

Venice International University

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Spring Term 2008

Anti-Americanism in the Age of Globalization

„Amerika, Du hast es besser.“
Johann Wolfgang v. Goethe 1803

„We're going to ruin your culture,
just like we ruined our own.“
Jay Leno 1993

Since the end of the Cold War, but particularly since September 11th, 2001 the role of the USA as the „benevolent hegemon“ is under global scrutiny. Classic Americanism or rather American exceptionalism has become controversial again, not only within America, but the world over. Even before these dates Anti-Americanism hovered like a shadow over the Americanization debate, fed by steady resentments caused by the not-yet-quite-understood effects of globalization. Globalization represents for many non-Americans a creeping form of Americanization, an estimate common in the Third World or in Europe that Americans, even liberals, steadfastly oppose. Yet, the forces of globalization have inspired new types of Anti-Americanism around the globe, some bordering on conspiracy theories. To sort out the political agendas contained in the political keywords **Anti-Americanism**, **Americanization** and **Globalization** and to identify the diverse processes so described we first need to clear away the historical habits of auto-stereotype and hetero-stereotype which have over the years fossilized in transatlantic narratives. Only after such an archeological anatomy of our deep political semantics will we be able to distinguish between knee-jerk Anti-Americanism and justified criticism of current US foreign or economic policies. Finally, there are certain cognitive differences and transatlantic dissonances in key concepts of the debate: terms such as liberalism or empire may have different historical and political resonances on either side of the Atlantic. Religion in particular has become a cause of transatlantic dissonances.

The following key questions need to be answered: 1) What has the term Anti-Americanism transported as a hidden agenda or as a tacit background assumption over the past two centuries on either side of the Atlantic (and why is nobody worried about Pro-Americanism)? 2) Why have Americanization and its silent partner Anti-Americanism enjoyed a remarkable renaissance since the collapse of a bipolar world at all levels of the European and global public sphere? 3) Is globalization merely an expansion or intensification of a one-dimensional Americanization towards a global McWorld or is the „new global economy“ a new ball game altogether? 4) Is the current flap caused by a serious “clash of civilizations” between Venus vs. Mars? Or is it “just talk” and hence part of a long range narrative *folie a deux* with little political impact or significance? Or are we dealing with political instrumentalization plus media hype, i.e. biased propaganda?

Recommended Texts: Andrew Kohut and Bruce Stokes. *America Against the World. How We Are Different and Why We Are Disliked*. New York: Times Book 2006. Julia E. Sweig. *Friendly Fire. Losing Friends and Making Enemies in the Anti-American Century*. New York: Public Affairs 2006. Paul Hollander, ed. *Understanding Anti-Americanism. Its Origins and Impact at Home and Abroad*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee 2004. Andrei S. Markovits. *Uncouth Nation. Why Europe Dislikes America*. Princeton U. Press 2007. Brendon O'Connor. Ed. *Anti-Americanism*. 4 Vol. Greenwood Press 2007. Peter Katzenstein, Robert Keohane. Eds. *Anti-Americanism in World Politics*. Cornell U. Press 2007. Ulrich Beck et. al. Eds. *Global America*. U. Liverpool Press 2004. Reading marked “optional” will be placed in a special

reader on reserve. A course packet with photocopies of primary and secondary reading will be made available. Credit will be given for active oral participation (30%), a midterm on the basis of the reader (30%), and a short research paper or book review (40%). The topics for the midterm or research papers must be cleared with the instructor.

Syllabus

* Hard Copy

** Electronic Copy

First Week

Introduction

Reading:** Joseph Joffe “The Perils of Soft Power” *The New York Times* 6/2006

**Margaret Drabble. “I loathe America, and what it has done to the rest of the world.” *Telegraph*, June 8, 2003.

**George McGovern “Why I Believe Bush Must Go. Nixon Was Bad. These Guys Are Worse.” *Washington Post*. Sunday, January 6, 2008; B01

Optional :

**Nick Cohen “Why it is right to be anti-American” *The New Statesman* Jan. 14, 2002
Editorial. “Looking at America” *The New York Times*. Dec 31 2007

Second Week

SOFT CULTURAL POWER OR WHY IS AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE SO POPULAR? A VIEW FROM EUROPE.

Reading: *Berndt Ostendorf: „What makes American culture so popular? A View from Europe.“ *OASIS*. 2002

*Todd Gitlin. „The Unification of the World under the Signs of Mickey Mouse and Bruce Willis: The Supply and Demand Sides of American Popular Culture” in B. Ostendorf, ed. *Transnationalism*. 2002.

Third Week

What does „Americanism“ stand for? American *exceptionalism* after 9/11?

America as City upon a Hill and as a universal model to emulate?

Reading: **Handout on exceptionalism

*Andrew Kohut & Bruce Stokes “The American Way” and “The Problem of American Exceptionalism”

*Samuel Huntington: „The American Creed and National Identity,“ *American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony*. Cambridge 1981

Optional: Richard Crockat. “Americanism as a Source of Anti-Americanism”, *Anti-Americanism*, Vol. 2.

John Kane, “Schizophrenic Nationalism and Anti-Americanism” in O’Connor, *Anti-Americanism* Vol. 2

Jan Nederveen Pieterse. “Hyperpower Exceptionalism: Globalization the American Way” in Beck et. al. *Global America*.

**“American Exceptionalism” Wikipedia

Fourth Week

A BLESSED PEOPLE?

TRANSATLANTIC DISSONANCES: RELIGION IN AMERICAN POLITICS

Reading: *Kohut/Stokes "A Blessed People"

**B. Ostendorf, "A Nation with the Soul of a Church: The Strange Career of Religion in American Politics" *Rivista di Studi Nord Americani* (Special European Issue) 15/16 2004-2005, 169-196.

**Boyer, Paul S.: John Darby Meets Saddam Hussein: When U.S. Foreign Policy Meets Bible Prophecy. in: *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. February 14, 2003. B10-11.

*Andrew Bacevich and Elizabeth Prodromou. "God is Not Neutral: Religion and U.S. Foreign Policy after 9/11" *Orbis*, Winter 2004, 43-54.

Fifth Week

America in the European Imagination: Decline or Progress? „Degeneracy or Utopia“? “Heaven or Hell“?

Reading: **Simon Schama. "The Unloved Americans. Two centuries of alienating Europe." *The New Yorker*, March 10, 2003

John Moser, "Anti-Americanism and Anglophobia" in: *Anti-Americanism*, Vol 3.

Gilbert Chinard. „Eighteenth Century Theories on America as a Human Habitat.“ *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 91,1 (1947).

*James Ceaser: „America as Degeneracy,“ "American Responses to Degeneracy" *Reconstructing America: The Symbol of American Thought*. Yale 1997.

*Barry Rubin, "A Naturally Degenerate Land" *Hating America*, 2004

Sixth Week

The Spectre of Americanization.

What does the term really mean? Is it a useful concept?

Reading: Rob Kroes. „Americanisation: What are we Talking About?“ in *Cultural Transmission and Reception*.

*Berndt Ostendorf. "The Americanization of Germany Debate: An Archeology of Tacit Background Assumptions. In E. Shore and F. Trommler, ed. *The German-American Encounter. Conflict and Cooperation between Two Cultures, 1800-2000*. New York: Berghahn Books 2001, 267-284

*Richard Pells. "American Culture Abroad. The European Experience since 1945" in Rob Kroes, ed. *Cultural Transmissions*.

John Moser "Anti-Americanism and Anglophobia" *Anti-Americanism*, Vol 3

Optional: **Handout: B. Ostendorf "Americanization – Anti-Americanism – Globalization" .

**B. Ostendorf "Americanization and Anti-Americanism in the Age of Globalization", in H.J. König and Stefan Rinke eds. *North Americanization of Latin America?* Stuttgart 2004.

Seventh Week

“Why do they hate us?” Anti-Americanism after the Cold War I

Reading: *Andrew Kohut & Bruce Stokes, "The Rise of Anti-Americanism" *America Against the World*

Tony Judt. "A New Master Narrative? Reflections on Contemporary Anti-Americanism", In: *With US or Against US. Studies in Global Anti-Americanism.*" Eds. Tony Judt and Denis Lacorne. Palgrave Macmillan 2005.

**Peter Katzenstein, Robert Keohane "Anti-Americanism. Biases as diverse as the country itself" *Policy Review*. Oct/Nov 2006.

**Harold Pinter "Nobel Prize Speech" "God Bless America"

Michael Wesley. "The Consequences of Anti-Americanism. Does it Matter?" *Anti-Americanism Vol 4.*

Eighth Week

"Why do they hate us?" Anti-Americanism after the Cold War. II: Europe

Reading:

**Rob Kroes. "European Anti-Americanism: What's new?" *Journal of American History* ms.

*David Ellwood. „Comparative Anti-Americanism in Europe“, in Fehrenbach/Poiger, eds. *Transactions, Transgressions, Transformations. American Culture in Western Europe and Japan.* New York: Berghahn 2000

**Optional : James W. Ceaser. « A Genealogy of Anti-Americanism » *The Public Interest* Summer 2003

John Borneman, B. Ostendorf et. al. "Is the United States Europe's Other?" *American Ethnologist*. Vol 30, No 4, Nov 2003, 487-507

Ninth Week

"Why do they hate us?" Anti-Americanism after the Cold War. III: Latin America.

*Julia Sweig „Cold War History and The Latin American Laboratory“ and “The Cold War Beyond Latin America”

*Alan McPherson, "Anti-Americanism in Latin America" *Anti-Americanism Vol 3*

Optional: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-Americanism>

Stanley Hoffmann, „Why Don't They Like Us?“ *Prospect*. 12:20, Nov. 19, 2001.

Tenth Week

THE CLASH OF CULTURES OR OF CIVILIZATIONS: Jihad vs. McWorld

Reading: **Samuel Huntington. "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993

**Fujad Ajami, "The Clash" *The New York Times*, Jan 6 2008

**Benjamin Barber. "Jihad vs. McWorld" *Atlantic Monthly* March 1992.

Eleventh Week

"Who Are We": WASP NATION OR MULTICULTURAL EMPIRE?

Reading:

**Walter R. Mead. "The Jacksonian Tradition and Foreign Policy" *The National Interest* 1999

<http://home.uchicago.edu/~rhaynes/papers/jackson.html>

**Samuel Huntington. The Hispanic Challenge. *Foreign Policy* March 2004

<http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/blogs/gems/culturalagency1/SamuelHuntingtonTheHispanicC.pdf#search=%22Huntington%2C%20hispanic%20challenge%22>

Optional: **Ostendorf, "Samuel Huntington and the Mexican Threat to the American Dream" In B. Vincent, F. Bisutti, eds. *The American Dream*. C'a Foscari, Venice 2006.

**Wikipedia "American Empire". http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Empire

**Michael Hardt. "From Imperialism to Empire" *The Nation* July 31, 2006.

<http://www.thenation.com/docprint.mhtml?i=20060731&s=hardt>

Thomas Friedman. "Intercepting Iran's Take on America" *The New York Times* Dec 5 2007

**Richard Lamm "I have a plan to destroy America".

<http://www.snopes.com/politics/soapbox/lamm.asp>

**Robert Kagan. "Power and Weakness" *Policy Review* 113

http://www.policyreview.org/JUN02/kagan_print.html

Robert Keohane, Peter Katzenstein, "The Political Consequences of Anti-Americanism" in *Anti-Americanism in World Politics*.

**Parag Khanna, "Waving Goodbye to Hegemony" *The New York Times*, Jan 27, 2008

Twelfth Week

GLOBALIZATION AS AMERICANIZATION

Reading.

*George Ritzer & Todd Stillmann. „Assessing McDonaldization, Americanization and Globalization.“ in: Ulrich Beck et. al. Eds. *Global America. The Cultural Consequences of Globalization*. Liverpool University Press 2004

*Kohut/Stokes "Globalization and Americanization"

Optional: Martin Griffiths and Michael Schiavone. "Anti-Americanism and Anti-Globalisation" in *Anti-Americanism*, Vol. 3

**Berndt Ostendorf. „Transnationalism or the Fading of Borders“ in B. Ostendorf (ed) *Transnationalism*. Winter Verlag 2002.

(alternative programs)

Anti-Americanism and Anti-Semitism: Identical or Different?

**Josef Joffe. "Anti-Semitism and Anti-Americanism" *PEW Forum*

**John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt. "The Israel Lobby" *The London Review of Books*

*Markovits, Andrei S. "Twin Brothers: European Anti-Semitism and Anti-Americanism" *Uncouth Nation*

Fast-Food Nation vs. Slow Food Europe?

**David Cutler, Edward Glaeser and Jesse Shapiro, "Why Have Americans Become More Obese?" Ms.

**Laura Knowlton, "Reading American Fat in France: Obesity and Food Culture" *European Journal of American Studies*. <http://ejas.revuew.org/document1363.html>

**Michael Pollan, "The way we live now: 10-12-03; The (Agri)cultural Contradictions of Obesity" *The New York Times* Oct 12, 2003.