

THREATS IN THE SECURITY POLICY OF THE USA

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Abstract: Using meta-analysis as methodological instrument, we are trying to shape the possible trajectories of US geopolitical games in early 21st century. According to some considerations, nowadays the US are going through a relative decline process, especially due to the fast economic growth of his principal rival, China. The study is presenting the main threats that can arise in the US international relations, especially those ones which are related to Islamic, Chinese and Russian challenge. We conclude that from these possible challenges the Islamic one can be the most dangerous, because of its unpredictability and because it can encompass some unconventional, non-state types of threats, such as terrorism. At the end of the study is presented three different attitudes towards the US geopolitical role – the neo-conservative interpretation of Huntington, the eco-socialist discourse of Wallerstein and the liberal-criticism of Revel.

Key words: security, relative decline, conflict, terrorism

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INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the 21st century the USA remains the first economic and military power of the world, unequivocally dominating international relations on a global level. However, its power is gradually decreasing, slowly but progressively, foreshadowing a future when the USA will lose its hegemony, a status that characterized the USA at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries. The rise of the USA on a global level began in 1870 when following the Civil War the country was unified again and consolidated in a strengthened inner cohesion which facilitated the explosive economic expansion unprecedented in history. During the 19th century until the beginning of WWI the USA considered with contempt the European politics based on the realistic principle of balance of power, founded by the Holy Alliance. In the same time, in alliance with Latin

America the USA managed to keep the European colonizers away from the American continent during the 19th century according to the Monroe doctrine (Lakatos, Kerekes, 2010, p.2). This phenomenon of isolationism was interrupted for a short amount of time during WWI when the American intervention was motivated by Germany's aggressive attitude in the submarine war and by the idealist principle of self-identification of the nations launched by president Wilson. Instead of negotiating a peace of the *status quo*, the USA decided to intervene unilaterally on the side of the Allies, thus obtaining the total victory of one of the belligerent parties (Kazin, 2017, p.46). In reality through this direct intervention on the side of the Allies the USA wanted to make sure that the immense amount of war credit given to the Allies in the first three years of war would be redeemed; this credit would certainly have been lost had the Central Powers been victorious. Disillusioned by the peace treaty of Versailles, considered rapacious by the USA (in the end the USA did not sign the peace treaty of Versailles), the Americans will again distance themselves from the Europeans, leaving the continent in a political vacuum where in a short amount of time Fascism, Nazism and Communism will thrive.

The isolationism of the USA will only be interrupted following the Japanese attack in 1942 and after winning WWII along with the Allies the American war industry will grow so big that it will not be possible to 'de-structure' it. The weight and the 'inertia' of movement of this military apparatus will always need to be put to use during the Cold War to restrict and discourage the Sovietic mammoth, or through direct deployment of forces (Korea, Vietnam, Grenada) or through proxy wars (Afghanistan).

After winning the Cold War, Fukuyama's prediction about the end of history did not come true (Fukuyama, 1992), we are witnessing the reorganization of the global order which generates multiple threats for the USA and for the world in general. Through this modest paper we would like to list these threats, analyzing their possible exogenous as well as endogenous sources.

CHALLENGE NUMBER ONE – THE INSTABILITY OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC AND ITS GLOBAL REPERCUSSIONS

Losing ground on the economic and military level the USA tries to redefine the specific standards and variables of their status as global superpower shifting the emphasis on the qualitative type of elements to the disadvantage of the quantitative ones that are specific for the rise and the growth of China in general. The USA and the world – especially the western part of it – could reach the same dangerous situation prior to WWI when the main actors of global politics could not find appropriate and balancing answers to the fast rise of Germany under Wilhelm's rule. This lack of any reaction or the lack of resilient adaptability led to the outbreak of a global conflict in 1914. Last, but not least, China has the responsibility to manage its own growth between reasonable terms, a growth that produces unbalances, including the dispute concerning the islands of Paracell and Spratly (Emmers, 2010).

In this context of the hegemony of the USA the main challenge is the rise of China, which as far as GDP is concerned in 2017 produces half of the GDP of the USA, but in the next 20 years will outpace the American economy and the economic interdependence of the two – labelled Chimerica in the specialized literature (Ferguson, 2010) will represent the most important relation in the global

system of international relations (Beeson, Lee, 2015, p. 93-95), in some cases characterized by cooperation, in other ones by competition – a classical example of this being their mutual interests, but, in the same time, their competition in the case of the investments in Africa (Thrall, 2015, p.76). This competition and economic growth will make it possible for China to increase its military expenditure, a fact that will establish China's future geostrategic weight. China already has the largest military force in the world as far as the number of combatants is concerned, but this force is predominantly land force with a significantly reduced destructive power than that of the US army as well as a more reduced capacity of "power projection" as compared to the US army. The growing economic capacity of China will also ensure the funds to cover the military expenses in order to change the global hegemony; at present the Chinese army benefits from the second most generous financing in the world (approximately 120 billion dollars a year) as compared to the financing of the American army that represents an overwhelming ration (40%) of the global military finances – approximately 600 billion dollars a year (Probáld, 2004, p. 25). It was not a coincidence that the Obama administration turned its attention mostly towards the Pacific area, thus Europe became sidelined in 2009, at least until the breakout of the crisis in the Ukraine in 2014. This area of the Pacific became increasingly important for the US due to its rivalry with China – predicted by certain analysts as early as the beginning of the 1990s (Bernstein, Munro, 1998) – as well as the military risks arising from the situation around the Korean peninsula and the South China Sea. There is a dispute between China and its maritime neighbours as far as the ownership of certain territories is concerned; these territories are located in the continental shelf of the East and South China Sea and contain important reserves of hydrocarbon. The animosity with Japan, South Korea Vietnam and the Philippines has grown recently; these countries on their turn have also armed themselves and they are the US' most reliable allies in its territorial containment policy towards China (Auslin, 2017, p. 21). China is building artificial islands in the South China Sea around the Paracell and Spratly islands in order to develop its military base and to strengthen its claims over the hydrocarbon reserves and also planning to restrict free sailing in certain areas. American warships have intentionally entered these restricted areas in 2016 thus expressing the fact that the US refuses to recognize the arbitrary limitations on free sailing imposed by the Chinese, thus creating an extremely tense situation from the military point of view. China, on its own turn, does not recognize abusively and unilaterally the ruling of the International Court of Justice of Hague concerning the right to access the hydrocarbon reserves of Vietnam and of the Philippines in the South China Sea area. These disagreements on the level of international relations might determine the smaller countries of the region – Vietnam, the Philippines, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and even Indonesia – to seek shelter at the US. A future Russian – American alliance is possible in the context of China's territorial claims over Siberia or in the context of China's increasing influence on the former central Asian republics at Russia's disadvantage, or, simply because of the unbearable pressure of a future superpower, such as China, on the power balance (Lakatos, Kerekes, 2010, p. 7). According to this reasoning the USA tried to limit China economically in order to slow its rate of growth, relying on an economic partnership of the Pacific between the states of Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, and the American states lining the Pacific coast. The Transpacific Partnership was signed in 2015 during Obama's

presidency, with an obvious intention to exclude China from this free trade cooperation, whose nucleus was represented by the ASEAN states. In January 2017, the Trump administration terminated the USA's participation in this partnership, considering that it created a disadvantage for the American producers in comparison with a cheaper import of their competitors. Thus, paradoxically, the USA offered China to take the initiative to create such an economic background which could turn against the USA limiting the American's free movement in the macro-region of the Pacific.

China's sensitive point in the competition with the USA is its insufficient nuclear force, China being the fourth nuclear power of the world, following Russia, the USA and France (it possesses somewhat more than 200 nuclear warheads as compared to the 6,000 – 7,000 that Russia and the USA possess). Although China has the triad of the launching capacity (land, maritime and aerial), it has to invest massively in its nuclear arsenal in order to equal the Russians or the Americans.

In this context we have to mention the nuclear crisis around North Korea, a neo – stalinist regime which benefits from China and Russia's silent approval to distract the USA's attention from other possible conflicts.

The first crisis related to North – Korea's nuclear endowment broke out in 1994 when the neo-communist dictatorial regime prohibited the UN's inspectors to visit its nuclear facilities. At that time a diplomatic agreement was reached which was later disrespected by the Pyongyang regime and thus in 2006 North Korea launched its first nuclear test. In parallel it also developed its transportation capacity of the nuclear warheads by launching the programme of medium and long range ballistic rockets. Some American secret services do not exclude the possibility that North – Koreans will hit continental America with rockets, even in Chicago in the central area of the Great Lakes. The crisis deepened in an unseen manner in the summer of 2017, when the sanctions against North Korea for executing a nuclear test became more severe, the country threatened the USA and its allies with a preventive nuclear attack, launched especially against the islands of Guam and Hawaii. Although it is not a fact practically proven, American experts do not exclude the possibility that North Korea has the capacity for a real nuclear attack against the USA. North Korea represents a substantial threat to the USA as it is the most dangerous among the criminal states (rogue states) and it can contribute via smuggling to the proliferation of mass destructive weapons, offering ammunition even to Muslim fundamentalists. This threat strengthens the alliance between South Korea, Japan and the USA; although the two Asian countries fear an American attack against North Korea as only the USA has the capacity to protect itself, South Korea and Japan are very much exposed to a military retaliation of the North Koreans, due to their geographical closeness. In fact, the strategy of the US serves the deepening of the collaboration with South Korea, especially on an economic level, through which these countries attempt a moderate counter-balancing of the Chinese economic influence, and on a smaller scale, that of Japan, but also serving America's economic interests in the region. For example, with the latest free trade negotiations the USA got some more favourable terms from Seoul as did the European Union (Brands, Feaver, 2017, p.29), a fact that the EU tries to counterbalance by negotiating with Japan. Nobody is interested to cause a destructive conflict which would mean the end of the regime in Pyongyang, but the North Koreans consider that they need the nuclear weapon in order to avoid the fate of the dictatorial regimes of Lybia and Irak. However, the USA was quick to reassure them that it did not want to abolish

the criminal regime of Pyongyang and it did not force the unification of North and South Korea. On the other hand, neither China, nor Russia is interested in installing a probably pro-American regime in case the peninsula would be united. In consequence North Korea is an irrational and unpredictable enemy as compared to a possible Russian-Chinese threat which would be “rational” and incomparably more predictable.

In the same context we could also refer to the initiative of certain Republican congressmen who proposed the selling of weaponry to Taiwan in order to help it resist the threat of a Chinese invasion (nationalinterest.org). The idea is totally out of place and it could result in the aggravation of the conflict with continental China and it would represent an unacceptable precedence in which the USA would contribute in the nuclear proliferation. Quite probably the desire to counterbalance the North – Korean threat with a corresponding threat of a third party against China, seen as the passive patron of North – Korea, was behind the curtains of this American plan. The USA’s military presence (in Japan, Guam and the Philippines) has been a factor to convince China not to force the issue of Taiwan, but quite obviously the USA will be less and less able and willing to protect Taiwan. But until then, this threat could also be used to obtain a substantial advantage, the Trump administration is going to sell Taiwan conventional weaponry for a worth of \$1.4 billion. The possibility that in the future Taiwan will wish to be unified with continental China and will not refuse the idea cannot be excluded either: but until then the USA have the moral obligation to protect Taiwan from a possible invasion coming from the continental giant (Peng, 2009, p. 109).

It is common knowledge that tensions in inter-state relations, that present the chance to escalate into military conflict, offer a good opportunity for the business of weaponry sales. In the case of the North-Korean crisis there is an increased chance for the American weapon industry to cash large amounts of money from the export of the ultra-sophisticated THAAD anti-missile system, or any other type of weapons, to South – Korea and Japan, thus increasing their ability to protect themselves.

It is interesting to consider the attitude of the American public opinion, which started to be radicalized following the exchange of spiteful declarations between the American and the North – Korean leaders during the crisis in the summer of 2017 and there is a slight increase of the number of people who would support a preventive and destructive war against North – Korea. This is all the more surprising if we take into consideration the fact that the American public opinion is already disgusted with the USA’s military activity in the Middle East (vox.com).

THE ISLAMIST CHALLENGE

The conflict between the Islam and the West and between the Islam and the USA, respectively, has its roots in the cultural differences as well as in the divergent economic interests which are escalating instead of decreasing. The demographic pressure on the part of the Islam has diminished significantly in the past 30 years, which means that the *total fertility rate* in the Muslim countries of the Middles East and Northern Africa decreased on average from 5-6 to 3newborns per fertile woman (except for Afghanistan where the TFR is still around 6). This means that the pressure of the migration towards Europe and other Muslim states will decrease in the short run. The Islam – according to Huntington – despite

feeling frustrated because of the West and especially because of the USA due to its considerable economical and technological backwardness has gained significant self – confidence and certain superiority towards the West in the second half of the 20th century, fuelled by the fast-paced demographic growth and the discovery of the hydrocarbon reserves. The slowing of the demographic growth and the discovery of new alternative sources of hydrocarbon even in the USA will leave room gradually only to the frustration, losing its ammunition that could have provided it with a narcissistic satisfaction. These factors were complemented by the Islamic Revolution many times developed on the grounds of identity, nationalist or indigenous issues. This movement was amplified especially with the appearance of the ayatollahs and with the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 and since then has been the main fuelling source of the fundamentalist Islamic terrorism. This religious revolution is anti-democratic, anti-modernist, it also seeks to introduce the traditional *sharia* law thus introducing fanaticism and brutality in a society which has not been touched by the Enlightenment and in the same time it is very popular among young people who have an anti-system attitude. This background has significant effects on the shift of the combat methods which will be led by a blind indoctrination, by a fanatic hatred where the majority of the combatants will not be fearful of self-destruction as they have been told in the mosques that they would go directly to heaven if they sacrifice themselves. In other words, the West and the USA will not face a calculable threat anymore as it happened during the Cold War with the communist regimes – aggressive but perfectly rational. How could the doctrine of limiting/enclosing or that of discouraging work with an enemy that will not hesitate to use weapons of mass destruction of any kind, on a state level and on a non-state level, as terrorist threats? It is no wonder that the majority of the criminal states have been the Muslim states: Libya, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan (in the meantime Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and Libya have been removed from the black list). The effect of this unpredictability in the confrontation with the Islam will be a huge pressure. The American interventions caused Pakistani researchers to identify three types of government in the Middle East: secular Arabic dictatorial regime, authoritarian government or American invasion and the imposing of forces close to the USA (Mirza, Abid, Qaisrani, 2017, p. 58).

American – Islam relations have not always been determined by cultural differences. During the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the Mujahedeen were seriously supported financially and militarily by presidents Carter and Reagan. During the Iraq – Iran war, Iraq was sponsored by the USA. In this case, against what is expected, the former beneficiaries of the American aid turned into its most fierce enemies, thus the so-called ‘blowback’ effect was produced, a term used in the CIA slang, developed later by Chalmers Johnson (Johnson, 2000, apudLakatos, Kerekes, 2010, p. 9).

Even Saudi – Arabia fit into the pattern of a pragmatic partner of the USA, what is more, on paper it is one of the USA’s most reliable allies. The ambiguity of the problem is easy to understand, though, if we analyse the religious fanaticism of the Wahhabites which can at any time turn against the USA. At the beginning of Trump’s presidency they developed a strategy which aims to separate the fanatical Islamism from the large masses of the Muslim world and combating it through force and propaganda; one of the proponents of this strategy is Sebastian Gorka, former counsellor of the president (Gorka, 2016). Only the future will tell us how viable this strategy is.

Pakistan has also managed to become a rational and cooperative partner of the USA during the military operations in Afghanistan, thus it was removed from the list of criminal states. However, Pakistan is playing a double game; it is rather a close ally of China due to the numerous hostilities with India. Besides, this regional rivalry of India with China and Pakistan could lead India to seek refuge in the arms of the USA, a vocal supporter of this idea the American analyst of Indian background, Fareed Zakaria (Zakaria, 2008).

POSSIBLE CONFLICTS IN THE RELATIONS WITH OTHER REGIONS

As a consequence of the Russian invasion of Crimea, Europe has once again become the territory of geopolitical uncertainty with a frozen armed conflict between Russia and the Ukraine. As opposed to the situation in the former Yugoslavia in this conflict neither NATO nor the USA can intervene unilaterally due to the fact that Russia is involved in the conflict and its response could have unimaginable dimensions. Russia is attempting to de-stabilize NATO and the USA through a hybrid war of information and manipulation, through cybernetic diversions. Europe is less and less to be vulnerable to blackmailing by the Russian energy issue due to the revolution in the exploitation of shale gas and to the spreading on a large scale of the renewable sources of energy. These tendencies have generated an explosion of the offer and they significantly reduced the price of the fossil energy resources on the global market, thus decreasing dramatically the income of the Russian economy gained from oil and gas exports. This fact added to the western economic sanctions caused the Russian economy important contractions as of 2014 and it only recovered starting with 2017. Its economic capacities being affected, Russia cannot continue to finance neither its war with the Ukraine nor its military endowment at the same pace as before 2014. However, the presence of the Americans and NATO's vigilance are justified by the fact that they enforce the defence capacity of the NATO member countries geographically close to Russia (Poland, the Baltic states, Romania) because the geopolitical interests of the USA and those of Russia are diametrically opposed. If from the point of view of real politics Russia's interest to increase its influence continuously to obtain the status of great power can be justified, the interest of the USA is to prevent the ascension of a hegemonic power in Europe, Russia being the main candidate for this position due to its richness in hydrocarbon reserves as well as to its military arsenal. The ascension of Russia to the status of a hegemonic or quasi-hegemonic power in Europe would lead to the de facto elimination of the American influence on the continent and through this a serious failure for the USA's politics (Güner, Koc, 2017). The Ukrainian crisis seems to have triggered a major breach between the EU and the Russian Federation which has not been desired by either of the parties involved (Larrabee, Wilson, Gordon, 2015, p. 24) and which offers the possibility for some American interests to be imposed in the region, although it is uncertain until when.

At the beginning of his presidency, Barack Obama showed a gesture of reconciliation towards Russia suspending the implementation of the anti-missile shield in Eastern Europe (Poland and The Czech Republic) started by president Bush who claimed that it is supposed to protect Europe from an Iranian attack and it is harmless for Russia. However, the Russian invasion in Crimea determined the USA to continue its display of defensive forces with a new impulse, this time in Romania, in Devesel (Lakatos, Kerekes, 2010, p.10). This fact produces profound mistrust between the two superpowers, both perceiving the

situation as a possible threat which could trigger a new era of arms race especially through the fact that the limiting of nuclear arsenal has been given up. The fact that Donald Trump won the elections and moved into the White House did not bring the results the Russians expected, that is the abandonment of NATO by the USA or the removal of the anti-Russian sanctions. Trump has already hit Assad's Syria (a traditional ally of Russia), declared that Russia has to leave Crimea and significantly strengthened the economic sanctions against Russia (justified, paradoxically, by Trump's wish to punish Russia for its involvement in the American presidential campaign on Trump's side).

In Latin America there is no state that would threaten the security of the USA, even if the import of certain phenomena – criminal gangs culture, drugs – seriously affects the American society.

At the moment Venezuela is the most unfriendly state towards the USA but it is not a real threat as it gradually enters social convulsion. In South America Brazil and Argentina could be the next countries that own nuclear weapons, but they are arming themselves against each other. Mexico, with the entire dispute concerning commercial exchange and illegal migration, does not represent a real threat for the USA. Anyway, these countries are incomparably more predictable and reliable negotiation partners in comparison with the countries of the Middle East.

THE DECLINE OF THE AMERICAN POWER REFLECTED BY CERTAIN THINKERS OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, SHAPERS OF OPINIONS

Samuel Huntington in his chef-d'oeuvre study *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* discusses, among other things, the issue of the erosion of the American power. In Iulia Motoc's opinion the realistic interpretations concentrated exclusively on the role of the state are criticized by Huntington and the state is replaced by culture (Motoc, 2002, p.21). We would add that in many cases the cultural – religious factors appear as absolute and sometimes fatalistic in the context of global security thus offering the possibility of a simplistic interpretation. There is no doubt that cultural similarities have a key role in the process of choosing one's allies and enemies on a global level, but there are many cases when interests superior to those ethnic, cultural and religious ones appear and the enemies have the same ethnic and linguistic origins or the same religious background.

We are obliged to start from the premise that Huntington developed this idea of the clash of the civilizations as a reply to Fukuyama's naive and idealistic vision that in the euphoria of the victory over totalitarian regimes following the Cold War predicted the gradual triumph and generalization of the western-type liberal democracies.

At this point we would like to highlight two aspects: the American – Muslim conflicts and the Chinese – American divergences which, according to Huntington, may be combined into a global conflict.

The American – Muslim conflicts of recent years are fueled by the insurmountable cultural gap between the two entities, the West and the Islam – Huntington points out. This fact was proved to be true beyond any shadow of doubt for the first time by the first Iraqi war in 1991. Iraq invaded Kuwait in the summer of 1990 annexing it as a new province to its territory, a province that was conquered by force. It was an obvious case of aggression against a sovereign state with a clear motivation to conquer, an act condemned by the majority of the

international community (the western world, that is, in Huntington's interpretation), but also by the majority of the Muslim states. However, when the time came to free Kuwait with the help of an international military coalition led by the USA where the great majority of the armed forces was also supplied by the Americans, the Muslim world, especially the Arabic countries condemned the American 'aggression' against Iraq. Saddam Hussein, previously considered a criminal, suddenly became a hero of the Muslim world (although he had been posing as a charismatic but lay leader). The American invasion also prompted an unexpected reconciliation of Iraq with its arch enemy, Iran. In other words, in this case the spiritual relations as well as 'kinship' were more important counterbalancing the pragmatic aspects related to respecting of the international law.

Another aspect developed in Huntington's work is the scenario of an imaginary global conflict initially caused by the USA and China in the first decades of the 21st century. According to the conflict's plan the USA would have interfered in the South China Sea in a military conflict that appeared between China and another state, offering military help to the smaller country. The conflict spread quickly, China provoking considerable losses to the American Navy in the Pacific, thus shortening the time until nuclear weapons – first tactical ones, later strategic ones - are introduced into the conflict. Gradually, as the conflict escalates to a global level, fueled by regional divergences other parties join in the war. The Arabic countries attack the American forces in the Middle East, Israel and Europe respectively. As the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons was a total disaster the Muslim states already possess atomic bombs which they are going to use in the first phase of the conflict against the Europeans (Marseilles and its surroundings are going to be hit by an atomic attack). As a response North Africa and the Middle East will be heavily bombed by NATO. Russia, animated by the Muslim threat and fearing China's territorial claims, becomes the ally of the West, due to its Christian origins as well, although Huntington sets Russia apart, as a different civilization, dissociated from the West. Surprisingly (it is very unlikely in our opinion) Japan will be attracted by China, taking part in the war against the Americans and the Russians, as a result of the increase in China's prestige in Eastern Asia, due to China's ascension to the status of attractive superpower. This will happen in spite of the fact that Japan is a different cultural entity from the Taoist China and the relations between the two countries are poisoned by the memory of the atrocities committed by the Japanese during WWII. India will obviously side with the American – Russian – European coalition and will face heavy battles with China and Pakistan. Huntington also identifies an internal risk for the USA, namely due to the cultural breach the Hispanic population of the USA will trigger ample and destabilizing internal movements arguing that they do not wish to take part in a 'gringo' war.

Eventually the civilization will collapse with every belligerent party suffering considerable and irrecoverable losses. The regions less affected of Latin America and Africa will contribute to the stripping of North America and Europe, that is, what is left of them. This somber scenario clearly sketches the possible threats for the USA but it also contains a clear warning as well, that the USA should not take risks and should not enter conflicts where it does not have direct interests. The chain of conflicts started in the South China Sea (Huntington intuitively placed the conflict area there two decades ago), but the same formula is applicable to the

conflict between continental China and Taiwan and the Korean peninsula. In consequence the American interference in these conflicts should be avoided.

Immanuel Wallerstein wrote a book about the decline of the American power inspired by the events of 11th September 2001 and by the possible shift in the global order following these events. Wallerstein accepts the idea of a slow, but steady decline of the American almightiness on a global level, as we got used to it at the turn of the century. In the author's opinion the 9/11 attacks, but mostly America's disproportionate response by starting the war against terrorism accelerated considerably this decline. In the meantime we could add that the financial crisis of 2008 (subprime mortgage crisis) only added fuel to the fire as it sped up the American regression. Wallerstein postulates that capitalism is suffering from an incurable disease and as a consequence we will witness the changing of the social organization system on a global level; that is the decline of the capitalist order established 250 years ago. This does not mean the decline of the West in Spengler's terms because we are talking about a systemic crisis of global capitalism on the whole, applicable to non-western countries as well, but the American society keeps the finger on the trigger. The increase of insecurity, the shorter time in which economic crises appear, the chaos of the political exchequer due to the almost complete disappearance of the former 'mainstream' left, the threat of the environmental and climate disaster – all these are part of the symptoms of this crisis. The author does not explicitly state what will follow after this system or at least what that system will be called, but he makes it clear that it will be centralized, corporatist, authoritarian system, with a brutalized society where the rights and liberties of the individual will be limited, where the more powerful will dominate over the weaker ones and social polarization could reach paroxysm. He recommends a revitalization of the left along the traditional values of the left, eco-socialist ones, through the promotion of the leveling of societal inequalities. He proposes a domination of the ecologist spirit, a 'Porto Alegre'- type, of sustainability, as opposed to the global monetary spirit, the 'Davos'- type. He criticizes Huntington (although never explicitly names him) as Wallerstein does not agree with the idea that the global crisis has its focal point in cultural and religious differences. In the same time he also criticizes Fukuyama for not promoting the eternal glory of liberal capitalism, on the contrary, he predicts its self-deletion. He rejects the third way of Giddens put into political practice by Tony Blair and somewhat by Clinton through which western left was compromised by being inoculated with neo-liberalism. This neo-liberalism is responsible for the increase of inequalities and for the disorders that triggered perpetual crises of the financial markets. Neo – liberalism, which is the third way of the left was an erroneous response to the challenges of accelerated globalization starting with the '70s. As a result of these tendencies the left abandoned the old middle-class, especially in its lower layers, affected by the reduction of their income due to outsourcing, by the relocation of workplaces in the classical industry to the peripheral areas of the global economy, by the increased use of robots, by the need to be competitive through life-long learning and the need to be adaptable to the knowledge that sells on the workforce market. The left has forsaken the old blue – collars, which is nowadays more of a 'pink-collar', new postmodern proletarians of the offices. Instead of the de-classed of America and Western – Europe the new left promoted, in an ultra-liberalist vision, different minority groups, such as the LGBTQ group, multiculturalism, feminism, disabled people, Afro-American people, refugees, the paupers of the Third World, who, no doubt, are a lot less

fortunate than the chronically out-of-work Westerners. As they felt completely betrayed by the old socialists, these frustrated and furious groups marched directly into the arms of the alt-right protagonists, or those of the populists or even neo-fascists. On the other hand, the radicalization of certain leftist movements represents as well an extreme which leads to the loss of internal cohesion and solidarity, being an endogenous factor of de-stabilization of the American society. What happened in Western Europe in 2016 with the ascension of the right, or the presidential elections in the USA with Donald Trump being the winner is symptomatic for the process of internal de-stabilization, which is a clear internal threat for the capitalist system in perfect concordance with Wallerstein's diagnosis, related to the anti-system movements. This internal scourge was added to by the Russian interference through the manipulation of the elections, the spreading of fake news, significantly increasing the social chaos via cybernetic diversion. Wallerstein, as a reforming eco-socialist, wields an internal criticism of the left with an anti-racist vision, attempting to avoid a fatal social upheaval that could happen due to a disastrous bifurcation following the crisis of the system and whose consequence would be the complete fall of the USA on the basis of contradictory movements and endogenous dysfunctions.

Jean François Revel's book *Anti – Americanism* discusses a phenomenon very dangerous for the USA, namely, the lack of a positive image, which produces aversion, enmity and hatred in large circles towards the foreign affairs of the USA and against the USA on the whole.

Revel condones rather easily Wallerstein and Chomsky's well-grounded criticism related to the double standards that the USA applies so clearly in many cases of its international relations. Revel represents the classical liberalism as compared to Huntington's neo-conservative attitude or Wallerstein's eco-socialism. Based on this ideology, in his book, the values of the state of the rule of law, of the individual rights and the free economy (value-systems representative of the USA) are worshipped and the attack against capitalism, liberalism and against globalization are reduced to simple anti-Americanisms in a slightly Manicheist way. The anti-globalist movements of Porto Alegre and Seattle, considered a positive initiative by Wallerstein are denigrated by Revel as simple destructive and unconscious acts of vandalism of some modern anarchists and Marxists.

Revel considers that America has frequently been viewed simultaneously with envy and despise because of its capacity to adapt, its enormous innovative abilities through which it has always managed to be number one, especially in areas where the qualitative contribution and added value count far more than the purely quantitative efficiency. The role of the 'Planet's gendarme', 'unique superpower', unilateralism, America's messianic mission, provoke irritation and are considered narcissistic whims by America's critics.

The solidity of the foundation of the American democracy, eulogized with absolute superlatives by Revel, has managed so far, in the author's opinion, to save America from dangerous derails of the societal evolution which could have led to the malignant proliferation of political extremes. This commendable immunity is shown in sharp contrast with the European continent's susceptibility to fall in the trap of totalitarian regimes or in that of fratricide conflicts that devastated Europe twice during the 20th century. The American balance could be maintained by the cleverly named and apparently contradictory combination of political idealism and rationality.

Revel points out, that especially the Muslim world, but also the French – who are the European champions of anti-Americanism – suppress their own frustrations, shortcomings and societal failures via their anti-American manifestations. Thus, the USA is used rather as a subterfuge for the camouflaging of their own inertia and inabilities.

The author underlines the fact that the American unilateralism is the product of the European impotence (and not only European) to maintain the order and security of foreign affairs. In fact, Europe's post-war and post-colonial decline in the second half of the 20th century determined the USA to play this role of the balancer. The last European war, for instance, the one in the former Yugoslavia, could not have been solved without the intervention of the USA. Paradoxically, the USA is criticized in both extreme cases – if it remains passive, it is blamed as being isolationist and for its lack of responsibility; when it actively interferes, alone or in a coalition, it is rebuffed for interfering in a state's internal affairs or in those of a group of states, it is accused of unilateralism.

CONCLUSIONS

The USA's security is inseparable of that of the Western world. In the post Cold – War era we are faced with new, unconventional, non-state types of threats, such as terrorism. Due to the efficiency of the anti – terrorism measures taken after the events of 9/11 at the moment the USA is less exposed to fundamentalist Islamist terrorism than Europe. Anyway, the presence of the two oceans does not provide the USA with the protection that it once did. A small and very poor country, situated at a considerable distance, as North Korea, is capable to threaten the USA with nuclear weapons – this means that the threat has reached a superior level. Finally, the nature of the enemies has fundamentally changed that is, as compared to the Cold War, at present the USA has to face – especially in the case of fundamentalist jihadists – some irrational, unpredictable and ruthless enemies, with whom negotiation is practically impossible. Even if the American influence is in decline, the USA will continue to play on the most important position in the game of international relations, even though the hegemony of the '90s will be lost.

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