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ROUNDTABLE: RISING POWERS AND THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER

A Post-Western Europe: Strange Identities in a Less Liberal World Order

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The debate on "rising powers," "power shift," and a possible end to the liberal international order has been mostly conducted on U.S. terms. As usual, there are two sources of this bias: the current power configuration in world politics and the dominance of American scholars in the field of international relations theory.[1] As a result, discussions of international order are typically framed around two kinds of actors: the hegemon privileged by the power distribution of yesteryear (consistently represented by the United States) and rising powers (notably China). In a collection of global perspectives, Europe is in several respects the least interesting continent: small, worn, and often just a weak echo of the real master.

Nevertheless, Europe's curious position brings to light some intriguing dynamics of the emerging world order.[2] Even if the United States and Europe are the closest of allies and jointly constitute the core of the West, perspectives differ depending on whether world politics is viewed from Washington as opposed to Brussels, Berlin, or Paris. The neglect of Europe is paradoxical because many commentators looking at rising powers point out that the world is becoming more diverse and differentiated.[3] This is true, and it applies to more than just the rising powers: Europe should not be subsumed simply as "U.S.-light." Precisely because Europe is not predefined as part of the basic constellation of hegemonic and rising powers, the European view of that constellation is particularly interesting.

In the new, post-Western world, Europe is a strange case. It is the "old world" in so many respects—not only by linguistic convention but also because a peculiarly European "international society" provided most of the DNA to the current

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international order.[4] Moreover, Europe has retained a privileged stake in the existing order with two permanent seats on the UN Security Council and as the closest ally of the leading power, the United States, both in a general political sense and through the world's strongest and deepest military alliance, NATO. Yet it is also possible to view Europe as a newly emerging continent. During the cold war Europe was no longer a major player in global affairs, given the dominance of the United States and the Soviet Union. Consequently, the state of the world was increasingly attributed to the two superpowers, not Europe. The "new regionalism" of the 1980s even sometimes included Europe as one of the "repressed" continents that would be reborn as the superpowers eventually retreated.[5] Today, Europe is on the one hand clearly among the "haves" who are challenged by the rising "have less." On the other hand, however, having been out of the driver's seat for decades, there is also a sense that whatever comes after the U.S.-led world might offer Europe new opportunities. For historical and economic reasons, Europe is comparatively well networked with all parts of the world and diplomatically skilled, so a more fluid system might offer Europe disproportionate opportunities compared to its relative power base.

In most discussions on order and change, *powers* and *values* are conflated, or at least discussed as closely connected. That is, the stability and future of the *U.S.-centric* order and that of the *liberal* order are typically linked as if one necessarily entails the other. That makes comparatively little difference when the attention is focused on the United States or the rising powers, but it makes a huge difference when talking about Europe. Although the rising powers are not all "revisionist" in the narrow and immediate sense of challenging the liberal order, they all have a long-term vision in which the United States is less dominant and the global value system is less American, whereas the United States naturally continues to see U.S. power as the best way to preserve a liberal order (and liberal internationalists in the United States see the liberal order as crucial for U.S. power).[6] The position of Europe in the liberal order is paradoxical. In one sense, it can easily be argued that Europe is more dependent on the current order than any other main actor. While the United States and China both benefit from it, they have more power in traditional terms and can look after their interests by other means if the institutional infrastructure weakens. In another sense, Europe has a less dependent position in terms of its ideational, emotional, and political relationship to the current order. There is not a general perception in Europe that this is "our order." Given this detachment, it might be possible to

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shift from one assistant role to another—from assistant to the United States to one of the supporting actors in a multicentric order. This detachment is reflected in the works of Europe's leading European policymakers and think-tankers. For instance, only two years before John Ikenberry published "The Rise of China and the Future of the West: Can the Liberal System Survive?" in *Foreign Affairs* (2008), the main strategic think tank for the European Union published one of its "Chaillot Papers" on "Facing China's Rise: Guidelines for an EU Strategy" without even mentioning the liberal order as such.[7]

Of course, this path is only tenable as long as one assumes that the international system in a more bare-bones fundamental sense ("liberal" or not) is enough to provide the necessary framework for European pursuit of interests, albeit with a reduced role for the United States, more decentralization, and increasing equality. Unlike the think-tank and policy set, some *scholars* in Europe have for years made arguments similar to their colleagues in the United States that the stability of the liberal order was of concern and that Europe should take an interest in how to steer this order through power shifts.[8] A year of rising populism on both sides of the Atlantic brought the wider policy circles in Europe more in line with dominant liberal internationalist analysis in the United States and with its (until then) quite small contingent in Europe. With Brexit and the election of Donald Trump to the U.S. presidency in 2016, the specter of a liberal unraveling from within suddenly appeared more real than ever. Particularly because the threat unexpectedly seemed to come from within, the widespread reaction in Europe was to spell out the European self-interest in upholding the liberal order.

In the following pages, I will provide Europe's perspective on the future international order in four domains: power, economics, values, and institutions. The guiding question throughout is whether recent changes have been cast as potential *threats* to Europe ("securitized") or whether they have been more pragmatically received as challenges to be handled with a mix of opportunities and risks. In each of these four sections, a distinction is made between the pre-2016 and the 2016–2017 version, accounting for the impact of Brexit, Trump, and populism. Because international order is in Europe mostly approached pragmatically, not as a value in itself, it is productive to analyze reactions to changes through the lens of security (in a wide sense): actors take dramatic action to the extent that they feel threatened. Thus, the stability of any given order is ultimately delineated by where the different major powers draw their line between developments that are deemed a framework within which to act and those that have to be prevented.

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As Henry Kissinger argued sixty years ago, "a legitimate order" is one in which each major power can imagine a realization of its "vision of itself"; consequently, when no such imagination is possible to one of the powers, the order becomes unstable.[9] This is particularly true for Europe, as it does not perceive itself as the main guardian of the Western liberal order and does not promote the current order as a value in itself or an extension of itself. Therefore, Europe's role in delineating possible global futures is best ascertained by gauging what changes are deemed dangers.

The analysis below shows that in the domains of overall power (polarity) and economics, the dominant European reaction is to register far-reaching change, but not designate this as ultimately threatening. In contrast, change in the domain of values (human rights and democracy, in particular) more often triggers alarm and rhetoric of possible definitive loss. Finally, the fourth domain, institutions, has seen the most dramatic change from a relative lack of concern prior to 2016 to a recent uptick in worry for the institutions of the liberal international order. Though it should be understood that each domain has overlapping concerns with the others ("power" can encompass military, economic, and soft power, for example), it will be instructive to take them in turn.[10]

Power

The first and most striking difference between debates in Europe and the United States about the ongoing global power shift is whether the power structure is conceptualized as a worry in its own right. That such a shift is underway is widely acknowledged, and global actors are reacting accordingly for their own policymaking. However, acknowledging and reacting to the power shift is not the same as making the power *structure* itself an object of concern. The latter demands an aggregate concept of "balance of power" or "polarity," along with the assumption that this factor has independent existence and causal importance.[11] Unlike Europe, U.S. policy is premised on the assumption that it matters what the power structure is. Major debates have been conducted on the question of whether the system is unipolar, what this entails, and whether it is possible and advisable for the United States to try to protect this structure against a potential peer challenger;[12] or whether the system is becoming multipolar and whether this contains possibilities for maintaining American interests.[13] In all of these, the structure matters as such. It is an object of policy to try to prevent a polarity shift from unipolarity to bipolarity or to shape an emerging multipolarity.

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Europe displays much less interest both in defining the power structure and in influencing it. There are at least three possible explanations. One is capability: policymakers in the United States care about the power structure because they are able to influence it, whereas Europeans more often view it as beyond their control. Second is a more ideological explanation: Europe simply thinks less in terms of power. However, as Robert Kagan has argued, this is at least partly a function of the first explanation.[14] Third is a silent satisfaction with a shift from unipolarity to multipolarity. For example, France's strong opposition to unilateral U.S. action at the start of the 2003 Iraq war was similar to the pushback from Russia and China, and for similar reasons. In a situation where a lone superpower stresses unipolarity, the great powers in the rank just below are structurally induced to resist—in this case, a unipolar, U.S.-dominated power structure—and work for multipolarity.[15] The 2003 European Security Strategy did not mention polarity, but a 2010 speech by Commission President José Manuel Durão Barrosso portrayed multipolarity as favorable because it "limits 'hegemonic power,' which can often be a source of instability"; and although multipolarity contains its own risks of competition, it is still the most favorable platform on which to build multilateral cooperation.[16]

Overall, the general tone in Europe is that rising powers and the global power shift is not Europe's responsibility. Europe does not sit at the pinnacle of global power to be potentially dislodged by shifts in the global distribution. Europe cannot project power in Asia, as the United States does, so it cannot really get involved in balancing China in East Asia or the Asia-Pacific. In Europe only very specialized security experts worry about the rise of China in power terms. Geopolitical power shifts mostly register indirectly through their impact on the relevant arenas for Europe, often those that are interregional, not global, such as the conflicts in Ukraine and Syria. In these cases, Europe is attentive to change in the global power distribution, not as a threat in itself or an object of policy, but only as context for these local arenas. Thus, global power shifts condition Europe's possible actions in its own neighborhood.

Though in recent years—and particularly since Brexit and Trump—there has indeed been increased focus in Europe on power distribution as a security concern, the increasing non-Western power is still not usually depicted as a threat itself. Even in a hardcore security setting such as the annual Munich Security Conference, where the 2017 report was a gloomy "Post-Truth, Post-West, Post-Order," the global power shift enters only as a secondary component folded

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into a general focus on illiberal and populist developments in the West. The European position remains distinct from the American one in this way because Europe's own status, identity, and interests are not tied in a one-to-one relationship to the current (or outgoing) order. At most, global changes in power figure an enabling condition in security concerns.

Economics

Shifts in the international order are most often viewed in Europe through an economic lens: the global distribution of production, trade, and consumption as it increasingly moves toward the Global South and East. Is this addressed as a threat to be stopped or a challenge to be managed? At the national level, it is mostly seen as a challenge with more opportunity than risk, and most importantly as a trend beyond one's own control; but at the EU level, it is sometimes taken as a worrying challenge to be met. Again, this mostly reflects the capability to act. No single state can do much about the general shift, whereas structural policies at the EU level have a better chance to rebalance a bit to Europe's advantage.

White papers at the national level present the economic rise of Brazil, China, and India as a call for adaptation, that is, to recalibrate national efforts to exploit the new possibilities and get the biggest possible piece of the cake. (For example, in 2011 Denmark appointed five renowned individuals as "export ambassadors" to optimize Danish exports to BRICs and "second wave" countries.) National diplomatic representations and export programs are targeted through an analysis of this economic shift. A more threatening image sometimes mobilizes action in specific domains, such as education policy (for example, when tests show European pupils losing out to those from South Korea or China), because education is widely seen as the ultimate source of future technological and economic competitiveness. It is also the domain wherein an economic shift becomes securitized, when people start imagining their poorly performing children placed at a disadvantage in some future global division of labor. Therefore, education is the subdomain where national debates about economics become most threat-infused.

At the EU level, worries are much more clearly articulated about decline in the relative economic standing of the continent and the need for and possibility of concerted efforts to maintain its position. Therefore, the EU developed structural policies to increase productivity and growth in its so-called "Lisbon strategy" for 2000–2010 and then in its "Europe 2020 strategy" for the following decade.[17] Most

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analysis has focused on U.S.–EU comparisons, and the puzzle has been why the United States is doing better than Europe as a "knowledge economy." The larger context was a global picture of European economic decline, ultimately pointing toward a future where the next generation will be less favorably placed in the global division of labor. Similar worries in the 1970s about decline led to the creation of the internal market in the 1980s. Then, and now, the reaction is one of "internal balancing" (strengthening oneself), not anger directed at the international economic order. As with geopolitics, Europe does not see itself as a stakeholder in an advantageous order; the status quo is already one of gradual loss. A Trump transformation is looming in this domain but has not yet kicked in. Trump's personal mercantilist outlook seems to single out China and Germany as the two main enemies (the latter occasionally dressed up as "the EU").[18] If this outlook actually materializes in major trade battles, it is more than possible that Germany and Europe would mirror this analysis and link global structure to local welfare in a matrix of economic war. So far, however, the dominant image of global change in the economic domain is centered on emerging markets as national fields for competition and a structural challenge for the EU.

Values

Unlike in the domains of aggregate power and economics, Europe views global change as a threat in the domain of values, especially democracy and human rights. This is in no small part because the values of the liberal international order are seen as at least as much European as American. One example of how this threat manifests itself is the perceived moral dilemma between the economic gains to be had by collaborating with China at the expense of turning a blind eye toward Chinese human rights violations. In the media, this is an easy and therefore oft-repeated framing for policy debates relating to China and other rising powers.

This tendency to mobilize values domestically as the guilty consciences of politicians explains a paradox in Europe's position globally. In principle, Europe stands to gain from moving into a more fluid, post-Western world, as argued above. Europe indeed has the operational space to act in a more multidimensional world because, compared to the United States, Europe is freed of both the burden of being identified with the order and the weight of being widely seen as one of the main parties to global conflicts in the Middle East or in East Asia. However, in

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practice this advantage disappears when exposed to the dynamics of domestic politics, because in a competitive situation politicians are almost always rewarded for being "principled" and fighting for "our" principles and values.

Europe's global orientation on values has been modified recently. A useful comparison point for this modification is the difference between the European security strategy of 2003 under Javier Solana and that of 2016 under Federica Mogherini.[19] Solana's approach has been characterized as more idealistic and Mogherini's as more realistic, the former following roughly the logic of Europe as a normative power, and the latter maintaining a bleaker outlook on the challenges confronting Europe.[20] However, rather than signaling a turn to a darker and more power-centered analysis as a reaction to growing threats, the change is more an attempt by Mogherini to teach Europe the modesty needed to maneuver in a post-Western world where new powers expect to be treated with equality, than it is about Western presumption of privilege.

These internal struggles in Europe about how to move from a posture of superiority toward equality underestimate the long-term need to find a more effective strategy for an even weaker future position. The West still assumes the privileged position of the universalization of its particular values.[21] The rest face the hard choice of either articulating their own values as particular (in other words, valuable because they are *theirs*) or assimilating to the West's allegedly universal norms. However, in a post-Western future where many partake equally in defining the terms, Europe too will increasingly have to defend its values as particular (that is, claim a right to difference), and not as universally valid. Most importantly, this may reconfigure secularism. Because many Europeans currently fail to see secularism as particular and instead treat it as abstractly true, or at least as a universally valid best practice, Europe is inflexible in relation to other states' values.[22] Since some 80 to 85 percent of the world's population is religious and the majority let religion count politically, the European peculiarity as the secularist continent will be better defended by requesting minority protection than by claiming to be speaking for everyone. A long-term delinking of Europe, the West, and universalism is therefore likely.[23]

For now, in terms of values, Europeans more often feel it is *their* order that is threatened by change. Naturally, this mirrors a deep ethnocentric and imperialistic attitude in Europe to both the United States and non-Western parts of the world. Brexit and Trumpism have reinforced this. As the Brits and Americans jump ship, identification between "Europe" and "Western values" will only grow stronger.

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Liberal Institutions

The domain of institutions is where Europe has recently changed most dramatically. Until recently, a threat to liberal institutions was not a European theme outside narrow academic circles (as illustrated by the example of the rise of China not being linked to global liberal institutions). In recent years domestic policymakers have had little incentive to spell out the importance of liberal international institutions for their ability to deliver goods to the public; but they benefit from blaming them for negatives.[24] Brexit and Trump were a loud wake-up call; Europeans generally display greater support for European integration now than they did before.[25]

Today in Europe we see an increase in supportive rhetoric for liberal institution-building across the board: from the WTO to NATO and from international regimes on human rights and refugees to economic globalization—all elements currently under threat not least because of the United States. However, there is a paradoxical weakness at the heart of this mobilization. It is easy to argue in Europe that it is our mission to uphold multilateralism or that suddenly we have become the guardians of the liberal order, as when in the early 2000s the presidency of George W. Bush brought together even Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida to promote a European identity and a joint vision for Europe greatly indebted to the United States as provider of a useful "other."[26] German Chancellor Angela Merkel draws on this logic when she casts herself as the super-multilateralist of the day. However, it is easy to be self-congratulatory in relation to a Bush or a Trump. Ironically, the real challenge is to actually commit to Europe. It is easy to declare grand visions and depict these as European; it is difficult to actually stand up for one particular liberal institution: European integration. Logically, European integration is just one among many liberal institution-building projects, but practically and politically it is the central one for Europeans, because without sufficient European integration there is no European actor to actually perform all the heroic actions for other institutions. However, in domestic politics in Europe, it is European integration that is most contentious because it affects society most deeply, whereas the other—more distant—institutions are easier to support.

Euro-skepticism has become a constitutive element of modern populism. Most pro-European politicians pick the path of least resistance: the EU should narrow down and do more of a few necessary things and less of the excessive

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stuff. This naïve rhetoric ignores that commonsensical in one country equals controversial in another. Institutional strengthening is necessary, but highly unpopular. Politicians' fear of their own populations prevents the consolidation of European integration that is necessary for Europe to play the role of defending those values that Europe prizes. At present, there is a risk of grand, global rhetoric actually serving as cover-up for a lack of institution-building where it matters. The support is high and growing in Europe for international institutions for trade, climate policy, security, and much else. But the ability of Europe to do much on these issues depends on the institution closest to home: the EU.

After Liberal Internationalism

These four domains help establish the boundary between change that is taken as a condition for policy and change that is made the target of transformative action. The stability of an international order is circumscribed by this boundary from all major actors' perspectives.[27] In Europe, rising powers and revisions to the liberal international order are met pragmatically as long as these only relate to power (the "not my table" syndrome) and economics (we are losing anyway), but treated as threats when it comes to values (they are ours). *Institutions* is the dimension that has witnessed the most change recently, previously ignored and now increasingly seen as a crucial bastion under threat and potentially a place for Europe to step into action and gain a role befitting of its identity projections. For the most part, these general changes trigger little panic, because rising powers do not upend but modify principles, and Europe only embraces its role as value defender half-heartedly as a historically inherited curse. Both at the level of nation-state and of Europe as a region, there is naturally a strong impulse to defend territorial integrity, free trade, and international rule of law, but the lines of defense for such principles are not seen as coterminous with one specific "order." Only to the United States, which identifies so closely with the order, do such principles appear as either/or questions associated with "the liberal order." Europe places both less confidence in the current order and less revisionism to any specific rising power. It is important to place global developments in the context of a general European outlook on world history. Although this might seem strange to a U.S. reader, there is in Europe a widespread recognition that the natural context is decline over time.[28] Therefore, "losing" is not, as in Trump's universe, enough to mobilize an angry response, but rather a shrug.

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If the long-term trend is downward, the question is whether any particular challenge constitutes such a dramatic and immediate threat to Europe that it calls for dramatic action in response. Europe generally accepts that the international order is one that was constructed in the West (by Europe first, then rewritten by the United States) and increasingly is modified to reflect the current reality regarding power and economics in the world. However, Europeans are reluctantly considering whether to draw a line in the sand on principled "European values" and there is an expectation that any change will be gradual so that Europe will be able to adjust. Thus, the European outlook is strangely accepting of gradual decline, but resistant to radical change. Therefore, the Trump revolution has become the object of concern and the (ensuing?) Xi revolution will come to motivate foreign policy to prevent it, if too swift. Europe is prepared to move to the side, but only slowly.

The next question is in what direction Europe is willing to move. What kinds of reforms to the international order will prove viable? Again, identity is key. Europe is not as critical as the United States of the rise of Asia in power and economics, but it is important to Europe that the new scene for value politics is one where newcomers must make their case on classical terms. That is, the meaning of human rights might change in the long run, but new powers will have to make the case that their approach is better for human rights rather than make an ideological case against them.[29]

Focusing on the United States and China (and other rising powers) channels debate into the classic peaceful change dilemma, which is in many ways the constitutive question defining the discipline of international relations.[30] Is war the only mode of adaptation to power shifts, or can some peaceful route be found? While it is in the enlightened self-interest of the West to adjust the order enough to accommodate rising powers, it is notoriously difficult to give anything up voluntarily, not least power. This question ends as squaring the circle: change and order locked into something close to a stable equation. Europe is on neither side in this simple equation, and allowing for European complexity quickly allows others in. The resulting global constellation is a much better representation of the emerging global pattern.

NOTES

[1] Ole Wæver, "The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline: American and European Developments in International Relations," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998), pp. 687–727.

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[2] The term "Europe" is used throughout the article as a designation for the complex constellation made up of the EU, European nation-states, Europe as a regional economy, Europeans as a population, and the "idea of Europe" more generally. When in some specific cases it is necessary to be more specific, I will use the appropriate term. Of course, all these forms of "Europe" are not always in sync and views within Europe are not always homogenous. However, in a big-picture analysis like the present, it is appropriate to treat Europe as single analytical object. Similarly, although concepts like "China" and "the United States" refer to conglomerates of polity, economics, people, and ideas, we nevertheless tend to accept the aggregate terms in those cases because there is an official voice for the polity, even though in reality they are loosely coupled wholes just as "Europe" is.

[3] Amitav Acharya, "After Liberal Hegemony: The Advent of a Multiplex World Order," *Ethics & International Affairs* 31, no. 3 (2017), pp. 271–85; and Shiping Tang, *The Social Evolution of International Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[4] Martin Wight, *Systems of States* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977); and Barry Buzan, *An Introduction to the English School of International Relations: The Societal Approach* (Cambridge: Polity, 2014).

[5] Egbert Jahn, Pierre Lemaitre, and Ole Wæver, "European Security: Problems of Research on Non-Military Aspects," Copenhagen Papers no. 1 (Copenhagen: Centre for Peace and Conflict Research, 1987); and Björn Hettne, *Regionalism and Interregional Relations* (Gothenburg: Padrigu Papers, 1988).

[6] Peter Marcus Kristensen, "After Abdication: America Debates the Future of Global Leadership," *Chinese Political Science Review* 2, no. 4 (2017), pp. 1–17.

[7] See, respectively, G. John Ikenberry, "The Rise of China and the Future of the West: Can the Liberal System Survive?" *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 1 (2008), pp. 23–37; and Marcin Zaborowski, ed., *Facing China's Rise: Guidelines for an EU Strategy*, Chaillot Paper no. 94 (Paris: Institute for Security, 2006).

[8] Ikenberry, "The Rise of China and the Future of the West"; and Tim Dunne and Trine Flockhart, eds., *Liberal World Orders* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[9] Henry A. Kissinger, *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Restoration of Peace, 1812–1822* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1957).

[10] The four categories—power/polarity, economics, values, and institutions—are distinct observation points, which means that concrete content can show up in several. Clearly, aggregate power has a strong economic component, and values matter to both. Nevertheless, we should distinguish between observing the world in terms of its power structure (military, economic, and all other forms of power aggregated) and looking at economics as a field for achieving economic aims, such as welfare. Thus, the power category should not be read narrowly as military power only.

[11] Herbert Butterfield, "The Balance of Power," in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight, eds., *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1966), pp. 132–48; and Ole Wæver, "International Leadership after the Demise of the Last Superpower: System Structure and Stewardship," *Chinese Political Science Review* 2, no. 4 (2017).

[12] G. John Ikenberry, *America Unrivaled: The Future of the Balance of Power* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2002); and Stephen M. Walt, "Keeping the World 'Off-Balance': Self-Restraint and U.S. Foreign Policy," KSG Working Paper 00-013 (John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, October 2000).

[13] Patrick Porter, *Sharing Power: Prospects for a U.S. Concert-Balance Strategy* (Pennsylvania: Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, 2013).

[14] Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003).

[15] Samuel P. Huntington, "The Lonely Superpower," *Foreign Affairs* 78, no. 2 (1999), pp. 35–49; and Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[16] Quoted by Salvatore Finamore, "Normative Differences in Chinese and European Discourses on Global Security: Obstacles and Opportunities for Cooperation," *Chinese Political Science Review* 2, no. 2 (2017), pp. 170ff.

[17] C. Denis et al., *The Lisbon Strategy and the EU's Structural Productivity Problem* (Brussels: European Commission Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs Publications, 2005), ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/pages/publication_summary11040_en.htm; Susana Borrás and Claudio M. Radaelli, eds., *The Politics of the Lisbon Agenda: Governance Architectures And Domestic Usages Of Europe* (Abingdon, U.K.: Routledge, 2012); Tania Zgajewski and Kalila Hajjar, "The Lisbon Strategy: Which Failure? Whose Failure? And Why?" Egmont Paper 6 (Brussels: Royal Institute for International Relations [IRRI-KIIB] Academia Press, 2005); and Wim Kok, "Facing the

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[18] Peter Müller, "'The Germans Are Bad, Very Bad'," *Der Spiegel*, May 26, 2017, www.spiegel.de/international/world/trump-in-brussels-the-germans-are-bad-very-bad-a-1149330.html.

[19] Javier Solana, "European Security Strategy - A Secure Europe in a Better World" (Brussels: European Council, 2003); and Federica Mogherini, "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe - A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy" (Brussels: European Union Global Strategy, 2016), euagenda.eu/publications/shared-vision-common-action-a-stronger-europe-a-global-strategy-for-the-european-union-s-foreign-and-security-policy.

[20] Nathalie Tocci, "From the European Security Strategy to the EU Global Strategy: Explaining the Journey," *International Politics* 54, no. 4 (2017), pp. 487–502; Sven Biscop, "The EU Global Strategy: Realpolitik with European Characteristics," Security Policy Brief No. 75 (June 2016), Egmont Institute, Brussels, www.egmontinstitute.be/content/uploads/2016/06/SPB75.pdf?type=pdf; Karen E. Smith, "A European Union Global Strategy for a Changing World?" *International Politics* 54, no. 4 (2017), pp. 503–18; Maria Mälksoo, "From the ESS to the EU Global Strategy: External Policy, Internal Purpose," *Contemporary Security Policy* 37, no. 3 (2016), pp. 374–88; and Mai'a K. Davis Cross, "The EU Global Strategy and Diplomacy," *Contemporary Security Policy* 37, no. 3 (2016), pp. 402–13.

[21] Gurminder K. Bhambra, *Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and the Sociological Imagination* (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

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Abstract: Debates on "rising powers" and a possible end to the liberal international order mostly focus on two kinds of actors: the hegemon (the United States), privileged by the power distribution of yesteryear, and rising powers (notably China). Europe's curious position brings to light some intriguing dynamics of the emerging world order—nuances needed to capture a more differentiated future. This essay traces the threats and opportunities to Europe presented by the emerging order in four domains. In terms of overall power (polarity) and economics, far-reaching change registers but is rarely designated as threatening. In contrast, change regarding values (human rights and democracy especially) triggers more alarm. Finally, in the domain of institutions, change elicited a relative lack of concern prior to 2016, but worries have grown since then. For Europe, peaceful change

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primarily demands that rising powers rearticulate rather than confront classical Western values because, in contrast to the United States, there is little sense of loss in Europe in relation to the global structures of power and economics.

Keywords: Europe, EU, liberal international order, power shift, rising powers, peaceful change

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