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**Introduction:**

**The Politics of Anti-AmericanismS**

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In 1941 Henry Luce spoke of the coming of the American century.<sup>1</sup> Today commentators across the political spectrum emphasize America's dominant military capabilities and economic strength. Many observers have also argued that the United States uniquely benefits from the wave of economic liberalization and democratization that followed the end of the Cold War. Joseph S. Nye has coined a catchy phrase, "soft power," to suggest the importance of being admired, so that "others want what you want."<sup>2</sup> Nye argued that the United States has commanded a lot of soft power. Indeed, with the end of the Cold War it seemed for a short while as if the United States was in a "virtuous circle," in which its success caused it to be more admired, which in turn enhanced its influence, and thus furthered its success.

Yet after sixty years of global leadership, the United States is far from universally admired worldwide. After the 9/11 attacks, there was an outpouring of grief and sympathy for America and Americans in many parts of the world, although not in all. But little more than a year later, on February 15, 2003, the world witnessed the largest-ever global mass demonstration in history, protesting the U.S. attack on Iraq. A poll by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press of 16,000 people showed that in the

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<sup>1</sup> Luce 1941.

<sup>2</sup> Nye 2002, 8-12.

spring of 2003 majorities in only four of the fourteen countries that were also surveyed in 1999/2000 and 2002 held favorable opinions of the United States. By contrast, in both 1999/2000 and the summer of 2002, majorities in ten of the same fourteen countries had reported favorable views of the United States.<sup>3</sup> A series of polls taken in the winter of 2004-05 showed that in 16 of 22 countries surveyed, a plurality or majority of the public said that the United States had mainly a negative influence in the world, and in 20 countries a plurality or majority expressed the view that for Europe to be more influential than the United States in world affairs would be a positive development.<sup>4</sup> What is commonly called “anti-Americanism” – the expression of negative attitudes toward the United States -- has spread far and wide, including in parts of the world where publics showed deep sympathy with the United States after the 9/11 attacks.

The sensitivity of Americans to these expressions of dislike may say as much about America as about others’ views of the United States. Alexis de Tocqueville commented on this subject in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century:

The Americans, in their intercourse with strangers, appear impatient of the smallest censure and insatiable of praise....They unceasingly harass you to extort praise, and if you resist their entreaties they fall to praising

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<sup>3</sup> Pew Research Center 2005, p. 106. Results of polls taken in 2002 and 2003 are available on [Http://www.people-press.org](http://www.people-press.org). (last accessed April 12, 2005). Results of polls taken in 2004 are expected to be available in spring or summer 2005. See also Politi 2003. Marquis 2003. Clymer 2002.

<sup>4</sup> PIPA 2005.

themselves. It would seem as if, doubting their own merit, they wished to have it constantly exhibited before their eyes.<sup>5</sup>

The undeniable upsurge in the expression of anti-American sentiment abroad since 2002 has led to anxieties among many Americans. It is not obvious, however, whether these sentiments are primarily a reaction to the Bush administration and its policies or whether they derive from more fundamental sources. As a way of distinguishing between fundamental and ephemeral sources of anti-Americanism, we begin in chapter 1 with a distinction, made by many commentators, between disliking “what America *is*” and “what America *does*.” The ephemeral parts of anti-Americanism are linked to what America does, that is, American policies and the effects they have on others. The more fundamental sources of anti-Americanism refer to what America is. They include the fact that since the end of the Cold War the United States has attained a position of unchallenged military power. Whether technically an empire or not, the United States has intervened militarily throughout the world in a way that recalls empires of the past. Anti-imperial sentiments recur throughout history, as reflected in the experiences of the Chinese, Ottoman, Habsburg, British and other European empires. Other fundamental factors include the sharp differences in public attitudes between Americans and Europeans with respect to social welfare issues, the death penalty and the construction of binding treaties on such questions as land-mines and human rights. Still other potential deep sources of anti-Americanism could include resentment of American wealth, and of America’s dominant role in economic and social globalization.

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<sup>5</sup> Toqueville 1965 (1835), 252, quoted in Toinet 1988, 137.

Although we do not pretend to have solved all of them, this volume contains some evidence bearing on these questions. What the contributors to this book have done is to bring analysis, from different social science disciplines and with multiple methodologies, to bear on what is called anti-Americanism.<sup>6</sup> We have systematically deployed the tools of social science: examining in detail the profile of anti-American attitudes across space and time; asking questions about the conditions that shape the politics of anti-Americanism in different contexts; focusing on the dynamic changes that affect anti-Americanism; inquiring into the political effects of anti-Americanism; and bringing new evidence and interpretation to bear on different facets this important political issue. The editors developed questions to be asked in different contexts and commissioned authors who were qualified to answer them.<sup>7</sup> We have done so in order to clarify the forms that anti-Americanism takes and to enable us to make more informed inferences about its sources and consequences.

Part I places anti-Americanism in the context of Americanism, by examining the concept of anti-Americanism and various types of anti-Americanisms, and by discussing the images of America held by people abroad, from 1492 onward. Chapter 1, by the editors, develops the conceptual framework for this volume. We emphasize the

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<sup>6</sup> Anti-Americanism has been the subject of many recent studies, which include include Markovits 2006. Judt and Lacorne 2005, Steinberg 2005. Levy, Pensky and Torpey 2005. Telhami 2005. *Economist* 2005. Rubin and Rubin 2004. Hollander 2004a. Markovits 2004. Berman 2004. Ross and Ross 2004. Ceaser 2003. Sardar and Davies 2002. Shiraev and Zubok 2000. Kaase and Kohut 1996. Granatstein 1996. Rubinstein and Smith 1985. Kroes and Rossem 1986. Haseler 1985. Rubinstein and Smith 1985.

<sup>7</sup> This research project extended over eighteen months and convened six workshops in which a large number of highly knowledgeable scholars commented on various drafts of the chapters that appear below, repeatedly revised and greatly improved.

multidimensionality and heterogeneity of anti-Americanism and the ambivalence often associated with it. We point out the importance of distinguishing among *opinion*, *distrust*, and *bias*, and we develop a typology of different varieties of anti-Americanism. Our emphasis on the variety of anti-Americanism accounts for the title of this book: *Anti-Americanisms in World Politics*.

But we do not focus exclusively on *anti*-Americanism. For a full understanding of negative views of the United States, and the politics that accompany these views, we have to place anti-Americanism within the broader context of attitudes, positive as well as negative, toward the United States. We want to know under what conditions individually-held attitudes toward the United States become collectively-believed views, and when anti-American discourses and policies prevail.

To understand anti-Americanism, we also need to understand “Americanism.”<sup>8</sup> The diversity of anti-Americanism is due to the diversity of America. As a country of settlers and immigrants, America represents a very broad spectrum of values, stretching from an entertainment industry that dominates key sectors of global popular culture to a publicly salient religiosity that is unique among the advanced industrial states. The heterogeneity of anti-Americanism is matched by the heterogeneity of Americanism. America is a bundle of tensions and contradictions: intensely secular and intensely religious, unilateralist and multilateralist, statist and anti-statist. That is, American symbols refer simultaneously to a variety of values, which may appeal differentially to different people in different societies, and despite their contradiction may appeal even to

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<sup>8</sup> Hertzgaard 2002. Ceaser 1997. Rosaenberg 1982. Gerbi 1973. O’Gorman 1961.

the same person at one time. Furthermore, as David Kennedy shows in chapter 2, from Europe's first awareness of America after 1492 it has been a subject of fascination and interpretation. The image of America abroad, and America's image of itself, have moved in parallel, but have often been at odds with one another. Both anti-Americanism and pro-Americanism, as attitudes held by people outside the United States, draw both on rich and varied images of America as well as on the complexity of American life and the impact of the United States on the world. Arguments about the United States by Americans are often equally intense: Americans are divided about many aspects of their own country. We need to remember that many of the conflicts in world politics that manifest different forms of anti-Americanism have strong echoes within the American polity.

When most people think about studies of anti-Americanism, they think about polling results, which are often publicized in the media. Sophisticated analysis of polling data is very important for an understanding of anti-Americanism. Part II of this volume is devoted to this topic. In chapter 3, Pierangelo Isernia examines European views toward the United States during the Cold War, and how they changed under the pressure of events. With great sophistication, he demonstrates that the European public had quite well-structured cognitions about the United States, and that American foreign policy, perceived cultural differences, and direct contacts with American soldiers, played important roles in shaping attitudes. There is no indication that anti-American views were either irrational or deeply embedded in the European public's consciousness. Indeed, Isernia shows that between 1952 and 2001 views of the United States in Europe were consistently quite favorable. They fluctuate around a level at which more than twice as

many Europeans express favorable than unfavorable views of the United States.

Giacomo Chiozza demonstrates in chapter 4, that the recent upsurge of anti-American opinion is just that: recent. In 2002, majorities in 35 of 42 countries surveyed by the Pew Research Center held favorable views of the United States.<sup>9</sup> In a detailed analysis of Pew's 2002 results, Chiozza demonstrates that views toward America are multidimensional and non-ideological. Very few people uniformly dislike the United States. Rather, they tend to discriminate between features of American society that they like and those they dislike. Attitudes toward the United States are overwhelmingly most negative in the Middle East. Yet even in this angry region, since attitudes are multidimensional, overall judgments vary, depending the perceived salience of different aspects of the United States.

Polling data alone, however, do not enable us to understand the formation and activities of social movements and political organizations, the political strategies of politicians, or the policies pursued by and governmental officials. The politics of anti-Americanism in all its richness and diversity requires a more contextual and qualitative approach. Part III therefore turns to intensive examinations of the views toward the United States, and the politics that accompanies such views, in three important countries: France, Egypt, and China. In the case of Egypt, the focus is also on the Arab world in general, of which Egypt is a major part.<sup>10</sup> As editors, we asked the authors of these

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<sup>9</sup> Pew Research Center 2002, pp. 53-55.

<sup>10</sup> Our need for coherence, and to limit the topic sufficiently to discuss it in one volume, led us to focus on Europe, East Asia and the Middle East, and to omit analysis of anti-Americanism in Latin America, where it has a long history, and in Africa, where attitudes toward the United States remain on the whole quite positive.

chapters not only to explore views toward the United States in general, but also to address three other sets of issues. We asked them to examine issues involving relations with the United States of particular relevance to the polity in question, which might be unimportant to other countries, such as Taiwan for China, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for Egypt, and Google's effort to develop library search engines for France. We also asked them to examine at least one non-political issue, with no apparent linkage to relationships with the United States. This permits us to explore to what extent anti-Americanism, when generated by "hot-button" political issues, has an impact on political views and behavior on quite separate dimensions of activity. In particular, we asked the three authors to explore reactions to the American-led tsunami relief effort in the winter of 2005, which we use in chapter 1 as a way to examine the difference between negative opinion toward the United States, on the one hand, and deep distrust or bias, on the other.<sup>11</sup>

Part IV moves the focus away from political science toward sociology and anthropology. In chapter 8 John Bowen compares anti-Americanism in Indonesia and France, societies which he knows extremely well. In both polities recent polls have shown widespread disapproval of the United States. Bowen's research yields two main findings: negative schemas help to structure these unfavorable attitudes, and these schemas are much more deep-seated in France – and not only among Muslims -- than in Indonesia. Indonesian views toward the United States are therefore more volatile than

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<sup>11</sup> Because it is particularly germane, the chapters on France and China also examine consumer behavior in the context of anti-Americanism, a subject that, among others, we treat also in chapter 10.



those in France. In chapter 9 Doug McAdam examines anti-Americanism as “contentious politics.” Looking at anti-Americanism through this lens yields some surprising insights into the often unanticipated long-term consequences of episodes of anti-Americanism, sometimes leading to the institutionalization of distrust or bias, and at other times reversing course and yielding a more pro-American orientation than one might have expected. Hence the title of his article: “Legacies of Anti-Americanism.”

The chapters in Parts II-IV employ different methodologies, but they share a common view of the problem, taken as a whole. Negative actions toward the United States, by governments, groups or individuals, are affected by individual attitudes, especially in democracies. But actions do not follow directly from attitudes. For anti-Americanism to have a political impact, some mixture of negative opinion, distrust, and bias must be mobilized by social movements or institutions such as political parties. Whether such mobilization occurs is likely to play a crucial role in determining whether negative views of the United States have significant political effects. Without such mobilization, it is unlikely that such effects will endure. Yet without some level of negative opinion, distrust or bias toward the United States, there is little for political entrepreneurs to mobilize. Since both top-down organization, and bottom-up shifts in attitudes, are necessary for anti-Americanism to have a serious political impact, this volume studies both sets of processes.

In chapter 10 we examine the consequences of anti-Americanism. Based on new empirical research, we show that specific, short-term effects of anti-Americanism, which one might expect to find, are not apparent. Indeed, there have been remarkably few

negative general consequences of anti-Americanism for United States diplomacy on issues such as the war on terror, and traces of impact of anti-American public sentiments are difficult to discover even with respect to membership in the Coalition of the Willing or responses to American policies on the International Criminal Court. As a result of our analysis, we believe that the burden of proof has been shifted to those who argue that anti-Americanism has immediate and direct effects on world politics. There are good reasons, however, to expect that anti-American views may have indirect or delayed effects on policy. We therefore inquire into some of the conditions that may facilitate or impede such effects. A null finding on short-term, direct consequences should not be interpreted as a claim that anti-Americanism does not matter.

This book demonstrates that expressions of anti-American sentiments vary greatly across time and space. Instead of a single anti-Americanism we find a variety of anti-Americanisms. Negative views toward America wax and wane with political events, in different rhythms, in different parts of the world, in countries with very different kinds of politics. Anti-Americanism may lay dormant for long periods, yet sudden shifts in environmental conditions can activate it, with either temporary or longer-term effects, but rarely with direct and immediate consequences for government policies.

In the concluding chapter we address the central puzzle that this book's research and interpretation has generated. Why does a rich variety of anti-Americanisms persist? And why are its immediate effects limited? Broadly speaking, our answer to this puzzle comes back to the nature of America itself. America is "polyvalent." It combines within itself such a diversity of values and variety of ways of life that it readily serves as an

object of both disapproval and approval in many different polities or in the same polity over time. Just as Americans look to the world as a mirror in which they see themselves - - and wish to see themselves as better than they are -- non-Americans look to the United States as a mirror which reflects their own hopes, fears, and faults.

## **References**

Please refer to combined reference list in chapter 1.