New York City, a global city

Officially The City of New York (nicknamed "Big Apple" or "Gotham") is located in the southern end of the state of New York, thus in the northeast of the USA, approximately halfway between Washington D.C. and Boston. It is placed at the mouth of the Hudson River, and much of the city is built on the 3 islands of Manhattan, Staten Island and western Long Island. It was founded as the colony of New Amsterdam by Dutchmen in the early 17th century, and then ceded as part of the Province of New York to the British in 1664. Composed of 5 boroughs – i.e. counties (if each were to be independent cities, 4 of the boroughs - Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan and the Bronx - would be among the 10 most populous cities in the USA), the city spread from its beginnings on Manhattan Island (between the Hudson and East rivers) onto nearby Staten Island, western Long Island, and mainland North America, incorporating the other communities in 1898.

A global city is a metropolis that concentrates political, economic activities and that spread its influence on its region, on its country and on the world and which rules the world because of the concentration of financial, economic and political centres that impulse policies of globalisation. And among all, a global city is connected to all the networks in the world and has more than 8 millions of inhabitants.

New York is a major economic hub: it’s the 2nd most powerful city in the world on the economic aspect after Tokyo in terms of Global Economic Power Index. But it also be considered as the first in some other index in order that NYC benefits from the US power. This applies in various economic fields:

- it is a hub of finance, insurance because of the presence of the 1st world stock exchange in the world (Wall Street) composed of two stock market NYSE and NASDAQ. This last is the largest stock exchange in the world by capitalization ($14,242 billion in 2011) and the second largest stock exchange in the world by market capitalization ($4,687 billion in 2011). But regarding capitalisation, Wall Street is behind London stock exchange.

- NYC has a large concentration of wealth because it’s the biggest regional economy in USA. The estimated Gross Metropolitan Product of the New York metropolitan area is $ 1.13 trillion and it is predicted to be the richest city by 2025, ahead of Tokyo, Shanghai...

- NYC has also a large concentration of headquarters of TNCs as the fact that many Fortune 500 companies have their head offices in the city. These TNCs are as diverse as banks (JP Morgan Chase and Co), service firms (Ernst and Young LLP), media firms (Thompson Reuters), insurance firms (New York Life Insurance Co), jeweller and design firm (Tiffany and Co Corp), telecommunications (Time Warner Cable Inc) and so on.

This economic influence is visible spatially in the two CBDs of NYC such as Wall Street with the Stock Exchange, TNCs HQ, the Federal Reserve Bank and such as the one midtown close to the Empire State and the Chrysler buildings.

New York's worldwide influence is also diplomatic, thanks to the presence of the UN headquarters in Manhattan, since its completion in 1952 (i.e. 7 years after the creation of the organisation at the San Francisco conference of June 1945); the city also hosts the headquarters of some UN agencies like the UNICEF. New York City's influence is also, to some extent, military, due to the nearby location of one of the most famous US military academies, West Point, that has been made worldwide famous thanks to some of its former students (US presidents, generals...) and movies shot there (e.g. MacArthur, released in 1977).

New York's worldwide cultural power is illustrated by various elements:

- the fame and attractiveness of its universities (e.g. Columbia University – one of the university of the Ivy League6, Manhattan College, New York Institute of technology, New York University, etc.), some being part of the Ivy League
- many world famous cultural organisations and centres : over 500 art galleries, museums (e.g. : the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Carnegie Hall, the MoMA) ; theatres on Broadway, the Metropolitan Opera, the NYC Opera, the New York Philharmonic, the NYC Ballet, the Rockefeller center, ...
- many famous tourist places such as The Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, Time Square, Central Park, the Empire State Building, ...

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1 Fortune is a magazine that makes classification of the 500 most important, powerful, richest and dominant TNCs in the world each year.
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- NYC is the second film making city in the USA after LA and the third in the world after LA and Mumbai. The City is also famous for theatre plays.

New York is opened and connected to the world thanks to international transportation network and infrastructures:

- NYC port is the most important on the East Coast and is a part of the US North Atlantic Seaboard and Northeastern Range, i.e. the most important maritime route on this side of the Atlantic. The Port of NY/New Jersey is well connected to the rest of the world as it is the gateway for merchandises and raw materials from all over the world. Its 6 container terminal make it now the 3rd largest port in the USA handling 5.5 million 20-foot equivalent units in 2011, even if it’s far behind the Asiatic port such as Shanghai with its 32.5 20-foot equivalent units in 2012.
- NYC has 3 international airports: La Guardia, JFK and Newark, which, for the 2 latter, rank in the world top 50 airports, both for passenger and freight traffic.

As a center of command and impulse for globalisation, NYC has an influence on the world. Having one of the world leading stock exchanges, NYC has a large power in order to control and transform financial flows all over the world. The large amount of TNCs’ Headquarters concentrated in the city let also assume that important decisions on the New Division of Labour, RandD strategies and commercial strategies and campaign are decided in NYC. Finally, the cultural and diplomatic importance of NYC attracts each more and more people from all over the world in order to visit or to stay in the Big Apple.

Moreover, as the first centre of consumption and the real economic capital of the USA, NYC is also an impulse center for the USA by dragging a large amount of agricultural products, industrial and financial flows. It also attracts a large number of people for tourism, for studying or for working in NYC in the large numbers of firms and services that are linked to them.

Finally the influence of NYC on its region is visible through the transportation system with trains, roads, subways that connects the city, and its heart Manhattan, to the various district of NYC, to the suburbs and moreover to New Jersey and region from around 60 km range from the center of Manhattan Island. The influence is also visible in the phenomenon of the commuters causing large traffic jam and a large crowd of people in the common transport at the rush hours.

NYC explored the idea of a sustainable development program in order to drop the production of greenhouse gases (GHG). This program was released in 2007 by the mayor Michael Blumberg in a radiobroadcast speech. The question was to transform the way the city was consuming energy and the question of traffic.

First, it was a question of rehabilitating the old building and the systems of heat and cooling. It causes large transformations in many districts of NYC, especially Harlem, causing a gentrification, even if it’s only in progress, in this district. Moreover, a project of creating a toll for traffic was proposed but it faced the opposition of taxi drivers and the importance of the cost of such a system. But this project wasn’t only a project for NYC. It’s a part of a larger project and system of finance of sustainable program in global cities, proving that NYC is an impulse center in this domain too and cooperates with other cities of the world oligopoly.