

EUROPA. USA. GETEILTE ZUKUNFT? TRANSATLANTIC FUTURES. SHARED OR DIVIDED?

The question of the future of transatlantic relations is the focus of the fourth Bad Homburg Conference. For decades, intensive political relations and shared values united the USA and Europe, guaranteeing stability and security even in geopolitically turbulent times. However, this close relationship, which seemed to be firmly rooted in the USA's involvement in shaping modern European democracies, has entered a crisis. The reversals in American foreign, security and trade policy of recent years are causing increasing concern at the political level. At the same time, we observe how democratic culture and common political values in the USA are eroding as a result of social and political polarization - a development that we also see in European countries. These strains on the transatlantic relationship are all the more serious as the geopolitical balance of power shifts among the USA, China and Russia. Europe in particular must, therefore, take on the responsibility of examining the future of transatlantic relations and alliances. Can we be confident that the USA will continue to side with Europe? Are the interests and values of these two powers diverging, leading them down different paths? What would such a separation mean for Europe? One of the aims of the conference is to investigate political and cultural initiatives that might facilitate a revival of transatlantic relations.

We are very pleased to invite you to the fourth Bad Homburg Conference. Shortly before this year's presidential election in the USA, experts will come to Bad Homburg to discuss the present situation as well as the future of transatlantic relations. Not least through the corona pandemic, which forms the backdrop of the conference this year, we see how fragile transatlantic relations, especially those between Europe and the USA, seem to be in the face of a crisis. The conference will examine the political and societal challenges from a variety of perspectives.

The Bad Homburg Conferences are a public forum for reflection on the important political and social issues of our time. Once a year, experts from the fields of science, business, industry and culture meet with interested citizens at the Forschungskolleg Humanwissenschaften - a joint initiative of Goethe University and the Werner Reimers Foundation - to share and exchange different standpoints. The aim is to arrive at a multifaceted understanding of the topic at hand and to stimulate ideas for shaping our future.

The conferences are organized by the Forschungskolleg Humanwissenschaften with other professors from Goethe University and are supported financially by the city of Bad Homburg.

We very much look forward to your participation, which in this year of corona will have to be predominantly online.

Prof. Dr. Dr. Matthias Lutz-Bachmann

Director, Forschungskolleg Humanwissenschaften

Alexander W. Hetjes

Mayor, Bad Homburg v. d. Höhe

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2020

6:00 PM

OPENING

Matthias Lutz-Bachmann

Director of the Forschungskolleg Humanwissenschaften,
Bad Homburg v. d. Höhe

Rolf van Dick

Vice president of internationalization at Goethe University,
Frankfurt am Main

Alexander W. Hetjes

Mayor of the city of Bad Homburg v. d. Höhe

KEYNOTE

Klaus Scharioth

State Secretary of the Federal Foreign Office (2002-2006)
Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany
in Washington (2006-2011)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2020

11:00 AM – 6:00 PM

**TRANSATLANTIC POPULAR CULTURE
AFTER THE »AMERICAN CENTURY«**

11:00 – 13:00 PM

PANELISTS

Ellen M. Harrington

Director of the DFF - Deutsches Filminstitut & Filmmuseum
in Frankfurt am Main

Vinzenz Hediger

Professor of cinema studies, Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main

Verena Lueken

Author and journalist, Frankfurt am Main

Ruth Mayer

Professor of American studies, Leibniz University Hannover

CHAIR

Johannes Völz

Heisenberg-Professor of American studies, Goethe University,
Frankfurt am Main

**DEMOCRATIC WAYS OF LIFE IN
AN AGE OF POLARIZATION**

13:30— 15:30 PM

PANELISTS

Paula Diehl,

Professor of political theory, political culture and the history of ideas,
Kiel University, Kiel

Claus Leggewie

Holder of the Ludwig Börne Chair, Gießen University, Gießen

Stawomir Sierakowski

Ppolitical scientist, sociologist, senior fellow at DGAP and
founder of Krytyka Polityczna (Political Criticism), Berlin/Warsaw

CHAIR

Till van Rahden, professor of German and European studies,
Université de Montréal

**TRANSATLANTIC SECURITY AND
FOREIGN POLICY UNDER STRESS**

16:00—18:00 PM

PANELISTS

Michael C. Kimmage

Professor of history, Catholic University of America, Washington D.C.

Omid Nouripour

Member of the German Parliament, Frankfurt am Main/Berlin

Constanze Stelzenmüller

Senior fellow, Center on the U.S. and Europe, Brookings Institution,
Washington D.C.

Lora Anne Viola

Professor of North American foreign and security policy,
Freie Universität Berlin

CHAIR

Gunther Hellmann

Professor of political science,
Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main

TRANSATLANTIC POPULAR CULTURE AFTER THE “AMERICAN CENTURY”

When the American publisher Henry Luce proclaimed the "American century" in an editorial in Life Magazine in 1941, his tone was anything but triumphant. "There is no possibility of the survival of American civilization except as it survives as a world power," he warned. The world power he had in mind could not repeat the mistakes of the British Empire. Other American opinion-makers also saw the proven way to strengthen American interests in offering the rest of the world an attractive system. The superiority of the liberal-democratic and capitalist societal concept should manifest itself in political-normative, economic and, not least, cultural terms. The worldwide dissemination of modern mass media and targeted cultural diplomacy, therefore, moved to the center of what political scientists would later call "soft power". But American popular culture was never just an American propaganda machine. Whether Hollywood, literature, or pop music, American culture was also stylistically influential because it made those voices heard that denounced the failure to uphold American and European values - not only by means of discourse, but also by aesthetic expression. If American popular culture is still able to inspire worldwide democracy movements, it could be a cornerstone for a future revitalization of transatlantic relations. But is the American cultural industry still as dominant as it was in the second half of the 20th century? Doubts are justified - just think of the flourishing film industries of India and Korea. Is the "American century" also over in a cultural sense?

TRANSATLANTIC SECURITY AND FOREIGN POLICY UNDER STRESS

Without the USA, today's Europe would not only look different, but would also have a different position on the global political stage. The intervention in both World Wars, the substantial investments in the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of the European states after World War II, and the alliances within NATO laid the foundations for the close transatlantic relations in the decades that followed. The fact that tensions and conflicts arose in this process but were repeatedly overcome testifies to the stability and reliability of the transatlantic partnership. Whereas the scandal surrounding the monitoring of European governments by the NSA may still fall into the category of a temporary annoyance, the unexpected reversals in US foreign, trade and security policies in recent years have led to very high tensions. These reversals include, first and foremost, the withdrawal of the US from the role of a global political power and, associated with this, growing doubts about US security guarantees within NATO; however, the turnaround in Middle East policy, the trade dispute with Europe under threat of punitive tariffs, and the withdrawal from the INF Treaty and the Paris Climate Change Agreement have also played a role. At the same time, these shifts are taking place in a changing geopolitical balance of power between the USA, China and Russia. For Europe today, therefore, the question is not only how bilateral relations with the USA must be adapted to the new global political framework, but also how the European Union can strengthen its cohesiveness and at the same time independently guarantee the security of all partner states to a far greater extent.

DEMOCRATIC WAYS OF LIFE IN AN AGE OF POLARIZATION

Where political support for transatlantic alliances is losing its robustness, transatlantic relations of a different kind come into focus. Shared challenges connect the United States and Europe even in times of geopolitical reorientation. One of these common challenges concerns precisely that political culture of democracy that was long considered the realization of common political values. Our pluralistically open civil society, in which democracy can flourish as a way of life, finds itself under pressure on both sides of the Atlantic. In the USA, as in many European countries, processes of political polarization increasingly interfere with democratic coexistence. After many years of unavoidable reforms during which expert rule in Western societies on both sides of the Atlantic has attacked the pluralistic culture of debate, the disenchantment with politics seems to have come to an end. However, politics is now at risk of becoming a question of identification with a political camp. Political discourse serves less to negotiate compromises than to consolidate communities of like-minded people. But why is political polarization so pronounced in the USA in particular? And how can the processes of polarization on both sides of the Atlantic be defined more precisely? What is the role of those transnational populist forces that specifically fuel polarizing cultural wars? To what extent do polarizing tendencies stand in the way of the goal of the continued development the European project?

LOCATION

Forschungskolleg Humanwissenschaften of Goethe University
Frankfurt am Main

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CONCEPT AND PROGRAM

Prof. Dr. **Andreas Fahrmeir**, Goethe University/Forschungskolleg Humanwissenschaften; Dr. **Bettina Gentzcke**, city of Bad Homburg v.d. Höhe; Prof. Dr. **Gunther Hellmann**, Goethe University; Dr. **Albrecht Graf von Kalnein**, Werner Reimers Foundation; **Iris Helene Koban**, Forschungskolleg Humanwissenschaften; Prof. Dr. Dr. **Matthias Lutz-Bachmann**, Goethe University/Forschungskolleg Humanwissenschaften; Prof. Dr. **Darrel Moellendorff**, Goethe University; Dr. **Thomas Schimmer**, Forschungskolleg Humanwissenschaften; Prof. Dr. **Johannes Völz**, Goethe University/Forschungskolleg Humanwissenschaften; Prof. Dr. **Simon Wendt**, Goethe University

PARTICIPATION AND REGISTRATION

Due to the corona pandemic, only a limited number of people will be able to participate in the conference directly. Therefore, we will be broadcasting the conference on the internet; information about the broadcast is available on our website: www.forschungskolleg-humanwissenschaften.de Discussions will be held primarily in English.