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The Roots of French and German Anti-Americanism

Valentin Filip[1]

Abstract: After the Cold War and more specifically at the beginning of the 21st century we are witnessing a resurgence of Anti-Americanism in the West. This paper explores the origins of Anti-American ideas and discourse, arguing that they go beyond just a simple reaction to various U.S. decisions and actions on the world stage. Drawing upon constructivist theories and approaches in the study of international relations that put a premium on the role of heuristics and ideas in international politics, it attempts to uncover the cultural substratum that lies underneath current criticism oriented against the U.S., focusing on two significant actors of the Euro-Atlantic community: Germany and France, The main findings of this historical approach highlight the existence of a negative cultural predisposition when considering U.S. behavior and mere existence in the world. As such, Anti-Americanism generates cognitive biases which are greatly inflated due to the technological tools available in the information era. Moreover, this predisposition may be unintentionally or willingly activated, given the increasing impact of public opinion on the preferences of democratic states in the realm of international relations. Hence, the study may be of use not just for research dedicated to history and international relations, but also for academic and decision-making circles interested into information warfare.

Keywords: Anti-Americanism; History of Ideas; Constructivism; Cultural International Relations Theory

1. Introduction

The European Union and the United States are arguably the most important powers that shape the world: militarily, economically, culturally and politically; albeit a lack of fully integrated policies and processes on the European side, especially in the defense and security areas. Most notably, they constitute the main core from where democracy emanated and spread around the world, as well as the creators and guarantors of the current international system, both from a legal and institutional perspective. The Euro-American or transatlantic relations largely define world politics, yet if the bonds that tie these actors together start to crack, which is a thesis that has been advanced by many, especially since the end of the 20th century, then it may be that the West and consequently the world as we know it may come to an end and democratization/westernization, lacking the nucleus that gave it so much energy, may fade away little by little. Building on Karl Deutsch definition, a security community is built on "people bound by common values, trust, mutual sympathies and a we-feeling". (Kopstein, 2009, p. 367) As such, the very existence of the transatlantic security community depends on reciprocated feelings and beliefs on one another of its constituent actors.

Building on seminal works such as those of Graham Allison (1971), Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky (1974), Robert Jervis (1976), and Richard Ned Lebow (2008), this research rejects the complete understanding of world politics and decision-making in international relations based exclusively on a rational choice model. It explores instead the cultural milieu of interstate interactions,

[1] Lecturer , PhD., Tel.: 0722761020, Corresponding author: valentin_filip@yahoo.com.

starting from the premise that culturally-based and oriented ideas, identity politics and therefore subjective/irrational motives shape the mindsets of top decision-makers and thus the course of international relations. Given the complexity of decision- and policy-making, approaching the study of foreign/security policies and international relations requires a deeper understanding of cultural views, beliefs and cognitive biases that drive and animate the targeted societies and their publics, not just because their leaders arise from and represent them, but also because they are accountable to them, especially in democracies. All the more so because, in the information era, there is a wide and effective array of tools designed to influence public opinion, which may be also used by hostile entities. "Fake news" is truly a buzzword nowadays.

This paper studies a specific dimension of the transatlantic relationship, focusing on the evolution of Anti-American ideas in two Western European countries, France and Germany, in order to identify the origins and supporters of this phenomenon. The argument is that Anti-Americanism lies in the realms of culture, society and politics. It is a product of history in the sense that the first Anti-American perceptions were echoed throughout the years till present day. Moreover, they were transformed, refined by new circumstances. In other words, Anti-Americanism adapted, as a living being, to the cultural, social, political and economic realities. Consequently, it was disguised under numerous forms, but never departed from its original core. In order to better understand it, strategists, policy-makers as well as scholars need to deepen their grasp of the history of Anti-American ideas. The present, which has been quizzically dubbed as the beginning of the "Anti-American century" (Krastev, 2004), cannot be understood but in the context of the past.

The following chapter deals with the main debates on Anti-Americanism, attempting to shed light on such a controversial and contested concept. The next two parts are divided on a chronological basis: before and after World War I, ending with World War 2. The reason for this choice stands in the role played by the U.S. as a state: first becoming independent and then arriving to the European stage. The scope of study is limited to 1945, due to its founding premise: that Anti-Americanism is not exclusively fueled by the role of the U.S. as a superpower influencing world politics. Both chapters dealing with a specific period try to identify the partisans of Anti-Americanism in France and Germany and the key ideas that they supported. The conclusion includes a summary of findings and attempts to lay the foundation for future work.

2. On Anti-Americanism(s)

A lot of effort was dedicated to the topic in the academic sphere. However, there is no generally agreed upon definition of the term, thus making debates on the topic particularly difficult. In a very influential volume, Paul Hollander described Anti-Americanism as a "predisposition to hostility toward the United States and American society", identifying it as both "a relentless critical impulse", "an aversion", "contempt" and "dislike" to everything that may be dubbed American (1992, p. 339). In the same line of thinking, Peter Katzenstein and Robert Keohane defined it as "a psychological tendency to hold negative views of the United States and of American society in general". (2006, pp. 27-28) A similar interpretation was also given by Heiko Beyer and Ulf Liebe, viewing it "a psychological tendency to devalue actors and phenomena perceived as American" (2014, p. 91), and Andrei Markovits, considering it "a generalized and comprehensive normative dislike of America and things American". (2007, p. 17) Ivan Krastev called it "a systemic opposition to America as a whole" (2004, p. 7), while Marie-France Toinet viewed it as "systematic opposition, a sort of allergic reaction to America as a whole". (1990, p. 219)

The above selected considerations reveal a propensity to treat Anti-Americanism as some sort of culturally-driven prejudice. That said, not all criticism of America/American belongs to this "-ism": objective reasoning and political preferences are not. More explicitly, opposing a specific U.S. policy because of its causes or consequences is not Anti-Americanism, but opposing it just because it emanates from Washington, D.C., and not from, say, Paris or Berlin, that is Anti-Americanism indeed. Some scholars addressed this difficult separation only to observe the complexity of the attempt. The merger of "what America does with what America is […] will forever be jumbled and impossible to disentangle". (Markovits, 2004, p. 3) Another way to put it is to differentiate between opinion, which is about judging U.S. behavior, and bias, which is about cherry-picking reports about the U.S. (Katzenstein & Keohane, 2006, p. 26)

By contrast, another option to approach Anti-Americanism is "to move away from arguments over parsing definitions of essentially contested concepts and recognize that their meaning inheres in the way that they are used over time". (Friedman, 2012, p. 7) This departure from a pure definitional debate, but nonetheless intrinsically valuable for this endeavor, promotes the value of "understanding the historical development and powerful continuity" of the concept. (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, Introduction) Alternatively, in a complete paradigm shift but to the same purpose of avoiding the impossible distinction between legitimate criticism and prejudice, a different attempt to conceptualize Anti-Americanism is to analyze Anti-American discourse and its situated use, as well as the scientific discourse on Anti-Americanism, in order to represent the concept "as a family of performative speech acts, bound by similarity rather than universally common features". (Knappertsbusch, 2013, 105)

For the sake of conceptual clarification, research on Anti-Americanism aimed also at the identification of its various forms. One of the best known taxonomies proposed six different types but highlights their intermingling in reality (Katzenstein & Keohane, 2006, pp. 28-37): (1) Liberal, "feeding on perceptions of hypocrisy" that America does not live up to its own ideals; (2) Social, focusing on "value conflicts that reflect relevant differences" with respect to social aspects (Katzenstein & Keohane, 2006, p. 29); (3) Sovereign-nationalist, dealing with conflicting views of political/state power in contemporary world politics; (4) Radical, promoting the idea that America *per se* is evil. It can be both secular/ideological (Marxism-Leninism) and religious (Islamic Fundamentalism); (5) Elitist, originating in countries/societies with a long tradition of condescendingly considering America; (6) Legacy, existing in countries/societies which experienced (a perceived) U.S. imperialism.

Along the same lines, another classification identified five pure "types" of Anti-Americanism: (1) political-economic, seen as a reaction to U.S. foreign policy affecting the interests of different international actors; (2) historical, rooted in the negative feelings stirred by past, continuous American actions in world politics; (3) religious, as an expression of various condemnations of American immorality; (4) cultural, as a reaction to the abrupt intrusion of American culture into other local cultures; (5) psychological, stemmed from the ambivalence of the "American Dream": attractive but not always attainable. (Naim, 2009)

Different tipologies arise from a claim-oriented approach, stressing the charges used to accuse U.S. behaviour. Such empirical efforts are context specific but nonetheless indicative of the various offshoots of Anti-Americanism that cross traditional boundaries (political, economic, social etc.). One of the first attempts, later refined and elaborated according to historical conditions, noted six main themes preferred by the perpetrators of Anti-Americanism: (1) America is fascist, shifting towards an authoritarian repressive regime; (2) America is genocidal, owing to its commitment to annihilate opposition of any kind (cultural, ethnic etc.); (3) the Bomber Left is a moral force, legitimising violent action against America's refusal to change; (4) the American worker is a "honky", revelling in racist,

imperialist, anti-intellectual views; (5) America's political system is a fraud, hindering true democracy and threatening political freedom; (6) America is in decline and surpassed by its rivals, inherent weaknesses causing its own demise (Beichman, 1971). Another approach, more centered on "how" are promoted rather than "what" are the main Anti-American ideas, finds five central pillars: (1) stereotypization, referring to generalization of clichés; (2) denigration, labelling as moral and cultural inferior; (3) omnipotence, fearing the power and control of the U.S. over the world; (4) conspiracy, uncovering so-called treacherous attempts to rule over the mind and matter of all; (5) obsession, exhibiting constant and excessive concern with the U.S. (Markovits, 2007, p. 12)

The polyvalence of American society was advanced as an explanation for the heterogeneity of the concept, as well as its manifestation: "American symbols […] embody a variety of values with different meanings to different people and indeed to the same individual". (Katzenstein & Keohane, 2006, p. 34) Research on the topic is complicated by the difficulty of measuring it. Despite the utility of sociological surveys, such as the Global Attitudes Project of the Pew Research Center, the Transatlantic trends of the German Marshall Fund, or even experimental, tailored polls, in mapping Anti-Americanism, tracing its evolution and even correlating it with U.S. specific intentions and actions in international relations, they can hardly and rarely help when studying Anti-Americanism as a prejudice. However, statistical representations should and could be integrated into a broader examination of the concept from a cultural and historical perspective.

3. Early Signs: Cultural and Political Construction of Identities

Even though sporadically expressed during America's nascent stage, even before emerging as a country, the debate concerning the perception of America in Europe fully emerged in the late 18th century, once the "enlightened" Europeans started to look across the Atlantic to a savage and primitive America. It was an era when the "degeneration thesis" (Markovits, 2004, p. 7) or "degeneracy theory" (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 1) claimed European superiority over American backwardness. As far as 1749, the French naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, came up with an interesting theory, based on Montesquieu's work and embraced as well by Voltaire, concerning the impact of climate on animals and humans. His argument was that in America every living being was degenerate, morally and physically inferior to their Eurasian counterparts. (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 1) In 1768, Cornelius de Pauw, a Dutch philosopher at the court of Frederick the Great, published a book, "Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains" (Diner, 1996, pp. 3-4), in which he noted the monstrosity of America. De Pauw even wrote a second book, in 1776, in which he found that the Americans lacked the capability to progress due to their stupidity, laziness, ignorance and physical weakness. (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 1) Similarly, a French Encyclopedist, Guillaume Thomas François, abbé de Raynal, expanded these views on nature and morality to the realm of culture: "America has not yet produced a good poet, an able mathematician, one man of genius in a single art or a single science." (Ceaser, 2003, p. 7) Even Immanuel Kant found, in 1775, that Americans are "a not yet properly formed (or half degenerated) sub-race […] too weak for hard work, too indifferent to pursue anything carefully, incapable of all culture, in fact lower even than the Negro". (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch.1)

But an America which was growing demographically and economically faster than Europe and which was represented by famous philosophers and inventors, such as Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson, was hardly primitive and degenerate. Moreover, after the restoration in France, America became the home of the Enlightenment, founded on rational deliberation. The

degeneracy thesis had to find new grounds and they were offered by Romanticism, the cultural reaction to Enlightenment. Natural savagery was no more dubbed as the source of decadence, but its opposite: reason. The new, civilized America with its emphasis on rationality and science, freedom and equality was perceived by the Romantics as deficient in terms of culture, history and identity. Romanticism thus became the foundry of Anti-Americanism (Diner, 1996, p. 31), its cultural engine. Later Anti-Americanism, till the present day, was inspired by the Romantics and echoed their ideas.

As a result, mixed feelings continued to fuel the Anti-American discourse in France: America was characterized by both untrustworthiness, provincialism, individualism and hypocrisy. (Meunier, 2005, p. 127) The same paradoxical combination of arguments was present in Germany, where von Schlegel considered American fauna as "most unseemly in form and most degenerate in nature" and Arthur Schopenhauer wrote about the country's ignorance, vulgarity and ignorance (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, p. ch. 1), while at the same time Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel condemned the absence of culture and history in America and considered this a sign of inferiority. (Diner, 1996, p. 9) German Romanticists criticized the materialist and rationalist ideas praised in America. The source of European culture, in a Romantic view, was the Middle-Ages period. On the other hand, America was a product of modernity; its history did not go as far as the Middle-Ages. It goes without saying that the New World was then perceived as "unnatural", it was "a haven for avarice, the Babel of absolutely limitless utilitarianism and a reprehensible absence of culture."(Diner, 1996, p. 33) Moreover, since America was a pure society, a society without a state (as perceived in the European tradition), Hegel considered it a "happy country without a history" where the state existed as "merely something external for the protection of property" (Coker, 1998, p. 7). This idea of a "soulless" society lacking history and identity was to be borrowed by post-war Anti-American discourse, such as the Gaullist one. (Kuisel, 1996, pp. 145-146)

Since Romanticism placed a great emphasis on natural condition of society and history, it also viewed the industrial, capitalist and democratic America perverting the true nature of the Native Americans, as they were seen because of the novels of James Fenimore Cooper and Karl May. Paradoxically, while savagery was criticized by the partisans of the Enlightenment, now civilization was depicted as the one oppressing the Native Americans and mutating the natural order advocated by the Romanticists.

The cultureless America was the main theme of a new wave of Romantic critique, in the mid-1800s. After staying a few months in America, the poet Nikolaus Lenau (a Hungarian born in Habsburg territory and quite popular in German speaking lands) spread the myth of a materialistic America, based on commercial, mercantile and technical spirit. (Diner, 1996, p. 34; Rubin & Rubin, 2004, p. ch. 1) In his view, America was defined by *Bodenlosigkeit* (rootlessness) and offered no *vaterland* for its inhabitants. (Ceaser, 2003, p. 9). Americans are thus victims of alienation, that know not "wine or nightingales." (Diner, 1996, p. 35) His ideas were reflected in Friedrich Kürnberger's novel "Der Amerika Müde", also based on a phobia vis-à-vis America (Diner, 1996, p. 33), or in Hoffman von Fallersleben's poem "Die Neue Welt". (Diner, 1996, p. 37)

At the same time, the German poet Heinrich Heine, as well asthe French diplomat Talleyrand years before, condemned the Americans for their lack of passion and materialism. (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, p. ch. 2) Another German novelist, Heinrich Laube, attacked the same idea of equality which results in "no free science, no free art". (Diner, 1996, p. 37) Another idea is thus attached to the image of America, that of mass politics and capitalism, of homogenization of the masses in the name of equality and money. America is then the "Other" of Europe. Mass politics and mass production, industrialization and consumerism also formed the key ideas of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche's critique of America. Moreover, the German philosopher observes the spread of these ideas in Europe and compares them to a disease "already beginning ferociously to infect old Europe and is spreading a

spiritual emptiness over the continent". (Ceaser, 2003, p. 12) Other important figures of the German intelligentsia, including the historian von Schlozer and the dramatist Gutzkow, revolved against the same materialist critique, noticing how, in a "commercial country", "ideas are changed into money". (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 2)

America was not only the object of a cultural debate. It also entered the realm of politics. Anti-Americanism was not limited to Romanticists, it also included Conservatives who objected to the liberal ideas and values promoted in the U.S.. In 1823, Johann Georg Hülsemann, wrote a work whose main thesis was the American democracy as a peril to the monarchic, absolutist Europe founded at the Congress of Vienna in 1815. Moreover, because of its aspirations to a sphere of influence (Monroe Doctrine), America was now not only an object of despise, but an enemy. (Diner, 1996, p. 32) America also caught the attention and critique of Joseph-Marie, Comte de Maistre, a French philosopher, promoter of Conservatism, who described the young republic across the Atlantic as "the most fragile thing in the world: one that could not bring together more symptoms of weakness and decay". (Ceaser, 2003, p. 8)

The establishment of the American political system brought a relentless assault on the newest democracy from both European Left and Right. In France and Germany, the degeneration theme translated from nature and people to the political institutions, dubbed as "deformed, weak and fragile". (Beyer & Liebe, 2014, p. 92) De Maistre, one of the founders of European Conservatism, even denied the existence of "man" and "humankind", which formed the basis of the Declaration of Independence): "The is no such thing in this world as man, I have seen in my life French, Italians, and Russians […] but as for man, I declare that I have never met one in my life; if he exists, it is entirely without my knowledge. […] All that is new in [America's] constitution, all that results from common deliberation is the most fragile thing in the world: one could not bring together more symptoms of weakness and decay". (Ceaser, 2003, p. 8) Felix de Beaujour, a French writer and diplomat to the U.S., was convinced of the frailty of the U.S. Government, destined to fall into "despotism and disunion", while the famous novelist, Stendhal, deplored "the tyranny of opinion" that characterized the American democracy (Rubin and Rubin, 2004:ch.2). Heinrich Heine wrote in 1830 on America as "a monstrous prison of freedom," because it promoted principles such as equality of all men. (Diner, 1996, p. 38) Freedom becomes an illusion under the tyranny of the masses. Another French Ambassador to the U.S., Louis de Linières, denounced the "fraud" of allowing "common Americans to influence public affairs since they were incapable of reasoning". (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 2) The same argument was to be seen later to Charles Baudelaire, who described America as "gaslight barbarism, the alliance of technology with primitiveness", ruled through the tyranny of public opinion which was "more cruel and inflexible than any monarch". (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 3)

Besides right-wing Conservatives, left-wingers were also proponents of Anti-American ideas. Although equality was a dear idea of the Left, America was criticized by saint-simonists and socialists, such as Moses Hess, because of its capitalist image, its focus on wealth and money. Moreover, Hess linked this attribute to the national character, specifically to the Jews. (Diner, 1996, p. 39) Even the Alexis de Tocqueville, generally considered a supporter of the U.S. democracy, complained about the lack of "independence of mind and freedom of discussion" attended by the tyranny of the majority in the U.S. (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 2) The same ideas were to take a perverted twist and be (ab)used by the Marxists and Communists in the 20th century.

In 1906, Otto Ladendorf avowed in his "Historisches Schlagwörterbuch" the parallel between Americanization and Judaization/ "Verjudung" (Diner, 1996, p. 20) This was the beginning of the negative association between America and Jews which had a greater impact later on. A special focus

should be granted to Arthur de Gobineau, a French aristocrat who developed in the 1850s the Aryan theory. One of the founding father of racism, Gobineau also criticized America because he considered that democracy and its principle of equality was dangerous for the White Supremacy. In his view, in America a new race was created, due to the homogenization of various ethnies, but this race was characterized by "greatest mediocrity in all fields: mediocrity of physical strength, mediocrity of beauty, mediocrity of intellectual capacities – we could almost say nothingness." (Ceaser, 2003:11) As with the Anti-Semitism mentioned earlier, these racist ideas were going to have a greater impact in the mid-20th century.

4. The World Wars: Strengthening and Diversification

The European debate regarding America, and implicitly French and German Anti-Americanism, grew stronger once the US started to meddle more in the continental affairs. To be more specific, a new stage in the evolution of American *clichés* emerged with World War I. The French, German and American nations' trajectories started to intersect at a higher level. (Kuisel, 1996, p. 1) Consequently, their mutual perceptions multiplied. The American economic model was envied and imitated by both France and Germany, countries devastated during the Great War. However, this process of economic growing interdependence between U.S. and Europe was seen not only in terms of trade and finances. In addition, it was perceived as composed of social and cultural aspects which threatened German and French identities. The effect of technological progress, especially in the field of mass communication, added to an increasing American presence in Europe, by making "key aspects of American culture part of European life". The fact that common Europeans were now "dancing the charleston, flocking to movie theaters, idolizing film stars, grooving on jazz" increased the Anti-American feelings of the European elites. (Markovits, 2004, p. 10) This was the rise of mediocrity and conformity deplored by Martin Heidegger, destroying "everything creative". (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 4) Due to increasing U.S. involvement in international politics, Anti-Americanism also developed an anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist offshoot. (Beyer & Liebe, 2014, p. 92)

These social and cultural standards were detested by French intellectuals such as Georges Duhamel (author of "America the Menace" in the 1930s) and André Siegfried, who feared that American mass culture and conformism – Fordism – were threatening the French "civilisation" and individualism (Kuisel, 1996, p. 2). The 1930s American financial and economic crash was perceived as a proof that economic progress is illusory in the absence of a matching spirituality. Robert Aron and Arnaud Dandieu feared the "American conquest" and called for a "spiritual revolution." Thierry Maulnier, member of the Académie Française, defined Americanization as a wave of "new barbarism". (Kuisel, 1996, p. 13) In short, French intellectuals feared that the American consumerism, materialism and standardization were jeopardizing "la civilization française", as much as the novelist Paul Morand concluded that it was "fashionable for the intelligentsia to detest America" (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 4)

This new "wave of anti-American rhetoric" was also due to "French disappointment in the U.S. over its postwar isolationism and perceived biased indifference to France in the matter of war debts and reparations". (Meunier, 2005, p. 127) It was also the dismay of the French that "Americans had come out such clear global winners" and their "materialism and industrialism were seen as a real threat to the beauty and variety of Western culture". (O'Connor, 2004, p. 80) Antoine de Saint-Exupery warned about the "spiritual emptiness that accompanied the material productivity of American industrial society. (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 4) On the same lines, George Duhamel "conveyed the sense not

only that America's consumer and profit-oriented culture was unappealing in itself, but that it threatened to spread to France and affect its own traditions negatively". (Meunier, 2005, p. 127) While industrialization and technology made *homo faber*, civilization was needed to elevate him to *homo sapiens* (Kuisel, 1996, p. 127)

In Germany, the negative feeling towards given by the defeat was amplified by the same process of "Americanization." Adolf Halfeld's book, "Amerika und der Amerikanismus", was a virulent reaction to the American bourgeois liberalism. The connection between faith and business or the preacher-entrepreneur unity was a sign of hypocrisy in Halfeld's eyes. (Diner, 1996, pp. 56-57) Wilson and the Peace Agreement were another target of Anti-Americanism, which considered that Germany was betrayed in the aftermath of WW I (the "Dolchstosslegende"). Radical leftists saw Germany's defeat as the beginning of the infiltration of liberal capitalism in the country, they even criticized moderate social-democrats who dared to praise Wilson's ideas: "Wilson is great and Kautsky is his prophet!" The Romantic theme regarding the American lack of culture was reiterated by German authors such as Egon Erwin Kisch and his "Paradies Amerika", as well as Bertold Brecht. (Diner, 1996, pp. 74-75) Wilson, with his "American character" and "alleged Jewishness", was actually dreaded by Western European intelligentsia.; (Beyer & Liebe, 2014, p. 92)

Germany's dependence on American finances, as well as the problem of the "reparations", laid the foundations of another dear idea of Anti-Americans: American imperialism. (Diner, 1996, p. 56) Communists, such as Paul Levi, saw Wilson as a perpetuator of the same American capitalism and imperialism aiming to "enslave" Germany. Even right-wingers and national liberals, such as Friedrich Naumann, considered the Great War a "major financial operation" intended to establish American supremacy around the world. Emil Daniels, in his 1922 book "Amerikanischer Imperialismus und Deutsche Vorkriegspolitik", talked about the same new world order imposed by America. (Diner, 1996, pp. 60-61) In short, the anti-imperialist theme produced a strange rally of both left-wing and right-wing forces under the flag of Anti-Americanism. It can be synthesized as reaction to "dollar imperialism", a term used first by two Americans, Scott Nearing and Joseph Freeman (Diner, 1996, p. 64), and which refers to the US attempt for world domination through financial subjugation. The philosopher Richard Muller-Freienfels lamented about the "technicalization or mechanization of life", specific to "Americanism" or Americanization of the Western World. (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 4)

The inter-war era clearly led to the merger of two ideas: Anti-Americanism and Anti-Semitism. American quest for domination was also a Jewish enterprise, given their influence in American politics and finances. In this view, Werner Sombart called America a "Judenstaat". (Diner, 1996, p. 62) Jews were held responsible for the rise of "rootless modernity and capitalistm, with the worst ourcome of these forces being America": the United States became "the last bastion of Jewish Power in the World". (O'Connor, 2004, p. 80) In France, Charles Maurras went as far as accusing American Jews for blocking an earlier entry of the U.S. into the Great War. (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch.4) Again, as in the above mentioned issue regarding imperialism, aversion to Jews and Jewish capitalism reunited the two radical wings on the political scene: communists and nationalists, and later national-socialists. (Diner, 1996, pp. 66-67) Obviously, German fascists could not miss the opportunity of mixing "the hatred of America with the hatred of the Jews". (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch.4) Nazi ideologues built on all Anti-American ideas mentioned above. Giselher Wirsing condemned American imperialism and its "Jewish warmongers" and drew a racist comparison between the "American marines in South America" and the "French nigger regiments" in the occupation of the Ruhr area. (Diner, 1996, p. 68) Alfred Rosenberg concluded that the American cultureless is a result of women's rule. (Diner, 1996, p. 71) C.G. Jung deplored in racist terms the Negroid and Native American influences on the initially

Germanic culture and character of America. (Diner, 1996, pp. 71-72) Otto Bonhard, in his 1927 article "Jüdische Weltherrschaft" reaffirmed the connection between America and the Jews which resulted in a specific form of capitalist imperialism. Moreover, he claimed that the democratic form of the republic allowed a Jewish corruption of America. (Diner, 1996, pp. 72-73)

Two perceptions on American physical and moral traits widened the cliché of American impotence. The first was the disregard for the American military capabilities (Diner, 1996, p. 57) and the second was the perception of America as a "matriarchal society". Beyond the degeneration and materialistic theses, the excessive power wielded by American women was a common theme even for Nazi Anti-American propaganda. Alfred Rosenberg, a influent philosopher in Nazi circles, saw a clear relation between America's "low level of culture" and "women's rule in American". (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 4) Halfeld, already mentioned above, as well as Hermann Keyserling, enounced the idea of "feminization" of America. Equality of women and men was perceived even more as "rule of women". In addition, consumerism and utilitarianism deprived men of their aristocratic, noble and warrior nature. (Diner, 1996, pp. 70-71) American military ineptness is just a logical consequence, an idea that was also shared by Hitler, a firm believer in the cowardness and military incompetence of the Americans. (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 4)

Adolf Hitler also expressed his contempt with regard to American decadence and accused it of being ruled by the Jews and bourgeois elites. (Diner, 1996, pp. 82-83) He considered it "a moneyed clique... under the fiction of a democracy". (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 4) In short, he considered America "the land of infinite incompetence". (Diner, 1996, p. 25) However, an interesting remark is worth mentioning with regard to Nazis perceptions on America. From a technological and economic perspective, they admired and imitated the American model. Moreover, they even imported the idea of mass politics, which was fundamental for an authoritarian regime which emphasized de-individualization. (Diner, 1996, p. 85) However, ideologically and politically, Nazis shared the same ideas with the rest of the Anti-Americanism partisans. They even built on ideas propagated from the left and right of the political scene. Another relevant factor in the ambivalent Nazi approach to America is their strategic interest of keeping America out of Europe and as much as neutral with regard to European affairs. This is the reason why the Nazi regime restrained itself from giving a public voice to its Anti-Americanism until circumstances permitted them to do so. (Diner, 1996, p. 83) Nevertheless, Goebbels considered that, if needed be, "nothing will be easier than to produce a bloody revolution in America", given that it is poisoned with social and racial tensions. (Rubin & Rubin, 2004, ch. 4)

In the interwar years and into the 1940s, another source of f Anti-Americanism on the French political scene was situated to the left, within the Marxists ideologues, intellectuals and the Communist ranks, with their arguments built on the same myth of American emphasis on wealth and money and took a hard stance with regard to other major debates such as the "coca-colonisation" in the aftermath of World War II. (Kuisel, 1996, p. 38)

5. Final Considerations

Anti-Americanism as a prejudice is an ensemble of clichés and stereotypes. It was built on the past and it echoed the past in the sense that negative European perceptions on America were transmitted in time as a destructive legacy. These perceptions were adapted, in order to respond to various social, political, cultural or economic realities.

Its strength lies in the ability to cut across ideological or political differences, from Enlightenment to Romanticism, from right-wing conservatism to leftist socialism, from national-socialism to communism. The actors that promoted Anti-Americanism encompass then a huge span in the realm of ideas, as well as on the political scene. This chameleonic feature means nonetheless that Anti-Americanism is full of intrinsic contradictions.

Culture was an essential ingredient in the making of Anti-Americanism. Culture, and especially Romanticism, translated mostly into rediscovering and fabricating folklore and myths, building identities and glorifying the past, was the one major source for all later Anti-American ideas. Romantic ideas reverberated into several waves of Neo-romanticism. Politics constitute another source of Anti-Americanism. America was defined as the enemy by various political parties that were struggling to gain legitimacy and rally votes on the domestic scene. Although America was envied for its prosperity, economics also enhanced the rationale of Anti-Americanism. Economics were not considered a separate object of study, but a dual process with secondary implications. Prosperity "à la américaine" was envisaged as attainable only with the risk of a huge loss in cultural and social terms.

Its evolution may be traced as follows. Proto-Anti-Americanism started during the Enlightenment as an anti-degeneracy, anti-primitiveness movement. Then the Romantic ideas were added, such as anti-rationalism, anti-materialism, anti-decadence and anti-modernization. Racial theories came up with the new anti-Semitism feature. Later on, it became anti-capitalist, anti-consumerist and even anti-democratic. Finally, Anti-Americanism gained new attributes like anti-imperialism, anti-hegemonic and anti-globalization. In sum, we can talk not of one, but of many Anti-Americanisms. The only common feature that can be generalized to all these Anti-Americanisms is the European perception of America as a mirror of itself, as an *alter ego*, as both its past and its future.

Anti-Americanism persisted in the aftermath of the Cold-War and it consisted of two main perceptions, despite the feeble persistence of other minor ideas. First, America is nowadays perceived as the driving-engine of globalization. However, other Western countries are also sources of globalizing trends. Anti-globalization movements are not only Anti-American, but also Anti-Japanese, Anti-German or Anti-French. This cultural and economic stigma is now 'shared' among several countries. It is less Anti-American. Second and most important of all, America is perceived as hegemonic, in political, military and economic terms. This is probably the most prominent form of Anti-Americanism today and it is difficult to be countered because of (1) empirical arguments and (2) Washington's attitude vis-à-vis its European allies, especially France and Germany. US policies are sometimes unilateral and disregarding European positions and only add strength to the Anti-American arguments.

Anti-Americanism will probably continue to be with us for a long time. Its roots are too complex to be overcome; its ability to adapt is remarkable. However, Anti-Americanism can and should be moderated; otherwise it may lead to a gap in the transatlantic relationship. Moreover, as stated in the introduction, in the event of such an unfortunate development, it could have repercussions all over the world. It should not be forgotten that Anti-Americanism, as well as the so-called "transatlantic gap", is about perceptions which can be easily manipulated in the era of hybrid warfare. Atlanticism, as a vision of a shared future based on common values, may be breached, given the existence of the Anti-American weakness at its very ideational core. Franco-German disdain toward the U.S. is deep and transcends mere critique of American intentions and actions, all the more so if elites across the Atlantic fall into the "Anti-Anti-American trap", which is aversion towards or rebuttal of even objective, legitimate European criticism on the counts of irreconcilable Anti-Americanism.

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