changed the American situation evidently to the worse, at least for the time being. The European Union, however, is not better off; it has been struggling with immigration policy for years. “Fortress Europe” has become a political watchword.

[6] This is basically what “Eurohope—Authors” like Tzvetan Todorov have in mind. See his valuable study *Le Nouveau Désordre Mondial* (Robert Laffont: Paris 2003).

[7] Recent debate on the nature and the future prospects of globality, and

the actual geopolitical discourse, has been and will be for a long time a reaction to the events of 9/11. 9/11 has overtaxed the American political elite. The results of this overtaking can be studied in Iraq, in the Palestinian region and on the level of NATO organization. There have been tremendously negative consequences within the United States regarding its political culture and social climate. However, 9/11 has also overtaxed Europe as well as the United Nations. On the one hand, the United States failed by rather inconsiderately using military force in managing the shock and challenge of 9/11, the UN and the “New Europe” on the other hand did not find a meaningful and convincing alternative position either for dealing with the changed military situation created by the new quality of global terrorism. The United States will have to show that it can lead without becoming permanently threatening with its military superiority. Europe will have to accept that it can take part in real leadership only when it is ready to participate also as a military power. Only then it might be able to talk with the US on an “eye level,” eventually influencing the positions and actions of this first and perhaps also last modern “global nation.”

[8] Evaluating the bilateral economic relationships, Europe is much more vulnerable than the US.

[9] Military expenses in 2005 (\$ Billions, and percent of total):

Country	Dollars (billions)	% of total
USA:	420.7	43%
China (VR):	62.5	6%
Russia:	61.9	6%
Great Britain:	51.1	5%
Japan:	44.7	4%
France:	41.6	4%
Germany:	30.2	3%

Source: www.globalissues.org/Geopolitics/ArmsTrade/Spending.asp (accessed Nov. 17, 2006).

[10] It did not require much historical knowledge or training in sociological analysis to anticipate in 1989 that the new geopolitical scenario would challenge the USA after the loss of the Soviet Union as counterpart and comanager of the postwar world. The USA had to redefine its position, to take over a new role, to become a “The New America,” and that US new role-taking would become a challenge for the rest of the world, especially to its former allies on the European half-continent. These nations also were asked to redefine their position, to establish in some way a “The New Europe.”

[11] Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* (Simon & Schuster: New York 2004), 363.

[12] For clarification: an empire is based on a meta-national collective identity.

[13] The presidencies of the United States from the nineteenth century onwards do illustrate different combinations of the three elements: cosmopolitanism, imperialism, and nationalism.

[14] Phrased “Tired Titan” (German original: “Der müde Titan”), T.G. Ash in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, August 30, 2005, compared the present situation

of the US with the British in 1905, when the ugly war against the Boers documented a deterioration of the system, although the Empire continued for a few more decades. The author concluded: “Whether the American Century that has begun in 1945 will last until 2045, 2035, or only until 2025 – the end of it is already visible on the horizon!” (my translation, GS).

[15] Statistics and professional discussions show indicators of a problematically increasing social fragmentation with concomitant social and racial conflicts. Some of the keywords are: income-polarization, ethnic separation, bifurcation (the old Anglo-Saxon America versus the new Latino Hispanic America). Samuel Huntington envisages the possible destruction and final dissolution of the great American model of society and its creed based on Anglo-Protestant culture.

[16] *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, September 7, 2005 (my translation, GS).

[17] Whatever the path taken by the US during the next years might be, the emergence of the “New America” means a *good-bye* from the America we (the Europeans, and especially the West-Germans) had been used to. This *good-bye America* ends the post-World War II period. Some day soon, a European might get the idea to write a book entitled, “The America We Lost.”