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## **Anti-Americanism and Americanophobia: A French Perspective**

*Denis Lacorne*

Source: Tony Judt and Denis Lacorne, eds., *With Us or Against Us. Studies in Global Anti-Americanism*, New York, Palgrave, 2005.

French anti-americanism has never been as much the focus of debate as it is today. This is true both in France, where a crop of books has appeared on the subject, and in the United States, for more immediate reasons – notably the critical attitude of French diplomacy to the Iraq war. Some authors have underlined the unchanging historical nature of the phenomenon, defining the anti-American sentiment as an historical “invariable” since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a *bloc sémantique*, in Philippe Roger’s words. Others, like Jean-François Revel, tried especially to show what lay hidden behind such a fashionable and politically correct ideology: a deep-rooted critique of economic liberalism and American democracy. Yet others, while rejecting the anti-American label, like Emmanuel Todd, have attempted to lift the veil and lay bare the weaknesses of American democracy and the extreme economic fragility of an American empire “in decline”, despite appearances<sup>1</sup>.

### **Contradictions and swings in public opinion**

What I propose to do here, rather than pick out invariables, defend the virtues of the liberal model, or pontificate upon the inevitable decline of great empires, is to take a closer look at the contradictions

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<sup>1</sup> Philippe Roger, *The American Enemy. A Genealogy of French Anti-Americanism*, Paris, Seuil, 2002 ; Jean-François Revel, *The Anti-American Obsession*, Paris, Plon, 2002 ; Emmanuel Todd, *After the Empire. An Essay on the Decomposition of the American System*, Paris, Gallimard, 2002. For a review of these books, see Tony Judt, « Anti-Americans Abroad », *New York Review of Books*, May 2003, pp. 24-28.

of a what I view as a changing and ambiguous phenomenon, a subject of frequent swings in public opinion. In *The Rise and Fall of Anti-Americanism* (1990) Jacques Rupnik and I pointed out that

France is a heterogeneous country made up of countless different groups, every one of which has its “own” image of America, which frequently changes in the light of circumstances or political events. However, it sometimes happens that this multitude of contradictory perceptions coalesces into a major trend of opinion and for a while the attitudes of the country as a whole are either exaggeratedly favourable or excessively unfavourable to American realities.<sup>2</sup>

To properly bring out the complexity of French opinion, its ambiguities and frequent contradictions, I propose going back to the year 2000, before the upheavals of the 2001-2003 period. This was a peaceful time in French-American relations. Amongst the French, empathy with the United States (41% of the polled sample) was stronger than animosity (10%), and at first sight, the Frenchman seemed to be more an americanophile than anything else. However, the very proportion of those who « couldn't say » (48%) if they harboured any specific likes or dislikes for the United States was disquieting, suggesting a kind of discomfort before the American big brother<sup>3</sup>. To get a clearer picture, the SOFRES, in the same poll,

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<sup>2</sup> Denis Lacorne and Jacques Rupnik, "France Bewitched by America," in D. Lacorne, Jacques Rupnik and Marie-France Toinet (eds.), *The Rise and Fall of Anti-Americanism. A Century of French Perception*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1990, p. 2. (trans. from the original French by Gerald Turner, *L'Amérique dans les têtes. Un siècle de fascinations et d'aversion*, Paris, Hachette, 1986.)

<sup>3</sup> French American Foundation-SOFRES Poll, May 2000: responses to the question : « Would you rather say your feelings for the United States were a) positive; b) negative; or c) neither positive nor negative ? »

asked an open-ended question, leaving a wide margin to respondents: “When you think of the United States, what images, what keywords, first come to your mind?”

TABLE 1 : Response to the open-ended question : « When you think of the United States, what words and images come to your mind ? »

Source : SOFRES-French-American Foundation poll, May 2000.

As we clearly see in Table 1, most spontaneous images of America (56%) turned out to be negative. When a Frenchman thought of the United States, he thought, firstly, of violence (21% of respondents) in all its forms (physical violence, drugs, the death penalty, uncontrolled gun sales), or again the weird or excessive aspects of the American character (14%), including the “obesity of Américains” and the “junk” they eat (3%). The complaints so common in the 1960s and 70s against American imperialism or capitalism were now barely heard (respectively 3% et 2% of responses). As for the brighter sides, spontaneously mentioned, what is striking is that none of them had anything to do with American democracy or liberties. When a Frenchman holds a positive opinion of the United States, he cites, in order of importance, American grandeur or gigantism (14%), American power (12%), or superior technology... It is clear that for our countrymen, America is not a political model: an insignificant number of those polled refer specifically to key elements of economic or political liberalism, such as “individualism” (2%), “freedom” (4%), “liberalism” or “capitalism” without elaborating upon meanings (3%). One even comes away with the impression – and this goes to prove the

ignorance of the average Frenchman about America – that in the social integration of recent migrants, France is doing better than the United States<sup>4</sup>.

These limited figures show that the French didn't turn anti-American all of a sudden in 2003, at the time of the American invasion of Iraq. They were so before the Gulf War. Or rather, they were already in two minds, their empathy mingled with indifference, their admiration with doubt and distrust of the abnormalities of American society.

Who shapes opinion? The study does not help answer that question. But we could try an explanation, especially of the frequent criticism in France against the violence and racism of American society. This could partly be blamed on the media – films, news and current affairs programs, and all the French debates about the injustice and barbarity of the death penalty in the United States. There seem to be good reasons for the United States to get unpopular with the French, even if, as I hope to show, some of our good men have overdone it to the point of losing all credibility<sup>5</sup>.

Another recent and unusual phenomenon in French-American relations has been the three quick swings of public opinion within a short span of time between September 2001 and June 2003. First Stage: Extreme sympathy. That was a time when most of the French shared in the suffering of Americans, in the aftermath of the

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<sup>4</sup> In response to a closed question about the social integration of immigrants, 50% of the polled population were of the opinion that, in the United States, “things weren't better than in France” against 18% who thought that they were...

<sup>5</sup> See, in this volume, Gérard Grunberg, XXXX pp. XXX, for a complete and nuanced analysis of French and European opinion.

September 11 attacks. The most well known newspaper editors marked the occasion with a slogan somewhat unusual in the post-war daily press: “We are all Americans!”<sup>6</sup>. French compassion expressed itself in a hundred different ways: from the ecumenical mass at the American Church of Paris to the three mandatory minutes of silence in every school and government administration, the hundreds of paintings elementary school students in Normandy sent to the US, and other more modest but symbolically significant gestures like the planting of the Tree of Liberty alongside Bartholdi’s bronze Statue of Liberty at the Luxemburg gardens in Paris. During the festivities of the 14<sup>th</sup> of July in 2002 the new compassionate love for America reached its apotheosis, with a red New York Fire Department truck leading the parade. An entire class of marching West Point cadets, in Paris to celebrate the bicentennial of their school – founded in the same year as the French military academy – followed on its heels, their Saint Cyr comrades marching alongside.

Second Stage: Differences crop up between France and the United States regarding the UN resolutions and the invasion of Iraq. What came as a surprise in France, was the near-unanimous public support of Chirac’s critical stance, a situation where the political left, right and far right seemed to have joined the same chorus. Stranger still, French opinion coincided perfectly with widespread popular opposition to the war, making it possible to say: there is a Europe of the people too, and here’s evidence<sup>7</sup>... On March 28th, when the war

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<sup>6</sup> Title of an editorial by Jean-Marie Colombani, Chief Editor of *Le Monde* (see *Le Monde*, 12 September 2001. A year later, observing the rise in trans-atlantic tensions, Colombani wondered if we hadn’t “all become anti-american”. Id., « The American Blind Alley », *Le Monde*, 11 septembre 2002.

<sup>7</sup> See, Olivier Duhamel, « A European Public Opinion », *Journal du Dimanche*, 9 February 2003. In Europe, never did more than 10% of any polled sample express an opinion favorable unilateral intervention in Iraq. In Britain, a relative majority of the polled population was

began, public opinion confirmed its massive support for French foreign policy: 78% of the polled sample opposed the American intervention. More surprisingly, a quarter of the French felt themselves « more on the Iraqi side » (65% of French Muslims) and, according to the same study, “deep down”, 33% of those questioned “did not wish the United States to win” (72% of French Muslims)<sup>8</sup>. In a most unprecedented declaration, the Prime Minister felt obliged to clarify in Clermont-Ferrand, on March 31st 2003: “Be careful not pick the wrong enemy. [...] Opposing the war doesn’t mean that we’re hoping for dictatorship to win against democracy<sup>9</sup>.”

There did appear a note of discord within the French élite. Influential intellectuals, like Pierre Hassner (otherwise extremely critical of methods used by the Bush administration) spoke out in support of good sense and realism, against French diplomatic activism and the passing thought of allying with Russia, Germany and China, a combination intended to counterbalance the power of the United States: “Even if we refuse to take orders from Bush, we can’t have the butcher of Chechnya or Tibet commanding us instead (note). »

Third Stage: Appeasement and reconciliation. Preparations for the G8 summit at Evian became an occasion to resume friendly French-US relations, to a point where Bush concluded his *Le Figaro* interview with an unexpected “Vive la France!”, preceded by his admission that “between allies, we might have our differences, but

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opposed to any war (41%); the anti-war majority was net? in Germany (50%), significant in France (60%), and massive in Spain (74%). EOS- Gallup Europe Poll, 29 January 2003, quoted by Duhamel.

<sup>8</sup> Polls, *Le Monde*-TF1, 28-29 March 2003 and IPSOS-*Le Figaro*, 1-3 avril 2003, *Le Figaro*, 5 April 2003 (based on a national sample of French Muslims).

<sup>9</sup> Cité dans *Le Monde* du 3 avril 2003.

what brings the United States closer to France, to Europe, is far more important<sup>10</sup> ». At the same time, an officer of the American forces posted at Kabul stressed the eminently positive role of the French forces helping the Americans rebuild an Afghan army. “Out here”, he pointed out to a visiting American senator, “we’ve still got French fries<sup>11</sup>.”

Still, whatever the ups and downs of the transatlantic relationship, we would be well advised not to ignore the vigor and tenacity of anti-American feeling in France. This is proven by the sales figures of a whole new literary genre of books about the “murky side of America”. These publications indiscriminately denounce the more monstrous aspects of American civilization. We could cite, for example:

Noël Mamère and Patrick Farbiaz, *Dangerous America* (Ramsay, 2002)

Peter Scowen, *The United States: An Unauthorized Report* (Mango, 2002)

Ziauddin Sardar and Merryl Davies, *Why The World Hates America* (Fayard, 2002)

Thierry Meyssan, *The Appalling Imposture* (Carnot, 2002)

All these books tell a similar tale of bad deeds, horrors, and threats – the American colonization of the world compounded with an even more real colonization of minds, a foreign policy that is nothing but

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<sup>10</sup> Bush, « I’m determined to work with France » (interview), *Le Figaro*, 30 May 2003. Curiously, *The Times* in London, interpreted differently the same event, under the title: « Bush Diplomacy Begins With Attack On France », *Times*, 31 May 2003, p. 23.

<sup>11</sup> Andrew Higgins, « For U.S., Waging Peace Still Requires Support From Contrarian Allies », *Wall Street Journal* (Europe), 17 June 2003.



a series of terrible conspiracies (of oil barons, GMO barons, the CIA and the Pentagon), brutal domineering behaviour, complete indifference to poverty and mass killings in the world – an indictment of American abuse of power and dominant position, US disrespect for international law, in a word the neo-colonial violence of a new Roman Empire. The image of the « Bush doctrine » in the media fulfilled all expectations. It seemed tailor-made – at last an American president that America haters always dreamt of, a splendid blend of the brutal sheriff and the fanatic clergyman. These studies, as we might suspect, lacked scientific rigor. Guesses and impressions stood in for truths and every manner of sophistry was deployed to prove the barbarity of America. George Bush, for instance, was portrayed as a bloodthirsty Texas Governor, with a finger firmly pressed on the switch of an electric chair. Elected President, Commander-in-Chief of the US Armed Forces, Bush suddenly appeared in the role of a Christian crusader king, out to shake up the world, flying the standard of a puritan fundamentalist horde gone out of control. News headlines spoke of “George Bush’s Holy Crusade” (*Libération*), “War or Jihad?”, “Holy Wars” (*Le Point*), “Holy War against Jihad” (*Le Nouvel Observateur*), “The Clash of the Fundamentalists” (*Le Monde*), over three weeks<sup>12</sup>.

José Bové and Jean-Marie Messier: two grand causes, two fallen heroes of French modernity.

We see that the protean anti-americanism in the past few years has been nourished by contemporary world events, and fed also by fears and fantasies inherited from the 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The anti-globalizing tone of a José Bové, the shepherd of Larzac, is ultimately

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little else but a remake of the attacks on industrial and commercial “Americanization” back in the twenties. “Americanization” was, at that time, another word for mindless mechanization. It symbolized the subservience of modest independent artisans to American corporate power, brutal assembly-line discipline, the acceptance of « dehumanized settings » in a modern society excessively rationalized by the rules of Fordianism or Taylorism – in short, a world with little pride in personal initiative and accomplishment<sup>13</sup>.

Going it alone against the American Goliath, and its Taylorized food outlet, the McDonald fast-food chain – José Bové proved that society had not totally silenced individual voices and that a lone David could check the inexorable advance of the juggernaut of food standardization. Wholesome food was counterposed to American « junk », the rich taste of a slice of Roquefort was compared with a tasteless, greasy, grilled mass of mince. A modern version of the *personnalisme* of the thirties, José Bové symbolized a typically French form of resistance to the dominance of American trade. His spectacular political acts launched with the Confédération Paysanne farmers’ union – the destruction discreetly termed a « dismantling » operation) of a McDonald’s restaurant at Millau in the Aveyron region<sup>14</sup> or his active participation in anti-globalization protests at Seattle, during the WTO summit, were happenings which led (far more in France than in the US where he remained a little-known figure) to his omnipresence in the media.

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Acclaimed by leaders of the right and the left, united in their opposition to the uncontrolled globalization process, José Bové became a myth all by himself: he incarnated the virtuous qualities of the heroic characters of French and Belgian comic books. He was Tintin in America, going after the producers of GMO foods, quite like the Tintin who got after the Chicago gangs, and he was Astérix at war against the legions of imperial Rome.

Oddly enough, the provisional rejection of « American » globalization, symbolized by José Bové, was accompanied by the acceptance, just as provisional, of another kind of globalization incarnated by the most American of French corporate leaders, Jean-Marie Messier. A classic product of the élite « Grandes écoles » (Polytechnique and l'ENA), a high-ranking, respected, civil servant in the government of prime minister Balladur (whose principal secretary he had been, in charge of privatisation), Messier demonstrated that it was possible to live the American dream in France, firstly by changing careers, then by taking control of a private company, the Compagnie Générale des Eaux, and turning it into one of the biggest media and communications companies in the world, with its name changed to Vivendi Universal, after a series of mergers. Like the frog in the tale, blowing itself up to the size of an ox, this ordinary French company became one of the leading American multinationals, highly rated on Wall Street, gaining control of a Hollywood major (Universal Studios), and adopting English as its working language in accordance with the desire of

most members on its Board of Governors, with a President that lived on Park Avenue in downtown Manhattan<sup>15</sup>.

However, these two emblematic figures of French modernity were also fallen heroes. José Bové landed in prison, sentenced by a French court for attacks on private property, and Messier had in the end to quit the Presidentship of a company he had driven to the verge of bankruptcy. Both kinds of zeal had led to failure. José Bové and Jean-Marie Messier, men who symbolized the difficult French relationship with modernity and globalization, only revealed the paradox of French sentiment, generally « suspicious » of globalization (72%), declaring at the same time that globalization was a “good thing for France” (53%), especially “good for French industry” (63%)<sup>16</sup>.

This inconstancy of the French surely reflects another paradox, observed in a recent study by Philip Gordon and Sophie Meunier. “While the French (often stridently) resist globalization, they also adapt to it (discreetly and usually better than many would suspect)<sup>17</sup>. » Anti-American rhetoric should therefore never be taken literally: it is often accompanied by rhetoric perfectly admiring of America, an aspect too often overlooked by the media, and by authors who have made a career out of anti-Americanism »<sup>18</sup>.

Still, French anti-Americanism has a bright future. It feeds on more than a century-old tradition, and enjoys continuing support from

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

leading political figures of all shades, and from lobbies of a new kind, like the Confédération Paysanne founded by José Bové in 1987, and ATTAC, the Association for a Tobin Tax on speculative transactions, in aid of social solidarity. ATTAC was launched in 1998 at the initiative of the editors of *Le Monde Diplomatique*. Almost echoing José Bové's radical slogan, "the market is my main enemy!", Ignacio Ramonet, Editor of *Le Monde diplomatique*, declared soon afterwards that the « market had to be disarmed and defeated » at all costs<sup>19</sup>. This explains the impressive success of ATTAC, the biggest French lobby against globalization<sup>20</sup>.

At least part of the success of the anti-globalization movement could be explained by the support it got from most major French political parties. If we take a look at the political formations that considered globalization their main target of attack, we find in the forefront Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front, belligerently opposed to the globalization of trade during the European elections of 1999, and a precarious alliance of two champions of national sovereignty, Charles Pasqua and Philippe de Villiers, who joined in a chorus to lament the sacrifice of the "grandeur of France upon the altar of globalization" (Pasqua termed it the "new totalitarianism of our times" ); the Communist Party and its general secretary, Robert Hue, who denounced the process of "unbridled neo-liberal globalization" at WTO's Seattle summit, to say nothing of the curious union of a Gaullist Chirac and a Socialist Jospin, both proposing, in turns, ways to "tame" or "humanize" globalization as if it were some kind of beast that had to be reined in at all costs if the

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eventual destruction of European cultures and economic systems had to be averted. Worried about the increasingly important role of American pension funds in the workings of the French stock exchange, Chirac attacked the selfish interests of “Californian pensioners” while Jospin denounced the “dictatorship of shareholders” on the other side of the Atlantic. Only the MEDEF (the organization of French employers) and the centrists of Liberal Democracy, led by Alain Madelin, could see any good at all coming out of the globalization of liberal economies<sup>21</sup>.

### The illusion of transparence

America is an open society. News and information circulates freely, American media organizations dot the globe, European journalists encounter no special obstacles when they work in the United States, and the number of Europeans traveling in America rises from year to year. One could consider oneself well informed about American affairs. However this apparently transparent American society comes with a dark curtain hiding the real workings of American society. One thinks one knows, but in fact one knows little... possibly due to carelessness or absent-mindedness, but also due to a kind of smugness: it is so much easier to speak without trying to understand, look without really seeing, condemn before taking a closer look. Two controversial topics could illustrate the actual ignorance that characterizes French views of America: multiculturalism and the death penalty.

American multiculturalism is, since the 1990s, the *bête noire* of the partisans of a secular, republican and assimilationist French society,

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who decry the import of a view of life foreign to our own ways<sup>22</sup>. Implanted in France, American multiculturalism would be an open door to the dissolution of the Republican pact, through its easy recourse to “identity politics and blackmail” and in the end, the rise of “ethnic ghettos” impossible to integrate into the mainstream. Worse, the acceptance of American-style multiculturalism would perpetuate regressive cultural practices like polygamy, female excision or forced marriage<sup>23</sup>.

The excesses of American multiculturalism are not denounced entirely without reason. One does, however, seem to miss the wood for the trees. In fact, there hardly exists such a thing as “American multiculturalism”. There are different kinds of multiculturalism, and most radical and separatist forms are rare even in the United States<sup>24</sup>. Multiculturalism, however divisive, did not prevent America’s spontaneous surge of patriotism in the aftermath of the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Beneath the apparent confusion of a multicolored mosaic, there did survive a oneness, a common political culture, a patriotic feeling shared by all Americans, whether they happened to be recent immigrants, Whites, Latinos, or Asians. The multicultural ideology thus isn’t, as we tend too often to believe in France, a source of irreconcilable divisions in society. The breaking up of America is no graver a risk than the balkanization of

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<sup>22</sup> For vastly differing analyses of the « multiculturalist danger », see Jean-Claude Barreau, Paul Yonnet, Alain Peyrefitte in D. Lacorne, *The Crisis of American Identity*, 2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition, Paris, Gallimard, coll. Tel, 2003, p. 31-36.

<sup>23</sup> Christian Jelen, « The multiculturalist régression », *Le Débat*, n° 97, November 1997, pp. 137-143, and more generally, id., *The casseurs of the Republic*, Paris, Plon 1997. Six years later, Luc Ferry, Minister of national education, denounced the « American logic » of the right to difference, a perfect « calamity », which according to him, would aggravate the « dérives communautaristes » si néfastes pour nos écoles. Voir Luc Bronner et Xavier Ternisien, « Le mauvais débat du communautarisme », *Le Monde*, 12 avril 2003.

<sup>24</sup> On trouvera une analyse critique de trois conceptions rivales du multiculturalisme américain dans *La crise de l’identité américaine*, op. cit., pp. 341-343.

France. Opposition to multi-culturalism, a special form of French anti-americanism, is shored up by a partly imaginary fear, based upon an ancestral, obsessive fear of the degeneration of the united, “indivisible”, French Republic into the chaos of a Girondine state<sup>25</sup>.

The French debate on the death penalty in the US is an equally eloquent example of the ignorance of French commentators. We are treated to every detail of the last minutes of the lives of prisoners condemned to death like Karla Faye Tucker, Betty Lou Beets, Gary Graham or Odell Barnes. In the matter of the barbarity of the American mechanism of putting prisoners to death, nothing was left to the imagination. Intellectuals, judges, and politicians were mobilized to denounce the injustice of the death penalty. Jack Lang, erstwhile education minister, visited Texas with Odell Barnes in the death row, hoping aloud that presidential pardon was at hand. Robert Badinter, once president of the Constitutional Council, launched a press campaign against the US death penalty, getting close to a million signatories for a petition addressed to the American president, and declared that the « world’s oldest democracy and the greatest power on earth [...] finds itself heading the list of States that practice the death penalty, along with China and Iran. [...] American society seems to be in the grip of a killing madness. And yet it has failed to rid itself of crime. All it has done is respond to killing with more killing<sup>26</sup>. » Serge Tornay, professor at the National Museum of Natural History, thought he finally had the secret: it was all explained by the “theocratic” character of American democracy. « It

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<sup>25</sup> Les Girondins, selon Laurence Cornu (qui cite Buzot) étaient injustement accusés de « naturaliser en France le gouvernement de l’Amérique ». Laurence Cornu, « Fédéralistes ! et pourquoi ? » in François Furet et Mona Ozouf (dir.), *La Gironde et les Girondins*, Paris, Payot, 1991, note 24, p. 284.

<sup>26</sup> Robert Badinter, « L’Amérique et la mort », *Nouvel Observateur*, 17 mars 1999.



just might be the case », he wrote, that human sacrifice, the notorious historical privilege of theocratic and totalitarian states, still constitutes a last resort. Faced with the threat of the annihilation of their social order, Americans today seem as powerless as the Aztecs, terrorized at the thought of the non-renewal of the cosmic cycle. Only the immolation of the human sacrificial offering, colossal if necessary, released enough energy to ward off the danger<sup>27</sup>. »

What justified this kind of denunciation was a certain feeling of disgust that a practice abolished in every nation in the European union should live on: Europe was civilized, and America a nation of barbarians<sup>28</sup>... But the explanation was incomplete. Paradoxically, it is not due to a lack, but rather an excess of democracy, that America maintains such a cruel mechanism. Indeed, contrary to what most commentators seem to assume, Congress in fact has no authority to abolish the death penalty accross the United States. Criminal law falls within the province of the States and it is up to their legislative institutions to decide to abolish or to retain the death penalty. In France, a simple vote in parliament in 1981 had sufficed to abolish the death penalty (even at a time when public opinion remained in favor of its maintainance). In the US, federalism and local democracy, probably excessive, tilt the balance in favor of a practice that many jurists themselves recognize as cruel, iniquitous and unjust, especially vis-à-vis the ethnic minorities. The death penalty lives on simply because this is the will of the people! Also, contrary

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<sup>27</sup> Serge Tornay, « De la théocratie en Amérique », *Le Monde*, 2 février 1998.

<sup>28</sup> Voir, D. Lacombe, « The Barbaric Americans », *Wilson Quarterly*, Spring 2000, pp. 51-60 et Emmanuelle Le Texier, « L'Amérique au miroir de la presse française (1998-2000) », *Revue Tocqueville*, n°1, 2001, pp. 139-161. Sur la période récente, voir le témoignage complet et bien informé de Justin Vaisse, « The Future of Transatlantic Relations : a View from Europe », Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, 17 juin 2003.

to what has often been said in France, when George W. Bush was Governor of the State of Texas, he was not personally responsible for executions in this state. The members of the « Pardons Commission » alone had the authority to pardon the condemned, independent of the state executive institutions of state.

Our ignorance could be explained by the tenacity of our Jacobin tradition. The concentration of power in a « united and indivisible » Republic has not prepared us to understand the workings of a federal state, provoking only irritation and impatience. Why in the world haven't the Americans got round to abolishing the death penalty, like we have? Could this be because they are less democratic, thus less civilized? The answer, as I have tried to show, is not as quite as simple as it seems.

We could cite several instances that reveal a lack of understanding about the exaggeratedly important role that religion plays in American politics, or about the ravages, more imaginary than real, of « political correctness » and other such typically French exaggerations about the « horrors » of American feminism, or the seething anger of the American ghetto, verging on explosion. The greater our ignorance, the more fanciful the stereotypes that serve to decipher American reality.

**A common fallacy: confusing opposition to the US with americanophobia**

The error commonly committed in the American media, and no doubt insidiously encouraged by the Bush administration provoked,

as a reaction, the French bashing mania in 2003. Indeed, too often, the American press described French foreign policy as a policy of a « perfidious » if not « treacherous » nation, the sole aim of which was the failure of the US military strategy, despite the thin evidence presented to the UN by Colin Powell about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction (WMD)<sup>29</sup>. We know today that this evidence was more fictitious than real and that the French criticism of an untimely war against Iraq was based on a healthy dose of critical thinking, perfectly justified in the circumstances. The French manner was perhaps unelegant: the threat to use the French veto at the UN « whatever the circumstances » was clumsy, to say the least, and the inability of the French to envisage an end to repeated rounds of inspections aroused doubt about the good faith of French diplomacy<sup>30</sup>. But to go as far as to accuse the French of treason, was a fine line that only the most ill-intentioned of francophobes could cross. But the line was indeed crossed by the most haloed institutions of the American press. It was a good time for bashing the French, those disgusting [« singes capitulars bouffeurs de fromage »] (The Simpsons); Murdoch's press pictured Chirac as a « weasel » running away from responsibility (New York Post), or a worm wriggling from one shape to another (The Sun), or stranger still, a « transvestite, balding, pygmy Joan of Arc » (Wall Street Journal). Our leaders became a band of cowards who slunk away the moment things got hot, forgetting how America had saved France twice from

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<sup>29</sup> Geoffrey Nunberg, « A Lexicon of Francophobia, from Emerson to Fox TV », *New York Times*, 9 février 2003. Charles Krauthammer, l'un des éditorialistes du *Washington Post* n'hésitait pas à dénoncer le « sabotage » de la France, un mois avant l'invasion de l'Iraq : « Yet the lengths to which France has gone to oppose the United States show that the stakes are much higher. France has gone far beyond mere objection, far beyond mere obstruction. It is engaged in sabotage[...] », *Washington Post*, 21 février 2003.

<sup>30</sup> Pierre Hassner, « Guerre : qui fait le jeu de qui ? », *Le Monde*, 25 février 2003 ; id., « Etats-Unis-Itak-Europe : le troisième round », *Le Monde*, 26 avril 2003.

disaster. As for our intellectuals, suffering, in the words of Jonah Goldberg, editor of the National Review On Line, from “mental fecal impaction”, they still naïvely believed that Old Europe still meant something, that it still counted in the world arena. Which is why, our visionary explained, French intellectuals, great lovers of America’s enemies, « [found] Castro’s ass so much to their taste<sup>31</sup> ». At the US Congress cafeteria, French fries had become ‘liberty fries’ to play up to the most xenophobic of American congressmen and the most merciless cartoons of President Chirac portrayed him as a transvestite, in a “compromising position” with a particularly virile Saddam Hussein, in simulated advertisements for condoms, with the legend: “Republican Guard: the only proven protection for your weapon of mass destruction”<sup>32</sup>.

### The historical origins of French americanophobia

Just as American francophobia must be distinguished, in the interest of clarity, from American critiques of French politics or society, americanophobia must be distinguished from anti-americanism. By anti-americanism, I mean the critical and reasoned expression of a disagreement with what Americans say or do. By americanophobia, I mean the total visceral rejection of anything that has to do with American culture, democracy, or economy, in a word, with American civilization. Anti-americanism expresses itself through critical acts or words; it may not be reasonable, but it is critically debated in the public sphere and is linked with events, with ups and

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<sup>31</sup> *The American Enterprise Magazine Online*, décembre 2002, [www.taemag.com/taedec02d.htm](http://www.taemag.com/taedec02d.htm)

<sup>32</sup> Image diffusée sur le site [www.StrangeCosmos.com](http://www.StrangeCosmos.com). Voir, Julie Loudner, « La nouvelle francophonie » mémoire préparé pour le Cycle supérieur d’études américaines de l’Ecole doctorale de l’IEP de Paris, juin 2003 ; Justin Vaisse, « Etats-Unis, le regain francophobe », *Politique Internationale*, n° 97, automne 2002 ; D. Lacorne, « Les dessous de la francophonie », *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 27 février 2003 (entretien) ; « Fuck la France. Comment les Américains nous jugent aujourd’hui », n° spécial de *L’Echo des Savanes*, Mais, 2003

downs of Franco-American relations. Philippe Roger and Jean-François Revel's recent books abound in examples of this type.

The story of French americanophobia is long one, going back to the beginnings of the trans-atlantic relationship. It was best expressed in Cornelius de Pauw's virulent theses on the degeneration of America. In his *Philosophical Studies On The Americans*, published in 1768, the primary concern of this Dutch priest who wrote in French and worked at the court Frédéric the Great, was to serve the interests of his regent. Realizing that the prince wished to discourage German emigration to North America, and inspired by Buffon and some French explorers, de Pauw developed his theses on the shrinking of nature in North America. His essay clearly aims to terrify future candidates for emigration. In his description of the pernicious American climate, of four-legged animals "more than six times smaller than their European counterparts", moronic, [énervés, edgy?] men viciated in every aspect of their organism<sup>33</sup> », and of the horrors of famine and hunger, de Pauw points that

« American tigers and lions were entirely mongrelized, undersized, cowardly and a thousand times less dangerous than those of Asia and Africa [...]; wolves, wolverines and bears also occurred as miniatures in this land, and were less audacious than their counterparts on the old continent. [...]. Finally, a generalized mutation and bastardization had affected

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<sup>33</sup> Cornelius de Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains*, in *Œuvres Philosophiques de Pauw* [1768], Paris, Jean-François Bastien, an III de la République, t. 1, p. 2.

all four-legged creatures in this part of the world, deep down to the very principles of life and its regeneration.<sup>34</sup>. »

Animals brought from Europe survived with difficulty in the New World, to the point of “dogs losing their voice, and ceasing to bark in most of the countries of the new continent”. On the contrary, the most repugnant animals escaped this phenomenon and were of sufficiently impressive sizes to discourage candidates for emigration:

« Here the earth’s rotting surface was overrun with lizards, eels, snakes, reptiles and monstrous and highly poisonous insects [...] Most caterpillars, butterflies, centipedes, beetles, spiders, frogs and toads, were giant-sized, and multiplying in number beyond imagination<sup>35</sup>. »

The new colonizers themselves encountered terrible reproductive difficulties, since the « climate of the New World concealed a hidden vice, which to this day is inconducive to the multiplication of the human race”. Worse, the rare children who did get born in this new land had a low life expectancy: « the suffocating malignancy of the atmosphere affected them right from the cradle, and strange illnesses cut them down at a young age<sup>36</sup>».

One knows that founding fathers like Franklin, Jefferson and Madison devoted much energy, and some of their correspondance, to

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

refuting the theses of the Abbé de Pauw, who represented the first example of a European to so radically denigrate America<sup>37</sup>.

Two hundred years later it did not seem possible any more to characterize the United States as an uncivilizable nation. On the contrary, it is the excess of American civilization, American hyper-modernity, that nourished the anti-American sentiment. Some americanophobes, like the communist writer Roger Vailland, used humour and irony in their perfectly reactionary denunciation of the French enthusiasm for refrigerators:

« I have never really understood what use a Frigidaire could ever be in a country like France, where, apart from two moderate months in a year, and that again not every year, the climate is uniformly so cold that a *garde-manger* at the window is quite enough to keep till Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday the leftovers from Sunday's lamb roast. Those of my friends who own one use it mainly to produce little cubes of ice, which are meant to be added to a glass of whisky (*sic*), and which alter its taste. Whisky, besides, has grown so dear that their Frigidaire no longer serves any but a symbolic purpose<sup>38</sup>. »

The most extreme forms of americanophobia express a morbid desire: the military defeat of America, or even the death of America. To sweeten his deadly pill, Doctor Baudrillard thus claimed, on the

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<sup>37</sup> Voir, James W. Ceaser, *Reconstructing America*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1997, pp. 19-65 et D. Lacome, « L'écartèlement de 'l'homme atlantique' » in Christine Fauré et Tom Bishop (dir.), *L'Amérique des Français*, Paris, François Bourin, 1992, pp. 169-175.

<sup>38</sup> Roger Vailland, *La Tribune des Nations*, 14 mars 1956, cité dans *L'Amérique dans les têtes*, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

morrow of the 11th September attacks, that each of us secretly wished the destruction of America. This was our *schadenfreude*, our secret joy at the suffering of others – a suffering that is necessary and justified because they well deserved it! Our jubilation, according to Baudrillard, was proportional to our « terrorist imagination », shared all well-meaning men. The « sacrificial » aspect of the attack could not be captured by a realist point of view. The violence here was symbolic, bringing out the fascinating beauty of the mismatched alliance of fiction and reality: « the white magic of cinema, and the black magic of terrorism ». The destruction of the twin towers ultimately fulfilled the dream of the West: « our aversion to any final or permanent world order ». Which explains the following peremptory truth about a stubborn « fact », more real than all others, despite the constantly affirmed rejection by Baudrillard of the very possibility of a principle of reality:

« That we should have dreamt of this event, that each one of us without exception should have dream of it, since one can't not dream of the destruction of a power become so hegemonic, is unacceptable to the western moral conscience, but it remains a fact, which is proved precisely by the pathetic violence of all efforts to deny it<sup>39</sup>. »

And yet, this extreme americanophobia is not a recent phenomenon in France. It was well entrenched in the France of the 1930s, with

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<sup>39</sup> Jean Baudrillard, « L'esprit du terrorisme », souligné par moi, *Le Monde*, 2 novembre 2001. Pour François Guery, il y a, à l'évidence, une filiation directe entre Duhamel et Baudrillard. Lorsque les jeunes lisent les *Scènes de la vie future*, écrit Guery, ils croient « que c'est Baudrillard qui parle de l'Amérique, ils ne savent pas qui est Duhamel. Duhamel, c'est pourtant Baudrillard ». F. Guery, « L'Amérique impensable ? », *Philosophie Politique*, n° 7, décembre 1995, p. 14-15.



classics on the subject of French decadence like George Duhamel's *Scenes from the Future* (1930), Robert Aron's and Arnaud Dandieu's *The Decadence of the French Nation* (1931) or their *American Cancer* published in the same year, Daniel Rops' *A World Without A Soul* (1932), or the more dispersed works of the partisans of spiritual renewal in France like Jacques Maritain, Alexandre Marc and Emmanuel Mounier<sup>40</sup>. But the intention or dream here was not the death of America but rather a check on the proliferation of the American malady.

For Robert Aron and Arnaud Dandieu, editors of *Ordre nouveau*, the degradation of the French spirit, or republican decadence, was due to this extensive rationalization of modern society, which under the auspices of Ford, Taylor or Young, imposed dehumanized and destructive frameworks upon our times<sup>41</sup>. » The adoption by the French élites of “the industrial dogma of the primacy of the economic principle” amounted to a two-fold betrayal. Betrayal of the old revolutionary enthusiasm, founded upon emotional, patriotic and individualistic values; and an economic betrayal too, since, on the purely « material and quantitative » ground of capitalism, France had “already lost the battle, sacrificed upon the altar of social forms utterly hostile and foreign to her”. In such a situation, the French would be no more than « parasites » of the American empire, « conquered minds », comparable to the Graeculi of the Roman empire, poor teachers oblivious of the meaning of what they “copied

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<sup>40</sup> « L'américanophobie intellectuelle des années 20 et 30, écrit Philippe Roger, reste, aujourd'hui encore, l'horizon indépassé de l'antiaméricanisme français. », *L'ennemi américain*, op. cit., p. 358. Sur cette période, on lira l'ouvrage essentiel de Jean-Louis Loubet del Bayle, *Les non-conformistes des années trente*, Paris, Seuil, 1969.

<sup>41</sup> Robert Aron et Arnaud Dandieu, *Décadence de la nation française*, Paris, Rieder, 1931, pp. 107-108

or taught<sup>42</sup>”. In an grand *élan* heralding the anti-capitalist utopias of the thirties, Aron and Dandieu attacked the « cosmopolitan plutocracy », which by accepting to submit France to the supra-national guardianship of the Young plan, broke “all bonds with the feeling of concrete reality, of the land, and finally, of the nation.” The americanization of the world, through the device of war debt settlement, did produce the terrible feeling, accepted as a matter of course by the *grands bourgeois*, « that France was done for ». The cause of such advanced decay was the total subordination of a France subjected to the ravages of American capitalism. Anticipating the *personnalistes* theses of the quarterly *Esprit* and its editor Emmanuel Mounier, Robert Aron and Arnaud Dandieu offered a new solution to the utter degeneration of France: a “return to a real, sentimental and anti-rational individualism”. The aim was vague but grandiose. Whatever the cost, it was an urgent task to recover the revolutionary patriotic *élan*, a taste for self-affirmation, a renewed acceptance of the “risks of victory, which demand an active thrust and aggressiveness<sup>43</sup> ». The americanophobia of the thirties effectively expressed, to use François Furet’s expression, a certain « pseudo-Nietzscheism<sup>44</sup> » in the air, which gave central importance to the exaltation of the will against cold rationalizations of the *Homo oeconomicus* modelled by American bankers and leaders of industry.

In *American Cancer*, Robert Aron and Arnaud Dandieu took stock of the gravity of the American malady, the subtly insidious,

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115-116. Prolongeant cette tradition, Régis Debray décrit l’attitude d’un véritable *graeculus* des temps moderne dans son pamphlet, *L’édit de Caracalla ou plaidoyer pour les Etats-Unis d’Occident par Xavier de C\*\*\**, Paris, Fayard, 2002.

<sup>43</sup> A. Dandieu et R. Aron, *ibid.*, pp. 243 et 57.

<sup>44</sup> J’emprunte cette expression à François Furet, *Le passé d’une illusion*, Paris, Livre de Poche, 1998, p. 504.

surreptitious cancer which penetrated all human communities, beginning with our cities, our universities, indeed our minds, since, they pointed out, « America is a method, a technique, a sickness of the mind <sup>45</sup>». The link with Georges Duhamel is undeniable; it is akin also to the concerns of the future editor of *Esprit*, who, in his collection of Scenes from the Future, warmly applauded Duhamel for his denunciation of « americanism », that « barbarianism which threatens the entire human edifice in the name of a civilization of the future.” The ultimate consequence of which would be nothing less than the « extermination of the individual and his life.” Faced with the horror of the « idolatrous development of mechanicism », added Mounier, the civilized individual had no other choice but to « wake up to the alarm » in order to save the future of man, whatever it might hold <sup>46</sup>».

The founding manifesto of the quarterly *Esprit* took up the same themes in 1932, implicitly training its guns upon the grand American tyranny, whose drastic effects called for a healthy revolt. These effects, if the authors of the manifesto were to be believed, were quite clear: « societies governed like business houses; savings dilapidated to adapt man to machine and to extract only material profit from human effort”; a private life torn apart by appetites and desires, totally disordered and pushed to all forms of homicide and suicide (...). » The solution, again, was to save man « by making him conscious of his true identity», while accepting the « permanent destiny of the spirit, without any attachment to its temporal

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<sup>45</sup> *Le cancer américain*, p. 80, cité dans Loubet del Bayle, *op. cit.*, p. 259

<sup>46</sup> Mounier, *Revue de culture générale*, octobre 1930, pp. 14-21, cité dans Jean-Louis Loubet del Bayle, *Les non-conformistes des années trente*, Paris, Seuil, 1969, p. 258. Sur Mounier et l'Amérique, on lira surtout, Seth Armus, « The Eternal enemy : Emmanuel Mounier's *Esprit* and French Anti-Americanism », *French Historical Studies*, n° 2, printemps 2001, pp. 271-303.

manifestations which, to their own benefit, once thought they had conquered it. » The final call for freedom was: « It is time to free heroism from bitterness and joy from mediocrity<sup>47</sup>. »

Strictly speaking, the exalted method of the editors of *l'Ordre nouveau* and *Esprit*, was not French. Behind the image of the decadence of France one could see the specter of European decadence, and their defense of the French cause echoed notes from a German philosopher they knew and who was for them a source of inspiration<sup>48</sup>. Heidegger, like Aron, Dandieu and Mounier was an americanophobe himself, for the same reasons. His enemy was American-Bolshevik materialism and mechanicism, essential causes of Europe's fatal sickness, the "emasculatation (Entmachtung) of the spirit." The decadence that results, the destruction of all that remains of generosity and heroism, of grandeur, the victory of the lowest common denominator in the name of equality leads ultimately to the "invasion of what we call the démoniaque (in the sense of devastating malveillance)". Europe, according to Heidegger is therefore « caught in a vice between Russia and America, which metaphysically comes to the same thing given their belonging in the world and their relation to the spirit is concerned<sup>49</sup>». The clearly Nietzschean solution consists in recovering the « true force and beauty of the body, the protection and bold daring of the sword» to finally seize the « essence of the esprit in its truth». Far from being a « powerless superstructure », as the American capitalists and

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<sup>47</sup> Prospectus annonçant la fondation d' *Esprit*, février 1832, reproduit dans J-L Loubet del Bayle, *op.cit.*, pp. 448-449.

<sup>48</sup> L'influence de Heidegger sur les rédacteurs de *l'Ordre nouveau* est bien documentée par J-L Loubet del Bayle, *ibid.*, p. 90. Autre source probable d'inspiration : l'essai de Gina Lombroso, *La rançon du machinisme* (tr. française), Paris, Payot, 1931.

<sup>49</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Introduction à la métaphysique* [1935], Paris, Gallimard, coll. Tel, 1967, pp. 57 et 56 respectivement.

Russian Bolsheviks imagine it, the spirit reinvented by the great European intellectuals was « [what] holds up and rules, what is first and last, not only an indispensable third<sup>50</sup>».

### Two totalitarianisms, Soviet and American

These debates on American barbarism back in the thirties were annonciateurs of another kind of americanophobia, widespread in the aftermath of the second world war, which asserted that American policy was just as dangerous for European freedom as Soviet communism was. Both were variants of modern totalitarianism. Read Alain de Benoist, one of the leaders of the New French Right, writing in the early 1980s: « The truth is that there exist two distinct forms of totalitarianism, with very different effects, but each as redoubtable as the other. The first, in the East, imprisons, persecutes, tortures the body; it however leaves room for hope. The other one in the West leads to the creation of happy robots. It air-conditions hell and kills the soul<sup>51</sup>. » The same argument was untiringly repeated by authors as politically apart as Michel Jobert, Jacques Thibau, Jean-Marie Benoist, or Anicet Le Pors, in books with revealing titles: *Pavanes for Dying Europe* (1976), *France Colonized* (1980), *Auctioning off Marianne* (1980)...

The intellectuals of « Old Europe » of the thirties were thus not americanophiles, to say the least. Their declared americanophobia went far beyond the bounds of a well thought-out anti-americanism.

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>51</sup> Alain de Benoist, cité dans D. Lacome et al., *L'Amérique dans les têtes*, op. cit., p. 33. Curieusement, le même raisonnement est exprimé par des penseurs ou des hommes politiques situés au centre de l'échiquier politique, souvent proches du gaullisme, comme Michel Jobert, Jacques Thibau ou Jean-Marie Benoist. D'autres grand intellectuels comme Merleau Ponty, Sartre ou Etienne Gilson défendirent des points de vue comparable à la fin des années 1940.

The point was not to criticise America on this or that aspect of her domestic or foreign policy. It was to reject American democratic values, as too egalitarian, and the American productivism, as too mechanical and materialistic, *in toto*, in order to escape, in Heidegger's cruel words, a horrible « emasculation of the spirit. »

#### « Old America »: a model for Europe?

Are the French today americanophobes, as they were in the thirties or during the Cold War? I do not believe so. Baudrillard's wild imaginings are the exception that prove the rule. The capital error of the Bush administration, and of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, is to have confused americanophobia and anti-americanism, as I have argued above. The critical stand taken by France and Germany, during the Irak crisis, was not a sign of a total rejection of American values. Quite the contrary. The liberal economy, economic globalization, American democracy were not perceived as cancers or instruments of the *énervation* of the western spirit by our political leaders. The [declared..?] American objective – getting rid of weapons of mass destruction – was not questioned. What created the problem were the means chosen to attain these objectives and especially the time-table of military intervention adopted by the Pentagon strategists. With his ironical comment about the powerlessness of « Old Europe », Ronald Rumsfeld forgot that Europe was also an inventive, creative machine and that she had chosen, in order to reinforce her foundations, the oldest republican model available: the model of « Old America » which emerged out of the Enlightenment, the America of the Philadelphia Convention, of the founding fathers, of federalism and constitutional

compromise. No better vibrant homage could ever be paid to America, at the very time when trans-atlantic misunderstandings were degenerating into mutual abuse.

How many in the Bush administration still cared for the glorious old model of « Old America »? Not the President or his praetorian guard. A little more attention paid to a new Europe in the process of construction, a little more respect for the reasonable (but no doubt debatable) criticism expressed by the leaders of « Old Europe » would doubtlessly have averted many misunderstandings. Indeed, in the end, nothing reveals the proximity of the two models, European and American, better than the motto chosen by the two federated continents: « *E Pluribus Unum* », say the Americans; « Unity in Diversity », propose the drafters of the Preamble of a future European constitution<sup>52</sup>. In a way, beneath outward appearances, we are all Americans.

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<sup>52</sup> D. Lacorne, « 'E Pluribus Unum', une devise pour l'Europe ? », *Le Débat*, janvier 2003, pp. 88-97.

<sup>52</sup> Philippe Roger, *L'ennemi américain. Généalogie de l'antiaméricanisme français*, Paris, Seuil, 2002 ; Jean-François Revel, *l'obsession anti-américaine*, Paris, Plon, 2002 ; Emmanuel Todd, *Après l'empire. Essai sur la décomposition du système américain*, Paris, Gallimard, 2002. Pour une critique de ces ouvrages, voir Tony Judt, « Anti-Americans Abroad », *New York Review of Books*, mai 2003, pp. 24-28.

<sup>52</sup> Denis Lacorne and Jacques Rupnik, "France Bewitched by America," in D. Lacorne, Jacques Rupnik and Marie-France Toinet (eds.), *The Rise and Fall of Anti-Americanism. A Century of French Perception*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1990, p. 2. (trans. from the original French by Gerald Turner, *L'Amérique dans les têtes. Un siècle de fascinations et d'aversion*, Paris, Hachette, 1986.)

<sup>52</sup> Sondage French American Foundation-SOFRES, mai 2000 : réponses à la question : « Avez-vous pour les Etats-Unis plutôt de la sympathie, plutôt de l'antipathie, ou encore ni sympathie ni antipathie ? »

<sup>52</sup> En réponse à une question fermée sur l'intégration des immigrés, 50% des sondés pensent que, aux Etats-Unis, « cela fonctionne plutôt moins bien qu'en France » contre 18% qui estiment que cela se passe mieux aux Etats-Unis qu'en France...

<sup>52</sup> On trouvera, dans cet ouvrage, une analyse complète et nuancée des opinions françaises et européennes. Voir, Gérard Grunberg, XXXX pp. XXX

<sup>52</sup> Titre d'un éditorial de Jean-Marie Colombani, le directeur du *Monde*, *Le Monde*, 12 septembre 2001. Un an plus tard, observant la montée des tensions transatlantiques, Colombani se demandait si nous n'étions pas « tous devenus antiaméricains ». Id., « L'impasse américaine », *Le Monde*, 11 septembre 2002.

<sup>52</sup> Voir, Olivier Duhamel, « Une opinion publique européenne », *Journal du Dimanche*, 9 février 2003. En Europe, jamais plus de 10% des personnes interrogées expriment une opinion favorable à une intervention unilatérale en Iraq. En Grande-Bretagne, une majorité relative des sondés s'oppose à toute guerre (41%) ; la majorité des anti-guerre est, nette en Allemagne (50%), massive en France (60%), écrasante en Espagne (74%). Sondage EOS- Gallup Europe, 29 janvier 2003, cité par Duhamel.

<sup>52</sup> Sondages, Le Monde-TF1 du 28-29 mars 2003 et IPSOS-Le Figaro du 1-3 avril 2003, *Le Figaro*, 5 avril 2003 (d'après un échantillon national de la population française musulmane).

<sup>52</sup> Cité dans *Le Monde* du 3 avril 2003.

<sup>52</sup> Voir, Olivier Duhamel, « Une opinion publique européenne », *Journal du Dimanche*, 9 février 2003. En Europe, jamais plus de 10% des personnes interrogées expriment une opinion favorable à une intervention unilatérale en Iraq. En Grande-Bretagne, une majorité relative des sondés s'oppose à toute guerre (41%) ; la majorité des anti-guerre est, nette en Allemagne (50%), massive en France (60%), écrasante en Espagne (74%). Sondage EOS- Gallup Europe, 29 janvier 2003, cité par Duhamel.

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<sup>52</sup> Cité dans *Le Monde* du 3 avril 2003.

<sup>52</sup> Pierre Hassner, « Europe/Etats-Unis : la tentation du divorce », *Politique Internationale*, n° 100, été 2003, p. 173. Des critiques très vives étaient aussi exprimées par les milieux d'affaire français et des partisans du « droit d'ingérence » comme André Glucksmann, Bernard-Henry Lévy, Bernard Kouchner, Bruno Latour, Pascal Bruckner, etc. Voir Laure Belot et Sophie Fay, « Les milieux d'affaires redoutent un divorce franco-américain », *Le Monde*, 4 avril, 2003 ; André Glucksmann, « L'étrange renversement », *Le Monde*, 5 avril 2003 et Bruno Latour, « Pourquoi cet abîme ? », *ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Pierre Hassner, « Europe/Etats-Unis : la tentation du divorce », *Politique Internationale*, n° 100, été 2003, p. 173. Des critiques très vives étaient aussi exprimées par les milieux d'affaire français et des partisans du « droit d'ingérence » comme André Glucksmann, Bernard-Henry Lévy, Bernard Kouchner, Bruno Latour, Pascal Bruckner, etc. Voir Laure Belot et Sophie Fay, « Les milieux d'affaires redoutent un divorce franco-américain », *Le Monde*, 4 avril, 2003 ; André Glucksmann, « L'étrange renversement », *Le Monde*, 5 avril 2003 et Bruno Latour, « Pourquoi cet abîme ? », *ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Bush, « Je suis décidé à travailler avec la France » (entretien), *Le Figaro*, 30 mai 2003. Curieusement, le *Times* de Londres, interprétait différemment le même événement en titrant : « Bush diplomacy begins with attack on France », *Times*, 31 mai 2003, p. 23.

<sup>52</sup> Andrew Higgins, « For U.S., Waging Peace still Requires Support from Contrarian Allies », *Wall Street Journal* (Europe), 17 juin 2003.

<sup>52</sup> Bush, « Je suis décidé à travailler avec la France » (entretien), *Le Figaro*, 30 mai 2003. Curieusement, le *Times* de Londres, interprétait différemment le même événement en titrant : « Bush diplomacy begins with attack on France », *Times*, 31 mai 2003, p. 23.

<sup>52</sup> Andrew Higgins, « For U.S., Waging Peace still Requires Support from Contrarian Allies », *Wall Street Journal* (Europe), 17 juin 2003.

<sup>52</sup> Voir, D. Lacome, « Mais non, cette guerre ne fut pas une croisade ! », *Le Monde*, 17 avril 2003.

<sup>52</sup> Voir, D. Lacome, « Mais non, cette guerre ne fut pas une croisade ! », *Le Monde*, 17 avril 2003.

<sup>52</sup> Robert Aron et Arnaud Dandieu, *Décadence de la nation française*, Paris, éditions Rieder, 1931, p. 107-108.

<sup>52</sup> Robert Aron et Arnaud Dandieu, *Décadence de la nation française*, Paris, éditions Rieder, 1931, p. 107-108.

<sup>52</sup> Paradoxalement, au moment même où José Bové s'en prenait à McDonald's, les ventes des 932 McDonald's français augmentaient de près de 3% (entre 2000 et 2001), alors qu'elles diminuaient de 1% aux Etats-Unis. Voir Shirley Leung, « McHaute Cuisine », *Wall Street Journal*, 30 août 2002.

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<sup>52</sup> Voir, José Bové et François Dufour, *Le monde n'est pas une marchandise*, Paris, La Découverte, 2000 et Jean-Marie Messier, *J6M.com. Faut-il avoir peur de la nouvelle économie ?*, Paris, Hachette, 2000.

<sup>52</sup> Voir, José Bové et François Dufour, *Le monde n'est pas une marchandise*, Paris, La Découverte, 2000 et Jean-Marie Messier, *J6M.com. Faut-il avoir peur de la nouvelle économie ?*, Paris, Hachette, 2000.

<sup>52</sup> D'après un sondage d'Ipsos pour le *Figaro Magazine* du 26 mai 2000, décrit et analysé par Philip Gordon et Sophie Meunier, *Le Nouveau défi français. La France face à la mondialisation*, Paris, Odile Jacob, 2002, pp. 143, 154. D'après le même sondage, 35% des Français estiment que la mondialisation n'est pas « une bonne chose pour la France » et 46% pensent qu'elle ne sera pas bénéfique aux travailleurs (contre 36% d'opinion contraires). Par ailleurs, 51% des Français interrogés par CSA, le 30 juin 2000, se déclaraient d'accord avec les positions de José Bové sur la mondialisation (p. 143).

<sup>52</sup> D'après un sondage d'Ipsos pour le *Figaro Magazine* du 26 mai 2000, décrit et analysé par Philip Gordon et Sophie Meunier, *Le Nouveau défi français. La France face à la mondialisation*, Paris, Odile Jacob, 2002, pp. 143, 154. D'après le même sondage, 35% des Français estiment que la mondialisation n'est pas « une bonne chose pour la France » et 46% pensent qu'elle ne sera pas bénéfique aux travailleurs (contre 36% d'opinion contraires). Par ailleurs, 51% des Français interrogés par CSA, le 30 juin 2000, se déclaraient d'accord avec les positions de José Bové sur la mondialisation (p. 143).

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>52</sup> Pour de nombreuses illustrations des moments américanophiles de l'opinion publique française, voir D. Lacorne, J. Rupnik et M-F Toinet, *L'Amérique dans les têtes*, *op. cit.*

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>52</sup> Pour de nombreuses illustrations des moments américanophiles de l'opinion publique française, voir D. Lacorne, J. Rupnik et M-F Toinet, *L'Amérique dans les têtes*, *op. cit.*

<sup>52</sup> Cités dans Philip Gordon et Sophie Meunier, *Le nouveau défi français*, *op. cit.*, p. 148-159.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 147. ATTAC aurait plus de 34 000 membres actifs et bénéficierait du soutien de 130 parlementaires français.

<sup>52</sup> Cités dans Philip Gordon et Sophie Meunier, *Le nouveau défi français*, *op. cit.*, p. 148-159.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 147. ATTAC aurait plus de 34 000 membres actifs et bénéficierait du soutien de 130 parlementaires français.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17-19, 150-155.

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<sup>52</sup> Christian Jelen, « La régression multiculturaliste », *Le Débat*, n° 97, novembre 1997, pp. 137-143, et plus généralement, id., *Les casseurs de la république*, Paris, Plon 1997. Six ans plus tard, Luc Ferry, le ministre de l'éducation nationale, dénonçait la « logique américaine » du droit à la différence, cette véritable « calamité », qui selon lui, contribuerait aux « dérives communautaristes » si néfastes pour nos écoles. Voir Luc Bronner et Xavier Ternisien, « Le mauvais débat du communautarisme », *Le Monde*, 12 avril 2003.

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<sup>52</sup> On trouvera une analyse critique de trois conceptions rivales du multiculturalisme américain dans *La crise de l'identité américaine*, *op. cit.*, pp. 341-343.

<sup>52</sup> Les Girondins, selon Laurence Cornu (qui cite Buzot) étaient injustement accusés de « naturaliser en France le gouvernement de l'Amérique ». Laurence Cornu, « Fédéralistes ! et pourquoi ? » in François Furet et Mona Ozouf (dir.), *La Gironde et les Girondins*, Paris, Payot, 1991, note 24, p. 284.

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- <sup>52</sup> Robert Badinter, « L'Amérique et la mort », *Nouvel Observateur*, 17 mars 1999.
- <sup>52</sup> Serge Tornay, « De la théocratie en Amérique », *Le Monde*, 2 février 1998.
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- <sup>52</sup> Voir, D. Lacorne, « The Barbaric Americans », *Wilson Quarterly*, Spring 2000, pp. 51-60 et Emmanuelle Le Texier, « L'Amérique au miroir de la presse française (1998-2000) », *Revue Tocqueville*, n°1, 2001, pp. 139-161. Sur la période récente, voir le témoignage complet et bien informé de Justin Vaisse, « The Future of Transatlantic Relations : a View from Europe », Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, 17 juin 2003.
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- <sup>52</sup> Pierre Hassner, « Guerre : qui fait le jeu de qui ? », *Le Monde*, 25 février 2003 ; id., « Etats-Unis-Itak-Europe : le troisième round », *Le Monde*, 26 avril 2003.
- <sup>52</sup> *The American Enterprise Magazine Online*, décembre 2002, [www.taemag.com/taedec02d.htm](http://www.taemag.com/taedec02d.htm)
- <sup>52</sup> Image diffusée sur le site [www.StrangeCosmos.com](http://www.StrangeCosmos.com). Voir, Julie Loudner, « La nouvelle francophobie » mémoire préparé pour le Cycle supérieur d'études américaines de l'Ecole doctorale de l'IEP de Paris, juin 2003 ; Justin Vaisse, « Etats-Unis, le regain francophobe », *Politique Internationale*, n° 97, automne 2002 ; D. Lacorne, « Les dessous de la francophobie », *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 27 février 2003 (entretien) ; « Fuck la France. Comment les Américains nous jugent aujourd'hui », n° spécial de *L'Echo des Savanes*, Mais, 2003
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- <sup>52</sup> Cornelius de Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains*, in *Œuvres Philosophiques de Pauw* [1768], Paris, Jean-François Bastien, an III de la République, t. 1, p. 2.
- <sup>52</sup> Cornelius de Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains*, in *Œuvres Philosophiques de Pauw* [1768], Paris, Jean-François Bastien, an III de la République, t. 1, p. 2.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>52</sup> Voir, James W. Ceaser, *Reconstructing America*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1997, pp. 19-65 et D. Lacorne, « L'écartèlement de 'l'homme atlantique' » in Christine Fauré et Tom Bishop (dir.), *L'Amérique des Français*, Paris, François Bourin, 1992, pp. 169-175.

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<sup>52</sup> Roger Vailland, *La Tribune des Nations*, 14 mars 1956, cité dans *L'Amérique dans les têtes*, op. cit., p. 29.

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<sup>52</sup> Robert Aron et Arnaud Dandieu, *Décadence de la nation française*, Paris, Rieder, 1931, pp. 107-108

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 115-116. Prolongeant cette tradition, Régis Debray décrit l'attitude d'un véritable *graeculus* des temps moderne dans son pamphlet, *L'édit de Caracalla ou plaidoyer pour les Etats-Unis d'Occident par Xavier de C\*\*\**, Paris, Fayard, 2002.

<sup>52</sup> A. Dandieu et R. Aron, *ibid.*, pp. 243 et 57.

<sup>52</sup> J'emprunte cette expression à François Furet, *Le passé d'une illusion*, Paris, Livre de Poche, 1998, p. 504.

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<sup>52</sup> *Le cancer américain*, p. 80, cité dans Loubet del Bayle, op. cit., p. 259

<sup>52</sup> Mounier, *Revue de culture générale*, octobre 1930, pp. 14-21, cité dans Jean-Louis Loubet del Bayle, *Les non-conformistes des années trente*, Paris, Seuil, 1969, p. 258. Sur Mounier et l'Amérique, on lira surtout, Seth Armus, « The Eternal enemy : Emmanuel Mounier's *Esprit* and French Anti-Americanism », *French Historical Studies*, n° 2, printemps 2001, pp. 271-303.

<sup>52</sup> *Le cancer américain*, p. 80, cité dans Loubet del Bayle, op. cit., p. 259

<sup>52</sup> Mounier, *Revue de culture générale*, octobre 1930, pp. 14-21, cité dans Jean-Louis Loubet del Bayle, *Les non-conformistes des années trente*, Paris, Seuil, 1969, p. 258. Sur Mounier et l'Amérique, on lira surtout, Seth Armus, « The Eternal enemy : Emmanuel Mounier's *Esprit* and French Anti-Americanism », *French Historical Studies*, n° 2, printemps 2001, pp. 271-303.

<sup>52</sup> Prospectus annonçant la fondation d' *Esprit*, février 1832, reproduit dans J-L Loubet del Bayle, op.cit., pp. 448-449.

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<sup>52</sup> L'influence de Heidegger sur les rédacteurs de l' *Ordre nouveau* est bien documentée par J-L Loubet del Bayle, *ibid.*, p. 90. Autre source probable d'inspiration : l'essai de Gina Lombroso, *La rançon du machinisme* (tr. française), Paris, Payot, 1931.

<sup>52</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Introduction à la métaphysique* [1935], Paris, Gallimard, coll. Tel, 1967, pp. 57 et 56 respectivement.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

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<sup>52</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Introduction à la métaphysique* [1935], Paris, Gallimard, coll. Tel, 1967, pp. 57 et 56 respectivement.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>52</sup> Alain de Benoist, cité dans D. Lacorne et al., *L'Amérique dans les têtes*, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

Curieusement, le même raisonnement est exprimé par des penseurs ou des hommes politiques situés au centre de l'échiquier politique, souvent proches du gaullisme, comme Michel Jobert, Jacques Thibau ou Jean-Marie Benoist. D'autres grand intellectuels comme Merleau Ponty, Sartre ou Etienne Gilson défendirent des points de vue comparable à la fin des années 1940. Voir Tony Judt, *Un passé imparfait. Les intellectuels en France (1944-1956)*, Paris, Fayard, 1992.

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