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Atlantis lost : the American experience with De Gaulle, 1958-1969

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Stellingen bij het proefschrift van Sebastian Reyn, *Atlantis Lost: The American Experience With De Gaulle, 1958-1969*

Ten minste vier stellingen met betrekking tot het onderwerp van het proefschrift

1. The postwar American conception of the transatlantic relationship as an evolving Atlantic ‘community’ was one by-product of the bipartisan foreign policy synthesis of the early Cold War as it preserved the consensus between, on the one hand, the liberal view of this relationship as a scaled-down world community and, on the other hand, the conservative predisposition to construct this relationship around the long-established strategic partnership and kinship with Great Britain.
2. How Americans judged Gaullism largely depended on whether they were liberal or conservative; as the liberal mindset was dominant during much of de Gaulle’s presidency, the Franco-American disagreement must therefore be partially understood as a clash between an American foreign policy steeped in liberal values and a French foreign policy steeped in the conservative European tradition.
3. The negative response to Gaullism in the United States, in particular among liberals, was an offshoot of the anti-Europeanism and the Europhobia that has influenced American foreign policy from the founding days of the Republic.
4. The moderate response of U.S. presidents to de Gaulle’s ‘heresy’ within the transatlantic alliance from 1958 to 1969 illustrates the accommodating nature of American hegemony in Western Europe and underlined how little leverage the U.S. ultimately had to compel a wayward ally to follow its lead.
5. De Gaulle’s policy of independence within the Western alliance imposed limits on American power by creating strategic and political realities different from those that had been envisioned in Washington, even as the achievement of many of de Gaulle’s aims depended on continued American involvement in Europe.
6. De Gaulle’s foreign policy contributed to a paradigm shift in American perceptions of the transatlantic relationship from the notion of an evolving Atlantic ‘community’ toward a more realistic Atlanticism primarily attuned to the national interest.
7. President Eisenhower’s search for a compromise in response to de Gaulle’s ‘tripartite’ memorandum proposal of September 1958 preoccupied him more than is often understood; he was prepared to furnish any assistance to the French nuclear program not prohibited by the Congress as well as to extend the ‘special’ relationship with Great Britain to France by creating an informal consultation mechanism in London.
8. De Gaulle’s political maneuvering was chiefly responsible for President Johnson’s decision in late 1964 to let the American proposal for a NATO sea-based multilateral nuclear force (MLF) wither on the vine.
9. By the spring of 1964, the Johnson administration began to prepare politically and militarily for a French withdrawal from NATO, which was finally announced by de Gaulle in February 1966.

10. The partial reassessment among historians of Lyndon Johnson as a competent foreign policy president is supported by the judicious restraint with which he handled the French challenge to the United States within the Western alliance, as this restraint brought important political and psychological compensations, reduced the symbolic appeal of de Gaulle's policy of independence, and facilitated the beginnings of Franco-American accommodation in 1968.
11. President Nixon and his National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger sympathized with de Gaulle's political philosophy to such a degree that they represented an American version of Gaullism, thereby raising the probability that the Franco-American relationship would have been significantly less antagonistic had Nixon been elected president in 1960.

Vier stellingen met betrekking tot het vakegebied van het onderwerp van het proefschrift

12. The history of American foreign policy from the early days of the Republic can be explained in terms of the interplay between the two mainstream traditions in American politics: liberalism and conservatism.
13. Dean Acheson's foreign policy outlook was an amalgamation of the conservative and liberal internationalist traditions in American foreign policy, and therefore cannot simply be typecast as realist.
14. American neoconservatism is one particular synthesis of liberalism and conservatism in response to the rapid emergence *and* the relative decline of the United States as a global power in the twentieth century.
15. The coming into being of the French nuclear force contributed to Franco-German political reconciliation by removing remaining French insecurities about a resurgent German military threat, as is reflected in de Gaulle's answer to Henry Kissinger's question how he proposed to prevent Germany from dominating Europe: "Par la guerre."

Ten hoogste vier stellingen over onderwerpen naar keuze

16. NATO may not have been indispensable in order to protect Western Europe in the Cold War, which enabled de Gaulle to withdraw France from NATO in 1966, yet it became indispensable for safeguarding European security *after* the Cold War, which helps to explain France's partial rapprochement toward NATO from the 1990s.
17. The goal of completing one's doctoral dissertation must be considered inferior to that of maintaining one's family, so one should be careful not to prioritize the former over the latter.
18. Het regeerakkoord van het kabinet Balkenende-IV bewijst dat de komma onvoldoende wordt begrepen door de opstellers van dit akkoord, waardoor het kabinetsstandpunt over een parlementair 'instemmingsrecht' bij besluiten tot de inzet van Nederlandse militairen in het buitenland onnodig lang onduidelijk bleef.