

“ ‘America’ – Europe’s Defence Mind”

American Projects for a European Defence Dimension

By HENRIK AAGAARD JOHANSON

This thesis is an inquiry into American political projects on constructing the European defence architecture. The major problem, which the thesis sets out to comprehend, is: *How American identity influences the development of European defence architecture.*

The thesis departs from a reflectivist point of view placing it in the world of language. Using discourse theory, the thesis searches for ‘differences’ in the American security discourses in order to uncover the structure of American identity: *who, what, and how* ‘America’ is constituted as a ‘self’ in relation to an ‘other’.

The thesis develops an analytical framework based on a model of ‘the American mind’ as a structure of ideas. It tries to reveal how ideas were used in the American hegemonic project for an ‘European defence architecture’, delimiting to the Clinton-administration, and then demonstrates how the alternative republican project is positioned in an antagonistic relation.

The thesis concludes that American hegemonic projects determine how the ‘European defence architecture’ develops, by articulating what ‘European defence architecture’ is, and what it is not. It then demonstrates how the predominant fundamental ideas in the American ‘self’ imply different projects. In this process, the democrat and republican projects struggle to define both the meaning of an ‘European defence architecture’, and simultaneous what ‘America’ is.

The thesis argues that the two projects were guided by different dynamics. The Clinton-administration was guided by an idea of progress, which means helping Europe toward a ‘better’ Europe. The republican project by contrast was guided by an idea of a strong Europe as a potential threat, which has to be fought to withhold American dominance.

Hence the thesis can contribute to reflection on the fact that European security politics is likely to be determined by the predominant hegemonic project in America.