

---

# Europe and the World

---

---

---

GUSTAV SCHMIDT

Large-scale historical change cannot be explained in terms of one or even several causal factors but through an analysis of conjectures.<sup>1</sup>

Social structures have three elements: shared knowledge, material resources, and practices . . . . Social structures exist only in process . . . . History matters.<sup>2</sup>

This article is predicated on a set of assumptions. The first proposition relates to the secular view that the rise of the European powers and Europe to take centre stage in world affairs from the late eighteenth century corresponds to the demise or implosion of the great empires of Asia. The second proposition concerns the options chosen at different stages and levels of the interpretation. How does one define turning-points in history? On what factors should one focus? Which features should inform one's concept of Europe and help provide a meaningful and operational terminology? How does one assess the impact of profound cultural or economic factors on Europe's position in the world; and how do such findings correlate with the changes brought about by the vicissitudes of political power projection? Third, one has also to ask how history might have developed, if, for example, Germany had won the First World War on the Western, instead of the Eastern, Front, or if Britain had waited until the United States came into the war against Hitler's Germany, in order to assess the balance between the two main politico-ideological blocs in each of the European states and on this basis examine which 'ideas put into practice' contributed to the survival and resurgence of Cold-War Europe as a leading power. After all, West and then the united Germany became and remains the mainstay of E(E)C/EU-Europe, whereas the United Kingdom represents a different idea of Europe, economically and politically. At the same time, since 1947 both states have established positions in the world which differ from those of their own past. Whatever one might think of the value of counter-factual questions, their

<sup>1</sup> Rey Koslowski and Friedrich Kratochwil, 'Understanding Change in International Politics: The Soviet Empire's Demise and the International System', in R. N. Lebow and T. Risse-Kappen, eds., *International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 138.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Wendt, 'Constructing International Politics', in *International Security*, Vol. 20, no. 1 (1995), 73–4; H. Randall and J. Sachs, 'Asia's Reemergence', *Foreign Affairs* (Nov/Dec 1997), 59.

purpose is to find out what the Europeans were doing to each other at turning-points in twentieth-century history and what impact these conjectures had on the importance of Europe in and for the ‘world system’.<sup>3</sup>

This article combines an assessment of a ‘long haul’ of eras – pre-First World War, interwar, post-Second World War, post-Cold War – with a secular perspective of the twentieth century, and focuses on world politics<sup>4</sup> and on the international political economy. It consists of two parts, a brief statement of the basic thesis and a historical exercise.

## I

The basic thesis is about ‘Eurocentrism’, first in terms of global European expansion in the first half of the century and of retreat in the second; and second in terms of the changing perspectives of Europeans on their position and role in the world. The existing twentieth-century international political system is understood as the product of an historically unfolding structure of European-generated political values, which formed the core of worldwide Western ‘culture’:

The content of ‘international society’ comes from the liberal principles of Western European (political systems) and became internationalised with the expansion of the West . . . The modern international system is governed by a powerful set of worldwide cultural rules whose core is the Weberian (and Western) notion of rationality.<sup>5</sup>

These rules about progress and modernity ‘created not only capitalism and markets, but also bureaucracies and distinctive features of modern politics’, such as the expansion of individual rights, egalitarian concepts of justice, governing with consent of the ruled, and so on.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System*, 3 vols. (New York: Academic Press, 1974, 1980, 1989).

<sup>4</sup> For a survey of the twentieth century, it makes sense to differentiate between the state systems and the world economy. Short-hand terms, such as ‘the state’, the Europeans, etc. have to be employed, if we are to relate observations on intra-European rivalries/partnerships to Europe’s position and role in the world at large. The article seeks to explain changing structures. This procedure often invites the criticism that, for example, states are portrayed as rational actors. The answer to this critique is that an explanation has to be rational, in the sense of Max Weber’s concept of an ‘ideal type’; in analytical terms, the assessment of actors’ ‘behaviour’, performance, etc., follows this. This survey restricts itself to establishing a framework. It does not proceed towards interpreting individual situations, decision-making processes, bargaining and negotiations, or ‘the sins of omission and commission’ of individual governments and political elites with respect to such questions as joining NATO or the EC, or decisions to fight or bring to an end the wars in Indochina or Algeria. I have done that in my writings on the age of imperialism, the interwar period and the East–West conflict (see notes 14, 15, 17, 18, and 22, as well as the extensive bibliographies of the works cited).

<sup>5</sup> Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 18–21; Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, eds., *Expansion of International Society*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984); Gerrit Gong, *The Standard of ‘Civilisation’ in International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).

<sup>6</sup> It is obvious that ‘democracy’, ‘liberalism’, ‘system transformation’, etc., differ from one European country to another, as do the images and perceptions of security and threats to security. One could emphasise the differences and insist that ‘national’ policies should shelve democratic traditions. Nevertheless, the Europeans established standards of civil society, rules of conduct, etc., both among

Europe is known for its diversity – both between and within the nation-states; and the rise of nationalism further reinforced differences.<sup>7</sup> Yet Europe is also the ‘region’ with the highest degree of interaction between its geographical parts, which reaches into all spheres of human activities, including trade and investment, travel and mass tourism, and technological and cultural transfer. Given the high degree of literacy and the spirit of competitiveness within and between the nations of Europe, they continuously learned about each other and – selectively – adopted both techniques of and ways of thinking about good governance and standards of social security and public service, as well as duties as taxpayers and military service. Thus a set of desirable minimum standards was established throughout Europe. ‘Learning’, of course, also meant that influential groups objected to what they saw happening in other European countries and/or to what the imitators – democrats or populists, left- or right-extremists – wanted to import into the domestic political, economic, social and cultural/intellectual landscape. Notwithstanding the differences which resulted from the different domestic balance of forces and the interlocking-transnational alignments between social and political movements and organisations in, say, Britain, Norway, Germany or Italy, these individual nations projected certain European characteristics onto the world at large.

The most important traits, which have to be viewed as a mutually dependent, mutually reinforcing ensemble, were as follows.

The differentiation of the social, economic, and political spheres:

varying with the constitutional framework, the co-existence of socio-cultural milieus generated changing political alignments and open-ended outcomes for political conflicts and bargaining processes, and thus made domestic peaceful change a landmark of European politics;<sup>8</sup>

in general, European political systems ‘produce’ governments which are ‘friendly’ to the requirements and requests of the economy (business world);

themselves and in their external relationships. The governments constituting the Council of Europe consented to a catalogue of norms and rules of conduct which is the most comprehensive code of European (‘Western’) values. After the end of the division of Europe and Germany, admittance to the Council of Europe was a kind of test of the ‘Europeanness’ of the east European applicants. Political expediency did influence the vote to let Russia in and keep Slovakia out, but that experience is no different from domestic politics. Governments – or, in reverse roles, oppositions – support the EU’s attempts to ‘export’ democracy, in the sense of insisting on ‘good governance’ etc. as binding terms of treaties. In this respect, the EU is doing what the World Bank introduced into its policy-making before the end of the Cold War.

<sup>7</sup> The term ‘Europe’ relates to expressions of willingness on the part of the peoples and the decisions of incumbent governments as to whether they want to join ‘chartered’ European organisations and participate in integration processes or to stick to staying *ipso iure*. But the whim of electorates, policy statements, etc. provide only one component in the analytical process of defining what Europe is and stands for. No meaningful term could evolve from purely ‘reading the lips’. Europe is a geographical expression and consists of the features listed in the text. The application of the term to the four long eras implies that the concept varies according to its function: with respect to international economics, Europe’s impact and presentation is different from that in the security and defence arena.

<sup>8</sup> This statement is not meant to excuse the persecution of the left in imperial Germany or the systematic annihilation policy of fascist states and Hitler’s Germany. But I object to theses which over-stress continuities and similarities between the structures of Germany pre-1933 and post-1949 on the one hand and the Third Reich on the other.

intra-regional (European) exchanges of goods, finances, 'ideas', etc. are proportionally higher than in other continental regions (except the North American continental economy), and persist, even though political conflicts and war have periodically caused interruptions; the principle of the 'rule of law' is entrenched sufficiently firmly to act as a constraint on the exercise of individual power in all spheres of human activity; exceptions merely confirm the general rule, in so far as the pendulum swings back to 'normal'; and countries which do not fulfil this criterion are not admitted to European community-building institutions; transnational co-operation between domestic power groups – at the level of both governments and oppositions – contributes to the convergence of interests and ideas, but also causes changes in the structure of the European economy and/or security regime, though not necessarily simultaneously;

in the projection of their power onto the outside world, most European governments and corporate headquarters prefer collaboration with indigenous elites to the export and imposition of their own model. In this case settlers' colonies constitute an exception.<sup>9</sup> The resistance to colonial rulers, especially to the effect of their redistributionist policies, which culminated in uprisings and liberation movements, was one reason for caution. The other was that the imperial powers had to harness their central resources to the struggle for power within the Europe-centred state system and thus could not afford to fight to uphold their predominance in a west- and/or east African and/or south/south-east Asian 'colony' at the same time. Imperial (colonial) rule differed not only, say, between the British and the French cases, but also between the British in India and the British in east or in west Africa. It also changed over time. Nevertheless, the Europeans imposed their rules for the conduct of business, administration, education, and so on, on the colonies with impunity in the first part of the century, and through diplomacy, tied-development aid and international institutions, and so on in the post-Second World War and post-Cold War eras.

## II: Historical exercise

### *The first and the last decade of the twentieth century*

'Europe and the world' during the pre-1914 era and at the end of the twentieth century are synonymous with 'Europe in the world', but with significant differences (see also 'Looking back and ahead', below). Europeans, including the peripheral US and Russian powers, have been the driving force in connecting different parts of the globe. However, there is a massive difference between the 'Age of Imperialism' – the culmination of 'Europe in and at the centre of the world' at the beginning of the twentieth century<sup>10</sup> – and the European Union and its member states at the turn of the twenty-first century, as they struggle to find a more self-generating source of stability in a world of competing core-areas. At the heart of the ever-growing, never-ending process of uniting Europe lies the Europeans' struggle to regain control over significant events both within a yet-to-be-defined European security

<sup>9</sup> Tsarist and communist/Bolshevik imperialism represent a type of settlement colony, i.e. for similar – 'security' – reasons, they and sub-imperial powers such as Israel rely on safeguarding 'frontier' areas and occupied territory through settlement, partly government-led, partly by forcing the hands of governments to succumb to the facts established on the ground by their own nationals.

<sup>10</sup> Gustav Schmidt: *Der europäische Imperialismus* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1985; pb. 1989); *idem*, 'The Age of Imperialism', in *Enciclopedia Italiana, Storia del secolo XX* (in press).

realm and in ‘money matters’, in EMU–Euroland. What had made the European Age in the long nineteenth century the combined position of an area safe from attack from non–European aggressors and the standard-bearer of world finance, have not (yet?) become the hallmark of EU–Europe.

### The past

From early modern history until the two world wars, ‘European expansion overseas’ was the external projection of different national proto-, pseudo- and/or ‘real’ imperialisms. It was embedded in a process of shifting positions within the power structure of Europe itself, which affected the ‘balance of benefits’. The equation was: how much back-up from the metropolis for the security and welfare of one’s national outposts at the periphery in return for how much transfer of resources from the periphery to the centre? This calculation still prevails and informs the different approaches of Britain and France on the one hand and Germany and Italy on the other, when they speak for Europe in trade and aid negotiations with non–European partners. Despite the desire of west Europeans since 1945 to shelve old rivalries and forge a new unity in order to re-emerge as world leaders, European unity is ‘still fraught with obstacles, for in spite of alliances, national interests too often predominated’.<sup>11</sup>

Concomitantly, the Europeans’ expanding presence in the world has been a continuing process of establishing and enforcing European standards, which in many instances prevailed even after decolonisation had re-established formal independence.<sup>12</sup> The main instruments for extending the writ of ‘Western’ (European) powers to colonies and informal empires, which penetrated political orders and economic exchange systems abroad, were various ‘unequal bargains and treaties’:

*concessions* provided and transferred to Europeans claims and/or rights to both economic exploration, exploitation, and so on and to the exercise of political rule, defining and governing relationships between sub-imperialists and indigenous peoples; an *economic rationale*, which linked local resources to world markets;

<sup>11</sup> Claude Arlier, ‘NATO and the European Union’, in S. Victor Papacosma and Ann Mary Heiss, eds., *NATO in the Post-Cold War Era: Does It Have a Future?* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995), 135.

<sup>12</sup> Rudolf von Albertini, *Dekolonisation. Die Diskussion über Verwaltung und Zukunft der Kolonien 1919–1960* (Köln/Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1966); Franz Ansprenger, *The Dissolution of the Colonial Empires* (London: Routledge, 1989); Raymond F. Betts, *Uncertain Dimensions: Western Overseas Empires in the Twentieth Century* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985); Henri Grimal, *The British, French, Dutch and Belgian Empires 1919–63* (London: Routledge, 1978); R. F. Holland, *European Decolonization 1918–81: An Introductory Survey* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1985); V. G. Kiernan, *From Conquest to Collapse: European Empires from 1815 to 1960* (Leicester: University of Leicester Press, 1982); Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Jürgen Osterhammel, eds., *Imperialism and After: Continuities and Discontinuities* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986); Wolfgang J. Mommsen, ed., *Das Ende der Kolonialreiche, Dekolonisation und die Politik der Großmächte* (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer Tb, 1990); John Darwin, *Britain and Decolonization. The Retreat from Empire in the Post-War World* (London: Macmillan, 1988); Miles Kahler, *Decolonization in Britain and France. The Domestic Consequences of International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); Anthony Clayton, *The Wars of French Decolonization* (London and New York: Longman, 1994).

*agreements, treaties*, and so on, which proclaimed the international rule of law and the principle of open access to trade and services, and so on, but which also granted preferential treatment to the colonial power by the 'local' contracting partner.

*The rivals of and heirs to Europe's supremacy*

What lies 'behind' the thesis that the decline of Europe has been linked to the rise in power of the United States?<sup>13</sup> On two occasions the European great powers required the intervention of the United States to subdue the threat of German hegemony; and on another (in 1947/48) they invited the United States to organise the 'security of the West' against a hostile Soviet Union, which already dominated one half of Europe, as well as the land masses of north (east) Asia. What price did the 'Europeans' have to pay? Conversely, what prize (if any) was won by the United States? The resurgence of 'Western' Europe, and especially of France and Germany, as global actors since the late 1950s has been confined to the realm of the international economy. During the Cold War bipolarity ruled supreme in military–defence matters; and both Europe and Japan were subject to the vicissitudes of the global contest between the two superpowers. At the turn of the twenty-first century the EU and the Europeans are again present at the creation of a new international economic order, but they are conspicuously absent from managing the power struggles in east Asia, south Asia or the Caucasus. The United States won the prize of protector, but paid the price of being simultaneously central banker and supplier of security in a very diverse international system. The irony is that the United States advocates principles of European origin – the policies of global order, world-wide implementation of democracy and the market economy in a multilateral and open international system without discrimination and without blocs – but thinks it must urge the Europeans to adhere to the same guidelines in order to share the burden of sustaining international (= Western) rules. Although the United States pretends that Europe should stand united, it simultaneously warns the EU and its member states that it would object strongly to the formation of a European power bloc, as this would stimulate Europe to adhere to its own script or interpretation of international rulings. To what extent are the Europeans and/or the United States engaged in maintaining the 'better side' of Europe's impact on the world? To what extent are they moving away from the 'bad legacies' of Europe's past?

This problem is linked to Europe's relationship with the other peripheral European power, Russia. Throughout the twentieth century the Europeans have been unable to cope with the power shifts between Germany and Russia without the intervention of the United States. Although Britain, France and their allies

<sup>13</sup> The leading edge gained by the United States since the turn of the century in many modern industries and regained throughout the century is one reason for calling the twentieth century the American Age. From my point of view, the twofold US decision (in 1947–1949) (i) to anchor Germany and Japan in regional and international-Western structures and hence take charge of the 'defence of the West'; and (ii) to take the lead simultaneously in the defence and the trade-and-finance arenas, marks the beginning of the 'American Age'.

finally came to the conclusion – in 1914 and in 1939 – that Wilhelmine and then Nazi Germany was the more serious threat to the European way of life ('humanitarian values') and to their 'security' than the tsar or Stalin, the fear of a German–Russian deal and distrust of the Kremlin's 'imperialism of the weak' led the 'other' Europeans to pursue their own mixture of preventive diplomacy and appeasement in the two prewar periods. The voluntary self-isolation of the Soviet Union during the interwar period induced France and Britain to object to the United States' assistance to the resurgence of Germany (during the Locarno era). The all-too-powerful impact of the Soviet superpower in the aftermath of the Second World War made 'free Europe' subscribe to the US policy of integrating West Germany into transatlantic and European institutions. In the arena of international politics, the containment of the Soviet threat was left to the US deterrent and to West Germany's trust in NATO. Only recently, in autumn 1998, has the EU made Europe's relations with Russia the top issue on its foreign policy agenda. However, the Kremlin's resort to unlimited force in Chechnya and Russia's need for IMF support point to the overarching role of the United States in settling the terms of accommodating or restraining Russia.

In international economics, the absence of the Soviet Union from the international organisations which define the rules of world trade, finance and investment, was the occasion for West Germany and Japan to assert their independence in economic affairs, emphasising the soundness of their economic model and consolidating their type of capitalism as the basis for their resurgence as global players. Their success in finding – over time – their own balance between regional stability ('working with neighbours'), standing up to US demands, and joining forces with the United States (especially during the 1970s and 1980s) in shaping the international trade and monetary regimes, led to the establishment of the tripolar structure of the world economy. Though the frictions increased, since each of the three expected the other two to perform better at home and dismantle the structural impediments to globalisation, Germany and Japan nonetheless remained supporters of US-centred or US-led international institutions.

The task of creating more symmetrical relationships between the United States and Europe in external affairs is apparently closer to the heart and mind of EU-Europeans than addressing the perennial question of whether and how Europe might solve the Russian problem or even persuade Gorbachev's successors that it might be wise for them to have the EU play Robert Schuman to a Russian Adenauer. To mention the equation, however, is to realise that the issue of Europe's approach to the Russian question is different from settling that of either a divided or a united Germany within the 'community' of European states. The contrast between Europe as a 'single voice' in trade and monetary matters and its relative silence as custodian of its interests in the defence arena illuminates two facts: (i) Europe has still to address the 'Russian question'; (ii) despite the visibility of European banks, firms, media, and so on in the process of 'globalisation', Europe differs from the United States as an actor on the stage of the world's 'high politics', and, of course, also from its own status at the beginning of the twentieth century.

*The preconditions of the European and the American age*

The secular ‘expansion of the European powers’ resulted from a coincidence of unprecedented military advantages over, for example, ‘Asians’ and the self-induced fragmentation of the ‘old’ Chinese, Indian, Persian and Ottoman empires. This made it possible for the Europeans to impose their will in all kinds of ways and with impunity in faraway countries, defining the terms of trade, controlling the means of communication with the outside world, determining in what areas and sectors to invest, and so on.

In the end, in the last decade (1985–97), ‘Asians’ seemed to benefit from the mutual communication of knowledge and extensive commerce both within the region and on world markets. They re-established equality of ‘force’ and respect for their rights as ‘others’, sometimes even to the extent of European heads of government courting the rulers of such countries as China and Indonesia. Even though Europe recognised the importance of direct links with Japan, the ‘Japanese question’, with its mixed record of imperial expansionism and opening to the West, was more or less left to the United States.

*The two long interwar periods*

The ‘age of Europe’s civil wars’ and the era of ‘divided Europe–divided Germany’<sup>14</sup> were shaped differently.

1. The age of Europe’s civil wars (1914–41) first experienced:<sup>15</sup>

the denial of imperial Germany’s claim to global power status, thanks to the United States’ intervention in the wars, albeit when the west European allies were on the verge of defeat or near-exhaustion;  
 the self-abdication of Soviet Russia as an offensive military power;  
 the culmination of Britain’s and France’s expansion overseas, together with Britain’s and France’s failure to accommodate democratic Weimar Germany within Europe;  
 the United States’ rise to Britain’s former position as ‘lender of last resort’ of the world economy, while refusing the accompanying role of supplier of security.

Defeated in the final, but as yet indecisive phase in the ‘struggle for power in Europe’ (1914–17) and in the parallel but still inconsequential rise of the struggle between ‘Wilsonism’ and ‘Leninism’ during the 1917–41 period were the stalwarts of wise European statesmanship, such as Grey, Caillaux and Kühlmann, and with them the vision that after the end of the war Europe should be reconstructed on the

<sup>14</sup> Gustav Schmidt (guest editor), ‘Divided Europe – Divided Germany (1950–1963)’, *Contemporary European History*, Vol. 3, no. 2 (1994), 155–92.

<sup>15</sup> Gustav Schmidt, *Politische Traditionen und wirtschaftliche Faktoren in der britischen Friedensstrategie 1917/19. Grundzüge einer europäischen Nachkriegsordnung in der Sicht englischer und französischer Machteliten* (Habilitationsschrift, Münster 1971); *idem*, *England in der Krise. Grundzüge und Grundlagen der britischen Appeasement-Politik (1930–37)* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1981; Eng. trans. *The Politics and Economics of Appeasement. British Foreign Policy in the 1930s*, Leamington: Berg Publishers, 1985); *idem*, ed., *Konstellationen internationaler Politik 1924–31. Politische und wirtschaftliche Faktoren in den Beziehungen zwischen Westeuropa und den Vereinigten Staaten* (Bochum: Universitätsverlag Brockmeyer, 1983).



premise that ‘peace’ cannot be predicated on ‘total security’ for the victorious powers alone. Bearing in mind the differences between, say, Ludendorff and Foch, we nonetheless see the triumph of those who envisioned the future as a continuation of the ‘age of wars’ that was already beginning.<sup>16</sup> The schemers plotting war aims everywhere during the First World War envisaged a complete revision of Europe’s political landscape, featuring the dismantling of enemy countries and the sharing of spoils at the expense of ‘unfaithful’ allies (Russia, Romania).

German war aim schemers went furthest: with the German military and economic presence stretching eastwards into Transcaucasia, Ludendorff envisaged (in late August 1918) the conscription of soldiers from Finland to Georgia with a view to holding the line in the west and building a German ‘Ostimperium (eastern empire)’ on the ruins of Bolshevik Russia. With the Russian enemy apparently no longer as a serious threat, he had no respect for Germany’s close partners, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. Hitler pursued Ludendorff’s dream but defied not only British, French and Russian sensibilities, but also the very standards of Europe’s aforementioned ‘culture’. In this way he invited the ‘world’ (except Japan and Italy) to combine for the ultimate defeat of German power.

2. After the Second World War Germany lost the ability to control its own destiny. This time, Britain and France invited the United States to provide and safeguard the ‘security of the West’, protecting western Europe against the threats of the ‘deal or duel’ between Germany and Russia. In the course of the struggle for Germany, the states of Europe were organised into two camps, and the superpowers got their allies to accept the integration of ‘their’ German state into NATO and the Warsaw pact respectively. In the ‘conflict of systems’, the idea of security was redefined.<sup>17</sup> In addition to protection against aggression and ‘blackmail’, ‘security’ in Western terms meant safeguarding the freedom of choice of the domestic regime and of external alignments. In this respect, (West) Germany evolved as the model of ‘Westernisation’, subscribing to the principles of multinational (even multilateral) institution-building, defence through ‘balanced collective forces’, the exercise of sovereignty through pooled resources and regulative decision-making, and so on. In contrast to the prevailing doctrine of its past – that Germany could trust only its own military power<sup>18</sup> – West Germany accepted that self-containment and thorough peacetime integration into transatlantic and European structures would eventually pave the way towards unification and fully-fledged sovereignty. Among the great powers, West Germany was the one resolved that defence was a joint affair and not solely the concern of an independent state. ‘The essence of German grand

<sup>16</sup> Klaus Hildebrand, ‘Das deutsche Ostimperium 1918’, in Wolfram Pyta and Ludwig Richter, eds., *Die Gestaltungskraft des Politischen* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1998), 119.

<sup>17</sup> Gustav Schmidt, ‘Ost-West-Konflikt und Intra-West-Spannungen. Die Position und Rolle (West) Deutschlands und Japans in der Sicht der USA’, in *idem* and Charles F. Doran, eds., *Amerikas Option für Deutschland und Japan. Die Position und Rolle Deutschlands und Japans in regionalen und internationalen Strukturen. Die 1950er und 1990er Jahre im Vergleich* (Bochum: Brockmeyer, 1996), 3–97.

<sup>18</sup> Gustav Schmidt, ‘Contradictory Postures and Conflicting Objectives: The July Crisis’, in Gregor Schöllgen, ed., *Escape into War? Foreign Policy of Imperial Germany* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1999), 135–60.

strategy during the Cold War was to make the price forever dwarf the prize. And so West Germany became the most militarised space on earth, with about 800,000 Allied and German troops plus [approximately seven, G.S.] thousand Allied nuclear weapons.<sup>19</sup>

The irony was that France, although agreeing to the German (and American–Atlanticist) philosophy of an intimate Franco–German partnership as the mainstay of Europe’s revival, began to object to the Atlanticist, US-centred strategy of integration, and subsequently retreated from integrated NATO structures in peacetime.<sup>20</sup> From the 1960s until the mid-1980s, France succeeded neither in presenting a ‘Europeanised’ collective defence system nor in finding any partner willing to join forces with it in constructing a European force to back up the EC/EU’s diplomatic ambitions. Hence France’s longing to restore Europe’s role in world affairs did not induce French governments to prove their willingness to put the money where their mouth was. It was one thing for them to recognise that, if a fundamental and irreconcilable disagreement between France and Germany were to occur, ‘there would be two Europes’;<sup>21</sup> it was quite another for Paris to ‘Europeanise’ France’s military potential and move towards integrated European force postures within reformed NATO structures.<sup>22</sup>

In the aftermath of the Second World War, Britain and France had expected to restore their ability to project their power globally. However, sooner or later (by the mid-1960s) both realised that they could not close the gap between their great power status and that of the superpowers by their own endeavours and resources. Hence they now aimed at giving ‘a lead to Europe’. The weakening of the individual home base of the European powers, including France and Britain, was completed by the mid-1960s. Yet the nuclear stalemate between the superpowers and the resultant doctrine of ‘stability and peace through division’ induced Europeans to compete with the United States and the Soviet Union for favours in the so-called Third World. This happened under two guises: (i) stimulating EC/EU–Europe to restore ‘geo-economics’ (‘Eurafrica’) by financial means; and (ii) restoring the national profile, but also earning foreign exchange through the export of arms. The vision, or in France’s case, the mission, was that Britain and France by provisioning military hardware to Third-World countries would enable the latter to enhance and sustain their non-alignment with either of the superpowers.

<sup>19</sup> Josef Joffe, ‘No Threats, No Temptations: German Grand Strategy After the Cold War’, in Bertil Heurlin, ed., *Germany in Europe in the Nineties* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 264.

<sup>20</sup> ‘There is, however, a strong belief in France that only the intimate alliance of France and Germany can provide the opportunity for Europe to deepen its unity and assert itself on the world stage’: Yves Boyer, ‘France and Germany’, in Bertil Heurlin, ed., *Germany in Europe in the Nineties* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 247.

<sup>21</sup> Alain Lamassoure, interview, *Ouest France*, 2 February 1994.

<sup>22</sup> Gustav Schmidt, ‘Getting the Balance Right: NATO and the Evolution of EC/EU Integration, Security and Defence’, and Lothar Rühl, ‘The Federal Republic and NATO’, both in Gustav Schmidt, ed., *NATO – The First Fifty Years* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, forthcoming), II.

*The consequences of Europe's wars*

The global contest between the United States and the Soviet Union was not the only result of the 'age of Europe's civil wars'. The other, albeit not immediately visible, consequence was decolonisation, and in its wake the revival of core-areas in Asia. From Washington's and London's perspective, Indonesia, Indochina, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore counted far more than China. Hence the stability of that area and the linking of 'free Asia' to the North American and west European economies became the goal of a strategy for south-east Asia. When the 'loss of China' became definitive in October 1949, the United States opted openly for Japan and south-east Asia as a means to contain 'Red China'. In the end, the strategy paid off, but the roads to success were bloody and dirty. From the mid-1980s, Asia and not just Japan seemed to be better off, and talk about an Asia-Pacific age gained currency among the ruling elites from Tokyo to Kuala Lumpur. US experts predicted that Asia's share of world income might rise to more than 50 per cent, about the same share that Asia had in 1820.<sup>23</sup> According to Randall and Sachs, if China, India and Indonesia, comprising 40 per cent of the world's population, could each achieve per capita growth rates of 5 per cent for the next three decades, Asia's share of world income could rise to 58 per cent by 2025.

Europe had been the main theatre of the global contest between the United States and the Soviet Union. But western Europe – in contrast to the east European satellites of the Soviet Union – was given the chance to recuperate its influence in some parts of the Third World: 'Aid policy' was proclaimed to help redress the dislocations caused by European colonialism/imperialism. The so-called OECD-world, however, constitutes the platform for co-ordinating European and American perspectives on how to sustain sound international (= Western) standards of finance, investment, etc., and is the launching-pad for the efforts of the European nations to influence the formulation and implementation of 'norms, rules and decision-making procedures' for achieving and sustaining their competitiveness.

*Looking back and ahead*

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Europeans established the 'state' as the centre of things, adding the power of redistribution to the monopoly of raising taxes and calling citizens to arms. At the turn of the twenty-first century, European expectations are geared towards intra-regional and international regimes, in which state governments are tuned on the one hand to implement international bargains at the domestic level and on the other hand to project the consequences of domestic network-bargains on to a multitude of international institutions. State power can be an asset in such negotiations, but private corporate actors and their strategic alliances – be they policy-advocacy groupings or 'star alliances' or mergers of branch leaders – have become major powers too.

<sup>23</sup> Randall and Sachs, 'Asia's Reemergence', 59.

'Europe in the world' resembles the American pattern in one respect: banks, firms, foundations, and so on, are complementing the state's control over economic events through international regimes on a world-scale. In the second realm, the projection of military power, Britain and France maintain capabilities and demonstrate the will to be present in crisis areas, but differ with respect to the need to police the world and whether the trendsetter should be the United States or whether the five vetoing powers on the UN Security Council should set the stage. Of the five, Britain was the first to announce (1998) the decision to assign military units to UN peace-keeping and peace-enforcing operations. The European members of NATO have resisted US pressures to enlarge NATO's new mission. Until 1993/4 Germany had objected to any signs that the Eurocorps might become France's 'Africa corps'. France has recently officially dropped the responsibility for coming to the rescue of rulers of francophone African states. The resolutions of the EU to absorb the Western European Union (WEU) and establish a European rapid deployment corps (about 60,000 strong) by 2003 is a first step towards getting Europe ready to defend the 'product' of west European integration, that is, Europe as a peace zone, and prevent 'state terrorist' rulers in the former Yugoslavia from making war on its own population and neighbouring states, in defiance of the common European values enshrined in the charter of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe. At the turn of the twenty-first century, Europe is different from the Europe of 1900 and 1950. But is Europe also willing and able to make a difference to the world's security and economic system?