

Not to quote without permission of the author

## **Anti-Americanism and European Public Opinion**

*Pierangelo Isernia*

To be published in *America Contested. The Limits and Future of American Unilateralism*, edited by Sergio Fabbrini, Routledge, 2005

## Introduction

The specter of anti-Americanism is hovering again about Europe<sup>1</sup>. In the last three years, politicians and commentators, on both sides of the Atlantic, have denounced its rapid resurgence in Europe.<sup>2</sup> In their view, the spread of anti-Americanism would contribute to explain Europe's lukewarm solidarity with the US fight against terrorism and rogue states, such as Iraq. However, as it is often the case, the existence and the relevance of the phenomenon is taken for granted, and little effort is spent to understand its precise contours, interrelationships and consequences. Is Anti-Americanism a manifestation, a cause or a consequence of the present transatlantic rift? Any analysis of the dimensions, nature and consequences of Anti-Americanism is difficult for at least three reasons: its "essentially contested" nature; its loose empirical referents and the variety of its manifestations. Not surprisingly, different answers are offered to the question on who is and what it means being anti-American.

Here, I interpret anti-Americanism as a general feeling toward America rather than more specific beliefs toward this or that attribute of American political, cultural and socio-economic system. I will therefore define anti-Americanism as the *psychological tendency to evaluate negatively the United States*. Such a definition of anti-Americanism leaves open for empirical assessment the issue whether its sources are rational or irrational, "visceral" or thoughtful. As such, anti-Americanism can be seen either as a manifestation of what are fundamentally internal, intra-psychic, needs and problems, a form of "symbolic scapegoating," similar in its function to ethnocentrism,<sup>3</sup> or as a reaction, perceptually and cognitively mediated, but still a reaction to what America is or does.

Given the powerful position occupied by the United States in the world system, people tends to pass evaluation of American policies and action in their own merit, quite distinct from their feelings toward the political object. Following the prevalent consensus in the literature (e.g. Haseler, 1995) I would not define this kind of criticisms as a form of anti-Americanism, but rather as a critical attitudes toward it, whose connection with beliefs and feelings has to be empirically assessed, rather than assumed.

Given the problems one incurs in handling the concept of anti-Americanism, as Sergio Fabbrini argues in Chapter 1, let me state as clearly as I can since the beginning the exact purport of my chapter. Here, I will focus my attention on mass-level anti-Americanism in four European countries – France, Germany, Italy and United

Kingdom. My analysis has therefore three characteristics. First, it is limited to Western European forms of anti-Americanism; for some (e.g. Hollander, 1995; Haseler, 1985) the less mercurial and resentful ones, as compared to those in the Third World. I selected France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom because of their different national cultures and because these are countries for which a rich set of long-term data are available. Second, this is an analysis of anti-Americanism at the mass level. Not many studies on anti-Americanism are available at the mass attitudinal level (among the few see Smith and Wertman 1992: 91-128; more recently, Johnston and Ray, 2004 and, for South Korea, Larson et al. 2004). But if elites use anti-Americanism “to socialize conflict” (Schattschneider, 1960 :11), it is crucial to see what impact this use has at the mass level.

Third, my analysis is based exclusively on a secondary analysis of available mass survey data. Survey data are a useful complement to the traditional methods that look at the cultural, literary or political manifestations of anti-Americanism. Since available survey data on anti-Americanism go back to the ‘50s, they constitute a very rich, differentiated and often underutilized stock of material that can contribute to shed some light on the phenomenon over a long period of time. Of course, being mine a secondary analysis, it is constrained by the kind of questions others asked for their own purposes. In trying to turn this variety of questions to my own advantage, I will move across surveys conducted in different time period, so as to exploit the variety of indicators available, at the expense of some of the rigor offered by strict comparability over time of identically worded questions.

In an attempt to give an order to the different meanings of anti-Americanism in what is an admittedly murky terrain,<sup>4</sup> I will distinguish between two fundamentally different set of attitudes one can entertain toward the United States: feelings and policy attitudes. People can hold different affective or emotional feelings toward the United States and evaluations of what America does; and they can vary quite independently among themselves. Following this bipartite distinction of attitudes toward the United States, my chapter is organized in two parts. First, I will present how anti-Americanism has been measured, using attitudinal data, and its evolution over time. Then, I will move to anti-Americanism as an independent variable to explain policy attitudes. More specifically, I will examine whether the present critical European stance vis-à-vis the American decision to attack Iraq is driven by anti-Americanism, or rather by other

factors, such as attitudes toward the first George W. Bush administration, the beliefs in the wisdom of American foreign policy or ideology.

### **Anti-Americanism on the rise?**

To measure anti-Americanism at the mass level three set of indicators have been used over time (see also the discussion in Smith and Wertman, 1992: 93-103). A first set of questions asks about the respondents' feeling or opinion toward the United States. These questions come in two formats. The most frequent format is a standard 5-points Likert-scale question, asking the respondent to choose between four choices<sup>5</sup>: very good opinion, good opinion, fair (or alternatively neither good nor bad),<sup>6</sup> bad opinion, or very bad opinion. An alternative way of getting at the feelings toward a country is the so-called "feeling thermometer".<sup>7</sup> A second set of questions, also asked repeatedly over time, demands the level of *trust* in the American *people*, rather than in the United States.<sup>8</sup> The third, and probably the straightest way of getting at anti-American feelings, was tried, twice, in Eurobarometer 17 (April 1982) and 22 (April 1984): "How would you describe your feelings toward the United States. As strongly anti-American, somewhat anti-American, somewhat pro-American, strongly pro-American or neither pro- nor anti-American (only volunteered)."

Two are the crucial differences in the questions whose impact on the aggregate level of negative orientation toward the United States is worth to be explored here: the sentiments which are called into question (feelings, opinion, trust) and the referent object (United States and/or American people). Is there any difference in asking about opinion or trust for the United States, and the orientation toward the United States or rather the American people or are all tapping the same underlying dimension of anti-Americanism?

The general reference to the United States has been criticized because "... it does not refer to an explicit set of national characteristics or attributes and therefore we have no way of knowing which symbols and associations serve as referents to the respondent prior to his expression of feeling." (Abravanel and Hughes, 1973: 113). On the other hand, Abravanel and Hughes continue, exactly because it is so cueless as to the referent object, the feeling question taps a general and basic attitude toward the referent object, an "anchoring dimension of people's images of the international environment" (Abravanel and Hughes, 1973: 114) hierarchically superior to beliefs and policy attitudes, through which the respondents filter their perceptions of the international

environment. Moreover, an explicit reference to the American people could be criticized as an indicator of anti-Americans, given the fact that anti-Americanism is commonly assumed to be a critical orientation toward what United States is and not an ethnocentric distaste for its people. Finally, the attempt to solve the problem as in the feeling thermometer, in which the respondent is invited to rate her feelings toward “countries, institutions and people,” is affected by a triple-barrel problem. What of the three the respondent has in mind rating the United States we simply do not know.

In order to explore what differences these different wording produce let me see the available evidence. It shows four things: first, respondents are able to distinguish between the people of a nation and their governments, if invited to do so, and more than ready to blame the latter rather than the former when called for evaluating policies, also in situations, such as a war, in which such a distinction is less obvious and less likely to be expected. Second, the distinction between the people and their government is more relevant when political tension exists between the respondent’s own country and the United States. Third, the simple reference to the United States is more likely to evoke the country rather than the American people in the respondent’s mind. Fourth, the different questions eventually produce similar and consistent results and they are quite highly inter-correlated.

The fact that people are able to distinguish between governments and their subjects, when explicitly asked to do so, does not tell us however what is in the people’s mind when the only reference is the United States. Are they thinking of the government, the people or both? Table 1 sheds some light on both these points. Table 1 compares what difference to ask for feelings toward a “country” or its “people” does make, keeping constant other possible sources of variation. And, it allows to do so for our four countries in quite different periods. In both cases, a split-half experiment was tried, in which to half of the sample was asked the feelings toward the United States and the other half about the Americans. In the 1958 USIA question, there is no difference in the two distributions and in the 2002 PEW question there is a slight difference, with the respondents being more likely to have a good opinion of the people than the nation.<sup>9</sup>

[TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

*Table 1 – Feelings toward Americans and the United States (in %)*

The slight difference between sympathy toward the US and the American people in 2002, as compared to 1958, might be a consequence of the state of political relationships between the respondent's country and the United States in the two periods. In other words, the tendency to distinguish between the people and the government – and the differential impact of a clear reference to one or the other – becomes more evident when the level of tension between the countries involved is higher, as it was the case in 2002 in comparison to 1958. This is confirmed by the fact that, once we consider the entire set of 44 countries surveyed by PEW in 2002, a clear differences do exist between the overall feelings toward a country and those toward the American people in some countries, but not in others. The difference is relevant among the Western European countries, where the favor toward the Americans is seven points percent higher than toward the United States, and even higher (16 points difference) in the three Middle East countries surveyed (Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon), while it is insignificant in all the other countries. These two pieces of information put together seem to indicate that, in period of tension, the distinction between the United States and Americans is more relevant and that the question asking the feeling toward the United States taps the general orientation toward the country rather than toward the American people.

The Eurobarometer 17 of March-April 1982 allows us to explore more systematically the impact these difference in wordings produce on the pattern of responses. In that survey, most of the questions here discussed were asked. A first question, placed at the beginning of the questionnaire, asked about the level of trust for Americans.<sup>10</sup> Then, in the middle of the questionnaire, a set of five different questions measured the opinion toward the United States,<sup>11</sup> the confidence in the American Administration's ability to deal wisely with world problems,<sup>12</sup> whether is better for the respondent's own country to coordinate with the United States or not,<sup>13</sup> the extent to which the United States take the respondent's own country interests into account when they make a decision,<sup>14</sup> the effects for peace or war of the United States policies in the past year,<sup>15</sup> and, finally, the anti-American feelings of the respondent.<sup>16</sup> Table 2 reports the Pearson correlation coefficients among these different indicators. They are all highly intercorrelated, and in particular the affective indicators, such as the general opinion of the United States, the feelings of anti-Americanism and trust toward the Americans. It is possible that the strength of some of these correlations was inflated by the fact that all questions (but one) were asked in a sequential order, one after the other.

But still the correlation between the only question that was asked earlier on in a separate section of the questionnaire (the level of trust toward Americans), also shows a high correlation with all the others items. These results are corroborated by a principal component analysis of the five variables that produces only one factor (eigenvalue of 4,18, explaining 59,8% of the variance and an average factor loading of 0.772).<sup>17</sup>

[TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

***Table 2– Correlation coefficients among indicators of attitudes toward the United States***

My data are in line with the conclusions reached by Smith and Wertman (1993: 94) ten years ago, that these different ways of measuring the overall opinion of the United States, although with different formats and wording, produce very similar results. And this is true over time and across countries. In conclusion, the general opinion toward the United States – usually measured using a feeling question – appears to be a reliable and valid indicator of anti-Americanism. Given the long time-series available for this question, one is in the position to assess the level of anti-Americanism over a long time span. Figure 1 shows, for these four countries, the trend in the net general feeling toward the United States between 1952 and 2003, obtained subtracting those with a negative opinion from those with a favorable one. The figure points to three main results.

First, in all four countries sentiments toward the United States are prevalently positive. This long-term view confirms once again what also other authors have stressed, that “anti-Americanism has been the view of only a limited minority in most Western European countries throughout the postwar period...” (Smith and Wertman, 1993: 101). Second, although substantially positive, the aggregate level of anti-American sentiments are systematically different across countries. The French public is always more anti-American in its orientation, while the German and Italian less so than the overall average. The net average feeling toward the United States in France is 20 points, while in Germany and Italy is respectively 50 and 48, with Britain at a slightly lower 43 points. This confirms the image of the French public as less pro-American (it is probably too strong to say more anti-American given the systematically positive sign of the net feeling indicator) than the other European countries. Third, the figure reports also some fluctuations over time in the net level of anti-Americanism.

[FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE]

***Figure 1 – Trend in the net attitudes toward the United States***

To give a plainer view of these fluctuation of anti-Americanism over time, I proceeded to smooth the four trend lines, using the same procedure Stimson (1991: 36-39) applied to develop his measure of mood.<sup>18</sup> Since I am here interested in examining the movement of anti-Americanism in time, the differences between countries can be ignored. In fact, the four series move quite in parallel, with an average correlation between pairs of 0.617, with only the British-France pair less than 0.5 (at 0.377) and one higher than 0.8 (Italy-Germany, at 0.865). Once forced to vary around the same average and range of variation, the series flattens a bit and show the clearer picture in Figure 2.

[FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE]

***Figure 2 – Trend in the net attitudes toward the United States (normalized average, yearly base)***

Level of anti-Americanism, as measured by the net favor indicator, appears to be related to the evolution in the international political environment. The increase in anti-Americanism (as measured by dips in net favor) are all related to crises in Transatlantic relations. The first dip was in October 1954, due however exclusively to the French data point, as a consequence of the Franco-American crisis followed to the failure to ratify the European Defense Community by the French National Assembly. A second turn down, in the second half of the '50s, followed on the Suez crisis and last until November 1957, as reported from the available survey data. A third surge in anti-Americanism materialized between 1971 and 1976, as a consequence of the turbulent state of Transatlantic relations in connection with the Vietnam war, the monetary crisis due to the stop in dollar convertibility and the economic crisis ensuing the Arab oil embargo. The following show of anti-Americanism manifested itself in the early '80s, in connection with the collapse of détente, the controversial NATO Euromissiles decision and the acrimonious debate about the Reagan's foreign policy toward the Soviet Union. Things started to get better again in 1985, with the arrival of Gorbachev and the changes in policies he introduced. The next dip, in 1994-95, must be interpreted

with caution, being the data available only for Italy. It probably occurred as a consequence of the reluctance of the United States to be embroiled in the Balkans' turmoil and the uncertainty about the American willingness to intervene there in support of European troops on the ground.

Finally, we arrive at 2003, with the highest increase in anti-Americanism in all four countries since survey data are available. In 2003, net favor in these four countries not only reaches the lowest level ever, but for the first time becomes negative in Germany and Italy and reaches the bottom lowest +8 points for Great Britain. However, as in the past, sympathy toward the United States is quick to recover. Already in July 2003, positive feelings in France outmatch negative ones of 29 points per cent. This rapid swing up in positive feeling is quite characteristic of attitudes toward the United States for the entire 40-years period. However, as figure 2 also emphasizes, the range of oscillations in level of anti-Americanism becomes wider and wider over time.<sup>19</sup> Once established what the general trend in anti-Americanism has been in the last forty years, I will now move to explore whether this general feeling is related to evaluations about American foreign policy.

### **Anti-Americanism and US Foreign Policy in the 2000s**

The period 2002-2004 (see figure 2), witnessing the most dramatic increase in anti-Americanism ever, is particularly useful in this regard. To detect if anti-Americanism play any role, a period in which the American image is tarnished is the most appropriate. To do so, I will first describe in some detail what impact the events unfolding between 9/11 and the war in Iraq had on sentiments toward the United States. Then, I will examine the influence of anti-American sentiments on attitudes toward Iraq, as compared to other factors, such as the antipathy toward the first Bush's administration and the harsh judgment of the American foreign policy.

#### ***Anti-Americanism in the wake of 9/11<sup>20</sup>***

In the wake of the 9/11 Al Qaeda attacks against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, sympathy toward the United States did arouse immediately in all the four countries here examined. In France, a country whose positive feelings toward US are systematically lower than in other European countries, the terrorist attack produced an upward pulse in sympathy of more than 20 percent points. To the SOFRES question "Do you have

sympathy for the United States or rather antipathy, or neither of these?” in May 16-18, 2000 (French-American Foundation), 41% answered sympathy, 10% antipathy and 48% “neither one nor the other” (and 1% don’t know). On November 1-2, 2001, to this same question (SOFRES for *Le Nouvel Observateur*), 65% answered to “have sympathy,” 5% antipathy and 29% “neither one nor the other” (and 1% don’t know). However, already in August 2002 the percentage of those having sympathy for the United States had declined to 39%, while those having the US in antipathy increased to 16% and the indifferents to 44%. In Germany, to an EMNID question for the Ministry of Defence asking “The United States have been hit most strongly by the terrorist attacks of 11 September. Do you personally feel solidarity with the USA?” on November 12-15, 2001, 79% of the 2,000 interviewed answered Yes, and only 19% No (with 2% with no opinion).

Immediately after 9/11, some commentators pointed to questions asking on the possible relationships between the American foreign policy and the 9/11 events as an indicator of anti-Americanism. In general, public opinion in the countries in which a question of this sort has been asked appears divided on the responsibility of American foreign policy in bringing about the 9/11 attack. The alternatives offered seem also to have an effect on the distribution of answers. Immediately after the event, on September 26-27 2001, SOFRES asked in France “What are, in your opinion, the principal reasons for the terrorists to attack the United States of America?” A plurality ( 49%) chose the option “because the US are the leading economic power in the world,” and another 42% (the question allowed multiple response) mentioned either “American foreign policy in general” or “American policy towards the Arab states” in particular. Another 38% mentioned “support for Israel” and 29% being a “symbol of the West.” In Italy, to a question (SWG/*Famiglia Cristiana*, September 2001), asking “With respect to the terrorist attacks that occurred in New York some say that the terrorists are entirely responsible for these attacks, others say that the United States are also partly responsible because of their policies around the world. With which view do you most agree?”, 45% pick the first option and 46% agree that “the United States shares part of the responsibility” (with 10% who do not know). In the United Kingdom, to the question “Some people are saying that the Americans brought these attacks on themselves because of their policies on the Middle East. Do you agree or disagree?” (GALLUP/*Daily Telegraph*, September 17-18, 2001) only 23% agree with the statement, while 66% disagree and 11% do not answer. The only truly comparative question on this matter has been asked by MORI for the GMFUS in June 2002 (table 3) and it shows that in France, 63% agree (strongly or somewhat) with the

statement “American foreign policy has contributed to the September 11 attacks”, while in Great Britain the percentage of those in agreement with this statement is 57%, and in Germany and Italy 52%.

[TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

***Table 3 – Has American foreign policy contributed to the 9/11 attack? (June 2002)***

Although it is not clear what this question is exactly measuring, the conviction that American foreign policy has contributed to the 9/11 attack is not strongly related to anti-American feelings. Correlating the standard feeling thermometer, as an indicator of anti-Americanism, with the agree-disagree statement mentioned right above in table 6 produces a significant but weak correlation in all the four countries surveyed: 0.281 in Britain, 0.280 in Italy, 0.307 in France and 0.250 in Germany.

The increase in sympathy toward the United States on the wake of the 9/11 attack, not surprisingly, passed on support for the military action undertaken by the United States in Afghanistan to turn down the Taleban regime found accomplice of the Al Qaeda ring. The data on the degree of support for the American military action in Afghanistan in a set of 63 countries surveyed in November-December 2001 by Gallup International, show that France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom, together with most of the other NATO members, Albania, Israel, India and Kosovo are the only countries in which a clear majority in support of the American military action in Afghanistan is found. In Britain, France, Germany and Italy, two thirds of the public is in support of the action. All other countries are either divided, with only a slim majority or a plurality in favor of the American military operation (e.g. Japan, Switzerland, Ireland and Sweden) or are resolutely hostile to the American military operation in Afghanistan (with at the top Pakistan, Greece, Azerbaijan, Malaysia, Argentina, Turkey, Mexico, Bolivia, Bosnia, Uruguay, Yugoslavia and Ukraine in this order). In another survey, carried out by IPSOS/REID in twelve countries in the same period (Global Express Monitor, 19 November-17 December, 2001), asking whether the respondents did “support or oppose these US-led air strikes on Afghanistan,” including “military sites of the Taliban government, and training camps of the Al Qaeda group led by Osama bin Laden”, a majority of the public in France (60%), Germany (60%), Italy (58%) and United Kingdom (65%) support “these US-led air strikes on

Afghanistan,” while Argentina, Turkey, China and Spain opposed and South Korea and Japan show mixed feelings.<sup>21</sup>

The high level of support for the United States is confirmed by a different way of tackling the same issue. Asking how justified were the American attacks, as a response to the 9/11 events, 77% of the Germans believed on October 12, 2001 (ENMNID/n-TV) that “were “justified;” 61% of the Italians thought in September “that the terrorist attacks justify a military response by the US” (SWG/Famiglia Cristiana, 16-25 September 2001) and 51% of the British in November were ready to go as far as to justify “the allied bombing campaign against the Taliban in Afghanistan, including the use of carpet bombing and 'daisy cutter' bombs” (ICM / *The Guardian*, 16-18 November 2001). On the contrary, in countries like Morocco and Palestine the American reactions were seen as unjustified by three out of four people (Everts and Isernia, 2002).

Some evidences point to the fact that, support for the American war on terrorism in France, Britain, Germany and Italy stemmed from a test of pro-Americanism and a show-flag of support for a friendly country rather than from a shared diagnosis of the best way to deal with terrorism. Scattered but convergent evidences from survey data point to the fact that military force was not perceived by the Europeans, at that time, as the preferred option to deal with the terrorist threat. An Environics survey, carried out in October-November 2001 in 16 countries (Global Issues Monitor Survey) asked whether the respondent agrees “that military force is the most effective way of dealing with international terrorism.” 59% of the French agree with this statement, while 39% of the Germans, 36% of the Italians and 46% of the British say so. On the contrary, in America, 76% subscribes to this view. In the Gallup International Survey on September 14-17, 2001, only in India and Israel clear majorities were found in favor of a military option. In the United States only a bare majority of 54% of the public would have preferred that “once the identity of the terrorists is known, should the American government launch a military attack on the country or countries where the terrorists are based.” Firm majorities in all the other 34 countries surveyed (and 30% of the Americans) would have rather saw that “ the American government seek to extradite the terrorists to stand trial.” In France, only 29% would have approved an attack rather than extradition, in Germany 17%, in Italy 21% and in Britain 18%. The extradition was chosen respectively by 77% of the Germans, 67% of the French, 71% of the Italians and 75% of the British.

But the support for the use of force might be even lower as the last question examined hints at. Apparently, the way in which the question was phrased may have led to overestimating the degree of support for military action. Whenever the question was not asked in the form of a simple dichotomy of ‘yes’ and ‘no’, but in the form of presenting alternative options including non-military ones, the outcomes were often rather different and support generally went down. Thus, for instance in one German poll (EMNID) 58% preferred to use diplomatic means in the struggle against terrorism with 40% saying that only military force could be effective. In a SWG survey in Italy in September 2001, only 10% preferred ‘bombing’ and 20 % ‘send ground troops’ among alternative options, while 49% preferred ‘economic sanctions’. In one YOUNGOV poll in the United Kingdom, to a question asking “Which of the following do you think should be the main focus for action taken against countries that knowingly harboring terrorist organizations,” 33% preferred ‘diplomatic negotiations’, 26% ‘economic sanctions’ and 34% ‘military action’. However, to a question, by the same institute YOUNGOV asking in two different occasions in the fall of 2001 if “there should be no military retaliation and that any action should be limited to economic and/or diplomatic sanctions against countries knowingly harboring terrorist organizations?”, a strong majority answered that actions should include “military retaliation”. And to a Gallup/Daily Telegraph question asking “Should the United States and its allies, or should they not, be prepared to take military action against countries believed to be giving aid and comfort to last week’s terrorists?” 70% of the sample interviewed on September 17-18, 2001 answered they “should.”

Feeling that the American counteractions were justified and having sympathy for the American situation did not imply automatically, however, that one wanted one’s country to become involved too. But again, here France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom stand out, together with most of the NATO members, Israel and India, in their willingness to get along with the American military strategy in Afghanistan. To a Gallup International question asking “Some countries and all NATO member states have agreed to participate in the military action against Afghanistan. Do you agree or disagree with that [your country] should take part with the United States military action against Afghanistan?” in September-October 2001 73% of the French, 53% of the Germans, 66% of the Italians and 79% of the British agree. To a slightly different question, asked by EOS Gallup in the 15 EU countries in the second half of November (13-23 November 2001), in which an explicit reference to ground troops rather than to

the more generic “take part with the United States military action” was made,<sup>22</sup> among the NATO members only in France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom could majorities be found, but not in Belgium, Denmark, Portugal, Spain, let alone Greece. In France, 54% answered yes, national “troops should be sent to fight with the US forces,” in Germany 55%, in Italy 51% and in United Kingdom 66%.

This opening of credit toward the United States however did not last long. In November-December 2001 the percentage of those supporting that the respondent’s country “should take part with the US military action against Afghanistan” was slightly eroding in respect to the identical question asked two months before (in France went down from 73 to 67%, in Italy from 66% to 57%, in the United Kingdom from 79% to 68% and only in Germany slightly increased from 53% to 58%) but still remained a majority. Being this second survey carried out once the operations in Afghanistan had truly begun, when the United States government had made clear that it wanted the allies to support and cheer them on, but not their participation in the fighting if that would enable them to claim a say in the way the battle was being fought, the lack of increase, if not downright decrease, of support show an erosion of the opening of goodwill among the so far staunchest allies of the United States.

The slight, but unequivocal, decrease in support for – and presumably sympathy toward – the American position on the fight to terrorism can be traced to the resurfacing back of a set of differences in the way to better fight terrorism between European countries and the United States. A PEW survey in April 2002 compared attitudes across the Atlantic (the United States on the one hand and France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom on the other) on a number of issues related to the terrorist attacks and the problem of how to respond to it (table 4). On a number of important aspects of the terrorist issue a growing gap appears between the American and European views. Issues that, by the way, looms large in the troubles to come in the following years due to the Iraqi crisis. While in 2002 still a majority of the public in our four European countries approved “The US led military campaign against” Afghanistan, no more than one third in France, Germany and Italy and slightly less than 40 percent in Britain approved the “axis of evil” reference in the “State of the Union” speech by president Bush in January 2002; and only a similar percentage approved the American Middle East policy. On the contrary, overwhelming majorities of Europeans, but only a slight majority of Americans, approved Bush’s decision “to increase US foreign aid to poor countries.”

[TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE]

***Table 4 – Attitudes toward Terrorism, Axis of Evil and US policies in Middle East***

***(April 2-10, 2002, % Approve)***

Remarkably enough, these different assessments of American policies are not accompanied by a different degree of concern and fear about the dangers of Islamic terrorism. In this respect there is hardly a transatlantic divide. 60% of the French (18% very and 42% somewhat), 63% of the Germans (17% very and 46% somewhat), 59% of the Italians (21% very and 38% somewhat) and 56% of the British (16% very and 40% somewhat) are worried “about the possibility of Islamic terrorism in [their own country] these days.” In United States, 67% are very (22%) or somewhat (45%) worried about terrorism (PSRA/PEW Survey, April 2-10, 2002).

It is not surprising then that to a PEW question in April 2-10, 2002 asking “How do you see the US led war on terrorism: do you think the US is taking into account the interests of its allies in the fight against terrorism or do you think the US is acting mainly on its own interests?” 80% of the French, 85% of the Germans, 68% of the Italians and 73% of the British thought America was “acting mainly on its own interests” and only 17% of the French, 12% of the Germans, 28% of the Italians, 22% of the British thought the United States was “taking into account the interests of its allies”.<sup>23</sup>

In conclusion, the review of the available evidence on support for the United States and its foreign policy in the crucial period between September 11, 2001 and the “axis of evil” speech in February 2002 shows that the conspicuous endowment of sympathy and support for the United States generated in our four countries by the eventful attack in New York and Washington began to be eroded well before the Iraqi war of 2003, and for reasons related to both differing views on how best to deal with terrorism and an increasing uneasiness with the developments taking place in the United States foreign policy after the Afghan war. In this context of increasing wariness and puzzlement for the direction American foreign policy was heading to, the issue for an intervention in Iraq was set on the agenda by the Bush’s administration.

### *Anti-Americanism and Iraq*

It is not my intention here to review the available evidence on attitudes toward the war to Iraq of 2003 (on which see, for more details, Everts and Isernia, 2005), but rather to explore in some depth whether, and to what extent attitudes toward Iraq can be explained by anti-American feelings in Europe. Using the comparative Transatlantic Trend Survey conducted in 2002, 2003 and 2004, I will examine the impact of anti-Americanism on attitudes toward the war to Iraq, as compared to with four other possible explanations of the tepid support for the Iraqi war: attitudes toward the first Bush administration's handling of foreign policy, attitudes toward the American leadership, orientation toward international relations and the ideological predispositions of the respondents. Given the fact that questions are not exactly identical before and after the war, the results of the comparison among the different surveys has to be interpreted with caution.

To measure attitudes toward the war to Iraq I used two different set of questions. In June 2002, when the discussion on Iraq was still at the beginning and no clear war plan had yet been made public (although some sources, e.g. Woodward, 2004, claims that the Bush's administration had already made up its mind on what to do with Iraq much earlier than that) I used a question asking what the United States should do in Iraq.<sup>24</sup> As shown in table 8, a clear majority of the public in the four European countries (and in the United States as well) was in favor of attacking Iraq "only ... with the UN approval and the support of allies." Only one tenth of the public in Europe, and one fifth of it in the United States would have approved it "even if they [i.e. US] have to do it alone." One third in the four European countries and slightly more than one tenth of the American public was of the idea that the "US should not invade Iraq" anyway. In 2003 and 2004 the question was in the "worth the costs" format.<sup>25</sup> In 2004 a methodological twist was added in the question. Half of the sample was asked the standard 2003 version, while the other half was submitted to a differently worded question, in which a reference to the idea of "liberating the Iraqi people" was included, to test the impact on support.<sup>26</sup> To account for this change in wording, I used a dummy variable that had value 1 when the reference "to liberate the Iraqi people" was present in the question, and 0 otherwise.

[TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE]

*Table 5 – Attitudes toward a US attack to Iraq (June, 2002, in percent)*

Besides anti-American feelings, measured through the feeling thermometer, I examined four major alternative determinants of orientation toward the United States policy toward Iraq. A first, very obvious one, was the pure and simple antipathy toward the Bush's administration entertained by the European public. The first George W. Bush administration's image in Europe was tarnished even before the war to Iraq. Eichenberg (2004, personal communication) has assembled data on British opinion towards three American president: Carter, Reagan and George W Bush. Figure 3 shows clearly how Bush's popularity was low even before the Iraqi crisis broke out. In August 2001 net favour toward Bush was at the level of Reagan's popularity during the Euromissiles crisis. In this connection, a up shift – though not dramatic – occurred with the 9/11 attack. But already in 2003, Bush's net opinion was back to negative, touching the lowest popularity score of the three presidents reported in the Figure. The indicator I used in my analysis is the assessment of the foreign policy job performance.<sup>27</sup> The hypothesized relationship is in the positive direction. A positive assessment of Bush's job performance should positively affect attitudes toward the war to Iraq.

[FIGURE 3 ABOUT HERE]

***Figure 3 - Net Favorable opinions of three US Presidents***

A second variable is the perception of American leadership, an indicator of the public assessment of the American foreign policy. The question asks “how desirable is it that the US exert strong leadership in world affairs? Very desirable, somewhat desirable, somewhat undesirable, or very undesirable?” This question has been asked several times over the past decades and it is sensitive to the evolution of American foreign policy in a pattern quite similar to the one shown by the anti-Americanism indicator reported in Figure 1. Also here I hypothesize that those who deem desirable that the United States exert a strong leadership are more likely to be in favour of the Iraqi operation.

While the two previous variables measure the attitudes toward concrete American Administration and political actors, as symbolized by the President of the United States or by the American leadership role in the world, the feeling thermometer is an indicator of anti-Americanism. The assumption here is that if people assess the merit of the Iraqi crisis according to anti-American lenses, this should emerge in this variable, once

controlled for the short-term, policy-sensitive and event-reactive attitudes, as measured by the two previous variables. In other words, if anti-Americanism is behind the present harsh judgment toward the American policy in Iraq, this should manifest itself with a strong and positive impact of the coefficient of anti-Americanism on attitudes toward the war. Otherwise, a negative and insignificant result should imply that most of the differences can be traced back to different judgments on the merit and nature of the American foreign policy in the Iraq war.

I also included two measures of the general orientation toward international politics, to take into account the argument, put forward by some analysts (e.g. Kagan, 2003), that Americans and Europeans have a different image of the world and of its threats. In this connection, I included first an indicator of internationalism, to assess whether opposition to the war might arise by a desire on the part of the Europeans to isolate themselves by present world politics' turbulence. The question asking whether we should "take an active party or stay out" of world affairs has been used. I expect that those who are more internationalist are also more likely to be in favour of a military operation against Iraq. The second indicator taps another potential source of ideological difference between Europeans and Americans: the greater importance attributed by the Europeans to "soft power" (Nye, 2004), and economic power in particular. In fact, available data show that Europeans are more likely to agree with the statement that economic power is nowadays more important than military power in international relations. Other studies have also shown (see Asmus, Everts, Isernia, 2004a; 2004b) that this is also an important predictor of foreign policy attitudes and quite stable over time, even in turbulent times as the present ones. The question in 2002 asked directly "Which of the following do you think is more important in determining a country's overall power and influence in the world – a country's economic strength, or its military strength?" In 2003 and 2004 the question was an agree-disagree statement on a four-points scale: "Economic power is becoming more important in world affairs than military power." I hypothesize that those who think that economic power is becoming more important than military power in world politics are also less inclined to support a military attack against Iraq or to deem the Iraqi war worth the costs.

In 2002 a variable measuring the perceived threat from Iraq was also included, in order to assess whether this perception played any role in explaining attitudes toward a prospective military operation against this country. The assumption being here that

those who are convinced that Iraq was a crucial threat were also more likely to subscribe to the idea of attacking it.

I included also a set of background variables, such as age, gender, education<sup>28</sup> and the ideological predisposition, as measured on a 7-points left-right continuum. I expect the younger generations, the women the better educated and the left-wing oriented to be more reluctant to use force and therefore less eager to support the Iraqi operation.

[TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE]

***Table 6 – OLS-estimate of determinants of attitudes toward the Iraq war (standardized beta coefficient, t-ratio among parentheses)***

The results of the OLS regression here reported shed some doubts on the argument according to which anti-Americanism is the groundswell of the present source of tension between Europe and the United States, at least as far as the war to Iraq is concerned. By far, the assessment of the first Bush's administration and of American leadership in world affairs are the two most important determinants of attitudes toward the war both before and after the American attack, and in this order. As to anti-Americanism, it plays no systematic role across countries and over time. It has a minor influence in Great Britain before the war, in France immediately after the toppling of Saddam Hussein's regime and in Italy in both periods, while it has no significance for the entire period in Germany. Moreover, in 2004 the variable is not significant in any of the four countries. As from these results, a major source of differences in explaining attitudes toward the Iraqi war is the assessment of the US foreign policy, both in general – in terms of “world leadership” – and in connection with the person at the helm of power, president George W. Bush. No other variable plays such a systematic role across the four countries here considered. In 2002, threat perception apparently had an impact, in the expected direction, only in the United Kingdom. Internationalism has no impact whatsoever in no country. As to the more general ideological dimension of the importance of soft power, it has a significant influence, and in the expected direction, in Germany and Italy in 2002, and in Great Britain in 2004.

One should also note the role played by the reference to “liberating the Iraqi people” in the 2004 survey. The coefficient has the right sign in all four countries and it is relevant in three out of four (the only exception being Italy where it is statistically

barely insignificant). The results indicates the importance of the goals of the action for the public in three out of the four countries here considered. In France, Germany and the United Kingdom a reference to the goal of “liberating” the Iraqi people increases support for the war.

## **Conclusion**

Anti-Americanism is an elusive phenomenon. In this chapter I have distinguished between a general affective orientation toward the United States, that I suggest to properly define as anti-Americanism, and policy attitudes about American foreign policy. Although related, they are not necessarily part of the same syndrome. In fact, one of the results of this analysis is that people can entertain quite complex and critical views of what the United States does, and still have a general positive affective orientation toward it.

If anti-Americanism is a psychological predisposition to negatively evaluate the United States, available data over more than forty years lead to think that it is quite a minority view in France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom. There are consistent and stable differences across countries, with France always coming up first in term of anti-Americanism and Germany and Italy struggling for the last place. But trends in anti-Americanism have moved in parallel lines over time and, also, have become closer. The data also show that anti-Americanism is not a constant in these four countries, but rather an oscillating manifestation, related presumably to the United States foreign policy. Already this result may lead us to reappraise the visceral sources of anti-Americanism. If anti-Americanism is, among other things, a reasoned reaction to American foreign policy, its irrational nature has to be somehow toned down.

The importance of foreign policy as a factor in explaining anti-Americanism is found in the present crisis of Transatlantic relationships. A reconstruction of the available survey data in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks show the deep reservoir of pro-American feelings in all European countries, France included. When, on September 12, 2001 the North Atlantic Council determined “... that this attack ... against the United States ... shall be regarded as an action covered by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty” (NATO press release, quoted in Sloan, 2003: 186), it was truly expressing the feelings of the majority of the European public. And this is even more remarkable if one considers that these feelings also muted doubts and perplexities

entertained by a majority of the European public in regard to the military strategy adopted by the first Bush administration to tackle the terrorist threat. The willingness to overcome these doubts in order to show support for the attacked ally was, in itself, a strong show of pro-American sentiments. One can pretend the hollowness of this sentiment, ready to dissipate after a few days. In fact, pro-American sentiments wore out quite early. Signs of a more critical stance toward the United States appear already at the end of 2001.

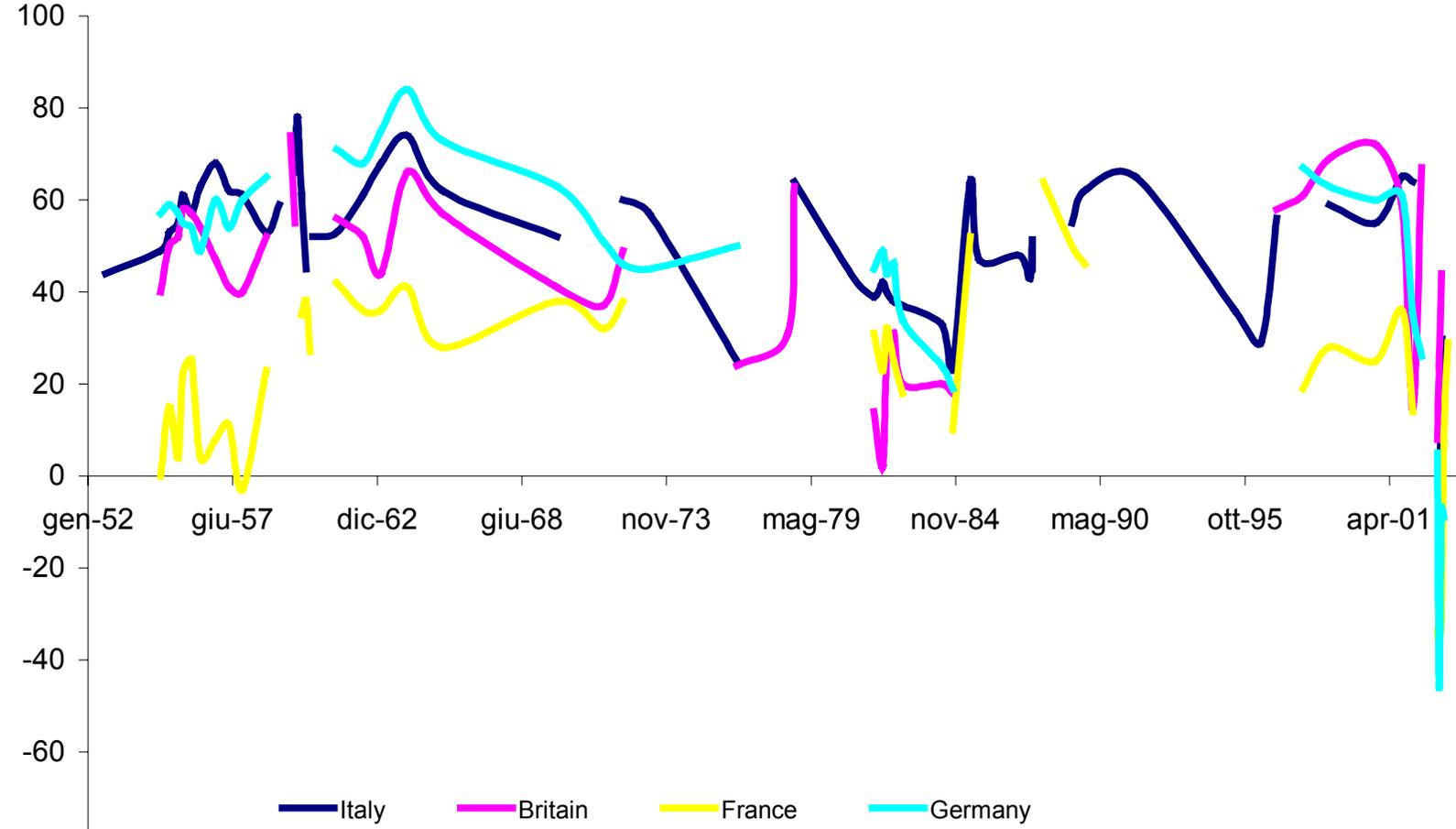
However, this was not a reflex of underlain anti-Americanism, but rather a consequence of an increasing puzzlement and preoccupation for the direction the American foreign policy was taking. In this context, the “axis of evil” speech confirmed and strengthened the worst apprehension held by the Europeans and the ensuing debate on Iraqi issue magnified the preoccupations. In this context, the Transatlantic crisis erupted over what to do with the Saddam’s regime was neither surprising nor unforeseeable. At the same time, it reveals that the causes of the Transatlantic friction were at once simmering down well before the crisis itself but also circumscribed in their purport. The Iraq crisis magnified preoccupations for American unilateral mood already present in the Afghanistan operation, in which the NATO offer was substantially overlooked and sidetracked. The causes of the present drift however are also less dramatic and structural than many claim to be. Looking at some determinants of the critical attitudes towards Iraq in the period 2002-2004, it is found that most of the difference is traced back to a sentiment of hostility toward the first Bush administration and the wisdom of its foreign policy. Anti-Americanism, once controlling for these factors, do not play a significant role in explaining opposition to the military operation in Iraq.

Having examined the nature and effects of anti-Americanism in more than 40 years and coming out of this examination with a minimalist view of the scope and importance of anti-Americanism as a source of resentment and hostility toward the United States, one is left however with some still puzzling questions. If the picture here offered is an accurate one, then why so many people, both in government and elsewhere, are so quick and ready to grab the anti-American banner to explain the causes of Atlantic tensions between Europeans and Americans? In other words, if anti-Americanism is a minority view and quite transient over time, why to dedicate so much attention to it? Why to be worried about something that it is not really there?

One might say, these same reactions can explain the rapidity with which anti-American sentiments recede in the public mind. If elites were not ready to denounce it, it might last more and take deeper and wider roots and ramifications. However, the analysis presented so far stresses that anti-Americanism is not rooted in firm beliefs about the United States and its role. Anti-Americanism appears rather shaped, to a greater extent, by situational and contextual factors, mostly related to what the American government does – or the Europeans perceive it does – in foreign policy than by emotional or instinctual anti-American reflex. If this is the case, then, there is no reason to believe that, once the crisis is overcome and Euro-American relations go back to normal, anti-Americanism should not recede. In this connection, it might be the very reactivity of the anti-American sentiments to be appealing for elites searching for quick fix to domestic and international problems, on both sides of the Atlantic. In other words, it is the implicit awareness of the shallow grasp of anti-American attitudes to make them so appealing to elites for use for political purposes. Anti-Americanism, as a political weapon, has here the twofold advantage of being quickly activated, but also of lasting only for a short period of time, so as not to constrain too much the very elites agitating it. One can doubt however if this playing on anti-Americanism has no political cost for Transatlantic relations. Over time, we have seen a widening of the margin of oscillations once each new Transatlantic crisis erupts and this is particularly important in a period in which, with the end of the Cold War, Euro-American relationships are entering in new, uncharted, lands.



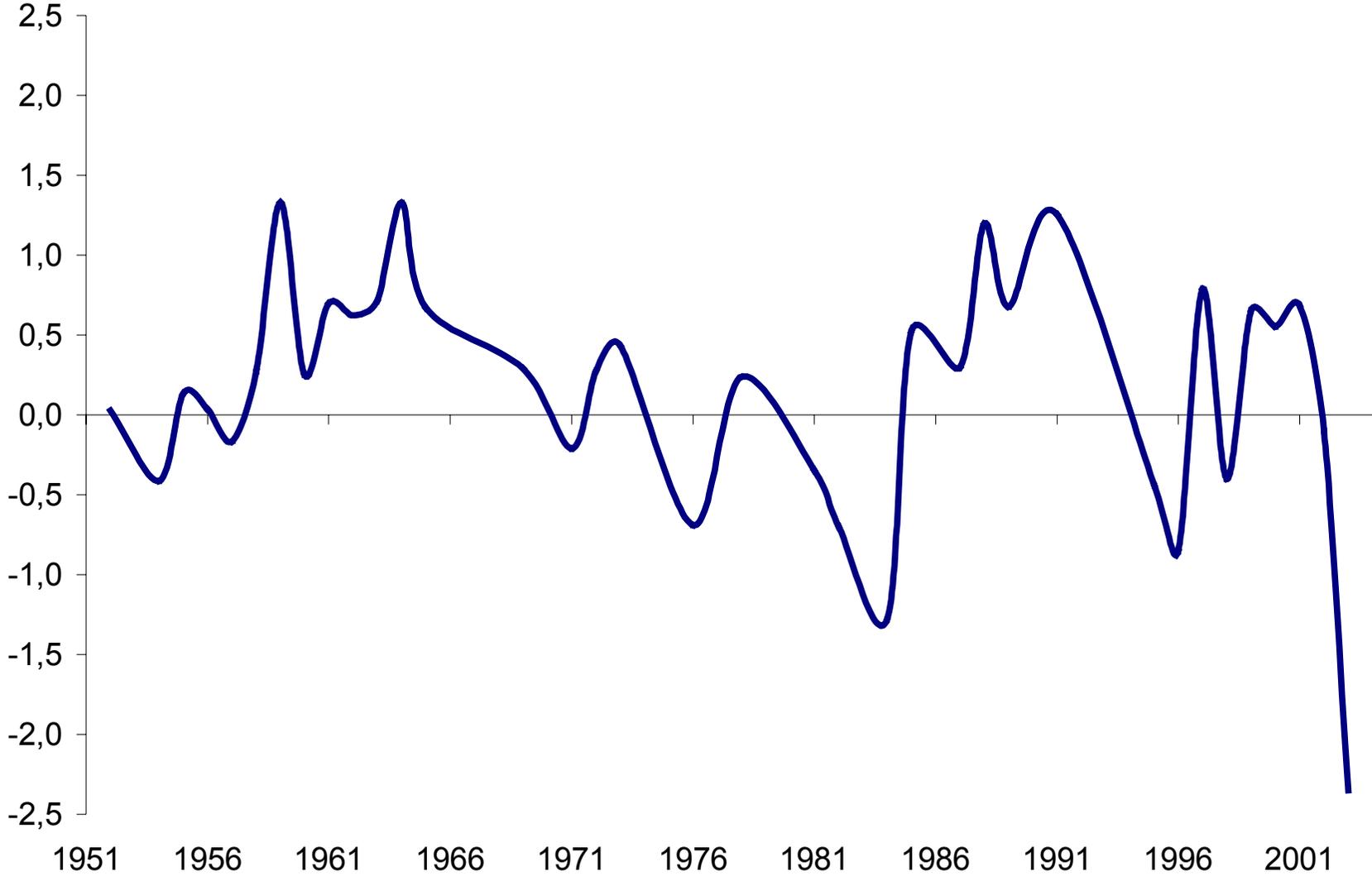
*Figure 1 – Trend in the net attitudes toward the United States*



The vertical line reports the net favour toward the United States, measured subtracting those who have a bad opinion of the US from those who have a good opinion. A positive number means that the percentage of those having a positive opinion is higher than that of those having a bad opinion and a negative sign the opposite.  
 Sources: USIA XX-series 1952-1967, Eurobarometer series 1970-2000, Pew Global Attitudes Survey 2002 and Transatlantic Trend Survey 2002-2004

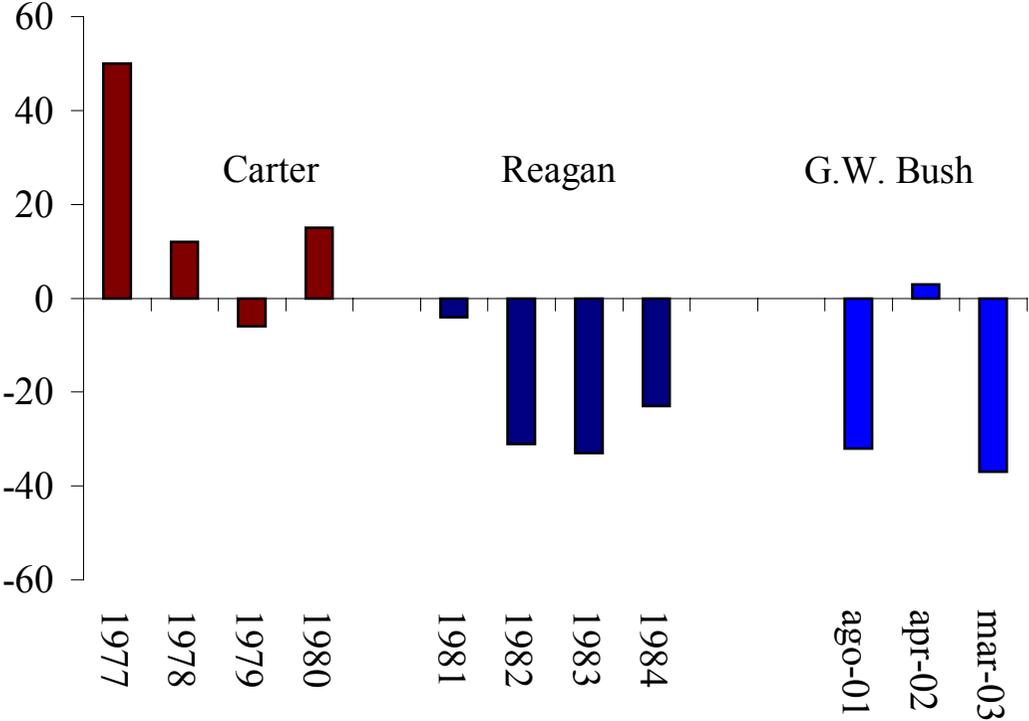


*Figure 2 – Trend in the net attitudes toward the United States (normalized average, yearly base)*



For the details on how it has been computed see text  
Source: same as Figure 1

Figure 3 - Net Favorable opinions of three American presidents



Source: Richard Eichenberg, personal communication. Data from British Gallup, various years and Pew Research Center

**Table 1 – Feelings toward Americans and the United States (in %)**

	October 1958		June 2002	
	Nation	People	Nation	People
Very good/Very favourable	15	15	13	14
Good/favourable	43	41	52	59
Fair	22	27	na	na
Bad/Unfavorable	8	7	24	17
Very bad/Very Unfavorable	2	2	5	4
DK	10	8	5	6
Total	100	100	100	100
	(2475)	(2404)	(2516)	(2516)

Sources: 1958: XX-11 USIA; 2002: PEW Global attitude survey. Pooled countries: France, Germany, Italy and United Kingdom.

**Table 2– Correlation coefficients among indicators of attitudes toward the United States**

	<b>GENERAL OPINION US</b>	<b>CONFIDENCE US FOREIGN POLICY AND US INTERESTS</b>	<b>NAT SECURITY AND US DECISIONS</b>	<b>US EFFECTS ON PEACE</b>	<b>PRO/ANTI- AMERICAN</b>	
<b>TRUST IN AMERICANS</b>	0.638** (3620)	0.560** (3686)	0.426** (3345)	0.460** (3567)	0.414** (3133)	-0.495** (3570)
<b>GENERAL OPINION US</b>		0.678** (3676)	0.456** (3338)	0.494** (3537)	0.499** (3102)	-0.596** (3523)
<b>CONFIDENCE US</b>			0.468** (3405)	0.531** (3646)	0.526** (3173)	-0.543** (3598)
<b>FOREIGN POLICY AND US INTERESTS</b>				0.493** (3363)	0.433** (2928)	-0.430** (3307)
<b>NAT SECURITY AND US DECISIONS</b>					0.453** (3115)	-0.411** (3512)
<b>USA POLICY EFFECTS ON PEACE</b>						-0.502** (3085)

Source: Eurobarometer 17, March-April 1982 (pooled data for France, (West) Germany, Italy and United Kingdom). Only the cross-section sample has been used.

**Table 3 – Has American foreign policy contributed to the 9/11 attack? (June 2002)**

	Strongly agree	Agree somewhat	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	N
Great Britain	24	33	17	19	7	1000
France	19	44	17	15	6	1001
Germany	17	35	24	20	5	1000
Italy	19	33	20	23	7	1000

Source: MORI for GMFUS

Question wording: Some say American foreign policy has contributed to the September 11 attacks. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Strongly or somewhat?

**Table 4 – Attitudes toward Terrorism, Axis of Evil and US policies in Middle East (April 2-10, 2002, % Approve)**

As I read some specific US policies tell me if you approve or disapprove of them. [READ AND ROTATE]

	France	Germany	Italy	United Kingdom	United States
The U.S. led military campaign against the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan	64	61	59	73	83
President Bush calling Iraq, Iran and North Korea an Axis of Evil	27	17	29	37	56
President Bush's decision to increase US foreign aid to poor countries	90	86	95	90	53
US policies in the Middle East <sup>1</sup>	26	25	39	36	55

Source: PSRA/PEW.

<sup>1</sup> Asked in form 2 only.

**Table 5 – Attitudes toward a US attack to Iraq (June, 2002, in percent)**

There has been some discussion about whether the US should use its troops to invade Iraq and overthrow the government of Saddam Hussein. Which of the following positions is closest to yours

	UK	Italy	France	Germany	US
<i>The US should not invade Iraq</i>	20	32	27	27	13
<i>The US only invade Iraq, UN approval the support of allies</i>	69	54	63	56	65

<i>The US should invade Iraq even if they have to do it alone</i>	10	10	6	12	20
<i>DK</i>	1	3	3	4	2
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100	100
<i>(N)</i>	1000	1000	1001	1000	1000

Source: CCFR-GMF Worldviews 2002.

**Table 6 – OLS-estimate of determinants of attitudes toward the Iraq war (standardized beta coefficient, t-ratio among parentheses)**

<i>Model</i>	<i>Great Britain</i>			<i>France</i>		
	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>
<i>Feelings US</i>	0.033 (0.868)	0.096 (2.537)*	-0.050 (-1.285)	0.092 (2.315)*	-0.024 (-0.636)	-0.052 (-1.445)
<i>US Leadership</i>	0.111 (2.999)**	0.069 (1.722)	0.106 (2.586)**	0.112 (2.922)**	0.110 (2.898)***	0.006 (0.170)***
<i>Assessment Bush's foreign policy</i>	0.113 (2.998)**	0.311 (7.839)***	0.334 (8.133)***	0.092 (2.403)*	0.266 (6.957)***	0.225 (6.186)***
<i>Threat Iraq</i>	-0.142 (-4.240)***	Na	Na	-0.002 (-0.050)	Na	Na
<i>Economic Power</i>	-0.025 (-0.748)	0.038 (1.129)	0.078 (2.235)*	-0.02 (-0.769)	-0.021 (-0.628)	-0.037 (-1.116)
<i>Internationalism</i>	0.039 (1.160)	-0.053 (-1.507)	-0.008 (-0.233)	0.008 (0.220)	0.023 (0.695)	-0.014 (-0.431)
<i>Dummy "liberate Iraqi people"</i>	Na	Na	-0.114 (-3.292)***	Na	Na	-0.075 (-2.298)*
<i>Adj. R<sup>2</sup></i>	0.129	0.200	0.173	0.091	0.117	0.100
<i>SEE</i>	0.53	0.87	0.43	0.57	0.64	0.29
<i>N</i>	(829)	(714)	(702)	(792)	(824)	(860)

**Table 6 (continue) – OLS-estimate of determinants of attitudes toward the Iraq war (standardized beta coefficient, t-ratio among parentheses)**

<i>Model</i>	<i>Italy</i>			<i>Germany</i>		
	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>
<i>Feelings US</i>	0.123 (2.905)**	0.110 (2.849)**	-0.010 (-0.233)	-0.041 (1.072)	0.068 (1.870)	-0.003 (-0.086)

<i>US Leadership</i>	0.082 (2.056)*	0.067 (1.527)	0.155 (3.549)***	0.079 (2.097)*	0.048 (1.207)	0.123 (3.267)***
<i>Assessment Bush's foreign policy</i>	0.094 (2.359)*	0.273 (6.122)***	0.285 (6.333)***	0.077 (2.020)*	0.360 (9.500)***	0.241 (6.480)***
<i>Threat Iraq</i>	-0.079 (-2.140)*	Na	Na	-0.061 (-1.744)	Na	Na
<i>Economic Power</i>	0.080 (2.212)*	-0.013 (-0.409)	-0.053 (-1.506)	0.071 (2.063)*	-0.032 (-1.003)	0.021 (0.647)
<i>Internationalism</i>	0.006 (0.170)	-0.019 (-0.587)	0.018 (0.516)	-0.040 (-1.154)	-0.011 (-0.354)	0.005 (0.155)
<i>Dummy "liberate Iraqi people"</i>	Na	Na	-0.056 (-1.613)	Na	Na	-0.070 (-2.122)*
<i>Adj. - R<sup>2</sup></i>	0.112	0.240	0.235	0.077	0.194	0.097
<i>SEE</i>	0.63	0.80	0.35	0.68	0.65	0.28
<i>N</i>	(699)	(715)	(636)	(802)	(832)	(844)

Socio-demographic factors and left-right continuum not reported here.

Dependent variable: 2002: "There has been some discussion about whether the US should use its troops to invade Iraq and overthrow the government of Saddam Hussein. Which of the following positions is closest to yours: 1 The US should not invade Iraq, 2 The US should only invade Iraq with UN approval and the support of its allies, 3 The US should invade Iraq even if they have to do it alone. 2003 and 2004: "Do you think the war in Iraq was worth the loss of life and the other costs of attacking Iraq, or not?" In 2003 1 No, 2 Uncertain and 3 Yes, worth the costs. In 2004 in half of the sample the question was worded "Do you think the war in Iraq to liberate the Iraqi people was worth the loss of life and the other costs of attacking Iraq or not? 1 Worth, 2 Not worth. To account for this change a dummy variable was inserted with value 1 when "to liberate the Iraqi people" was present in the stem and 0 otherwise.

Independent variables: *Feelings Thermometer toward United States*: 0-100. *US Leadership*: "From your point of view, how desirable is it that the US exert strong leadership in world affairs? Very desirable, somewhat desirable, somewhat undesirable, or very undesirable?" 1 Very desirable, 2 Somewhat desirable, 3 Somewhat undesirable, 4 Very undesirable. *Assessment Bush foreign policy*: 2002: How do you rate the George W. Bush administration's handling of the following problems? Would you say the American administration's handling of [overall foreign policy] has been excellent, good, fair, or poor? 1 excellent, 2 good, 3 fair, 4 poor; 2003: Do you approve or disapprove of the way the president of the United States George Bush is handling international policies? very much or somewhat? 1 Approve very much, 2 Approve somewhat, 3 Disapprove somewhat, 4 Disapprove very much. *Economic Power*: 2002: Which of the following do you think is more important in determining a country's overall power and influence in the world – a country's economic strength, or its military strength? 1 Economic strength, 2 Military strength. 2003 and 2004: "Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of the following. Do you agree/disagree strongly or somewhat: Economic power is becoming more important in world affairs than military power." 1 Agree strongly, 2 Agree somewhat, 3 Disagree somewhat, 4 Disagree strongly. *Internationalism*: do you think it will be best for the future of [own country] if we take an active part in world affairs or if we stay out of world affairs?" 1 Active part, 2 Stay out. *Gender*: 1 Male, 2 Female. *Age* (in years. In 2002 Year of birth in two digits); *Education* (in four classes in 2002 and 2003, age left education in 2003). *Left-Right continuum*: 7-points scale 1 extreme left-7 extreme right.

\*\*\* p significant >.001 \*\* p significant >.01 \* p significant >.05

---

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> I wish to thank Sergio Fabbrini and Philip Everts for their generous comments to the previous draft of the chapter.

<sup>2</sup> A quick search on LEXIS-NEXIS for references to anti-Americanism in the headlines of “international news” produced, 315 references in 2003. In 1998 they were only 22 references.

<sup>3</sup> This is what Hollander (1985) has in mind in defining anti-Americanism as “an attitude of distaste, aversion, or intense hostility the roots of which may be found in matters unrelated to the actual qualities or attributes of American society or the foreign policies of the United States. In short, as here used, anti-Americanism refers to a negative predisposition, a type of bias which is to varying degree unfounded. I regard it as an attitude similar to its far more thoroughly explored counterparts, hostile predispositions such as racism, sexism, or anti-Semitism.” (Hollander, 1995: lxxviii).

<sup>4</sup> Without pretending to be exhaustive, I have based my analysis on the following texts: Craveri and Quagliariello (2004); Crockatt (2003); Fabbrini (2004; 2002); Kroes and van Rossem (1986); D’Attorre (1991); Defleur and Defleur (2003); Diner (1996); Elwood (1999). Haseler (1985); Hollander (1995); Kuisel (1993); Lacorne (1986); Pells (1997); Rubinstein and Smith (1985); Spiro (1998); Strauss (1978); Teodori (2002; 2003); Toinet (1988). I thank Linda Fratini for helping me in the bibliographic search and analysis of the material.

<sup>5</sup> The United States Information Agency has been asking, with slight changes, the following question for more than thirty years: “Please, use this card, to tell me your feelings about various countries. How about US?” The respondent had an option between The Eurobarometer series of the European Commission has been asking, once in a while, a straighter version of this same question, worded as follows: “Do you have a very good, fairly good, neither bad nor good, rather bad or very bad opinion of the United States?” Those who answered “neither good nor bad” were probed: “on balance would you say that your feelings toward the United States are more favorable or more unfavorable?. This question has been asked in the Eurobarometer 22, 24, 27 and 28. Alternatively, in Eurobarometer 17, the question was “What is your overall opinion of the U.S.? Do you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion?”. This wording was also used in the PEW Global Attitudes Survey in 2002.

<sup>6</sup> In the period between October 1952 and April 1956 the intermediate option “Fair” as used. Since November 1956 the option “Neither Good nor bad” has been used. In November 1956 and in May 1957 the two formats were offered to half of the sample each, presumably to test for possible differences. Of the 8 available comparisons (two for each of the four countries here examined) in France and Italy no difference is greater than 2-3 points percent, in Germany in one case (May 1957) the difference is of 8 points percent and in Great Britain is of 10 and 13 points percent respectively for November 1956 and May 1957. In all the three cases in which the wording of the intermediate category makes a difference greater than 3 points percent, the effect is in the same direction: to increase the number of those who have a “good opinion” when the “neither good nor bad” category is offered in comparison to when the “Fair” category is supplied. Apparently, the item “Fair” seems to capture some of the positive feelings while neither good nor bad seems more neutral. For my purposes, this source of difference is unproblematical, before I will use the net favor (favorable minus unfavorable).

<sup>7</sup> An example of this question format is found in Eurobarometer 10/A: “Here is a sort of scale. You will notice that the 10 boxes on this card range from the highest position for plus 5, for something you have a very favorable opinion of, all the way down to the lowest position of minus 5, for something you have very unfavorable opinion of. How far up or down the scale would you place [United States].” The standard feeling thermometer scale has been tried also by the Transatlantic Trend Survey (drawing upon the Chicago Council of Foreign Relations Survey for the United States) since 2002. The question is as follows: “Next I’d like you to rate your feelings toward some countries, institutions and people, with one hundred meaning a very warm, favorable feeling, zero meaning a very cold, unfavorable feeling, and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from zero to one hundred. If you have no opinion or have never heard of that country or institution, please say so [The United States].”

<sup>8</sup> Since 1970, Eurobarometer has been irregularly asking, in slightly different formats, a question about trust in American people using slightly different wordings: “I would like to ask you, now some questions about the trust you have in different peoples of the world. I will give you the names of different peoples; will you tell me if you have a lot of trust in them, some trust, not so much trust, or no trust at all. You can answer with the help of this card [the Americans]? Or: “Now I would like to ask you about how much you would trust people from different countries. For each country please say whether, in your opinion they are in general very trustworthy, fairly trustworthy, not particularly trustworthy, or not at all

---

trustworthy? [Americans].” This question has been asked in Eurobarometer 6, 14, 17, and 25. In Eurobarometer 33 the question was: “Now I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in people from various countries. For each, please tell me whether you have a lot of trust of them, some trust, not very much trust or no trust at all? [Americans].”

<sup>9</sup> An exact comparison between the 1958 and 2002 versions is complicated by the fact that in the 2002 PEW survey the intermediate, stand-by, category of “Fair” was not offered. This inflates the number of those opposing and favoring somewhat the United States or the Americans.

<sup>10</sup> The question was worded as follows: “Now, I would like to ask about how much you would trust people from different countries. For each country please say whether in your opinion they are in general very trustworthy, fairly trustworthy, not particularly trustworthy or not at all trustworthy. [Americans, specify Americans from the United States].

<sup>11</sup> The question was: “What is your overall opinion of the United States? Do you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion?”

<sup>12</sup> “In general, how much confidence do you have in the ability of the US to deal responsibly with world problems? A great deal, a fair amount, not very much or none at all?”

<sup>13</sup> “All things considered, what do you think is better for [own country’s] national interest. To coordinate our foreign policy closely with the United States or to conduct our foreign policy without giving special consideration to the interests of the US?”

<sup>14</sup> “When the United States makes decisions which affect the security of [our country]. How much do you think it takes [our country’s] views into account? A great deal, a fair amount, a little, or not at all?”

<sup>15</sup> “On balance, do you think that US policies and actions during the past year have done more to promote peace or more to increase the risk of war?”

<sup>16</sup> Recently, there has been some expression of anti-American feelings among West-Europeans. How would you describe your own feelings? Strongly anti-American, somewhat anti-American, somewhat pro-American or strongly pro-American?”

<sup>17</sup> In the Eurobarometer 22 (October-November 1984) the feelings toward the United States and the anti-Americanism questions were posed again. The correlation among the two is, for the four countries pooled, of -0.604, significant at the 0.001 level for a two-tailed test.

<sup>18</sup> I first normalized the four series starting from the raw data in Figure 1 and then converting it into an index computed as 100 plus the percentage of those in favor of the United States minus the percentage of those opposed to the United States. I then standardized each score, using the mean average and standard deviation across the four series. These calculations were done for all the four series. As an example, in October 1954 the average percentage of those with a good opinion of the United States (very good plus good) were 59%, those with a bad or very bad opinion were 10 percent, the net favour was  $59-10=49 + 100=149$ .

<sup>19</sup> In figure 2 the 2003 data overlook this recovery being an yearly average of different surveys, but that it is there can be seen from the raw data in figure 1. Positive feelings go from a net average feeling of 47 down to -7 in February 2003, to the all time lowest -31 in March 2003 (the start of the Iraqi war) and then raising again and becoming positive already in April 2003.

<sup>20</sup> The data here discussed have been collected by Philip Everts and myself. I thank Phil Everts for allowing me to use these data. For a wider analyses of the consequence of 9/11 on attitudes toward the United States see Everts and Isernia ( 2002) [available at: <http://...>].

<sup>21</sup> A comparison of this question with the previous one, asked by Gallup in the same period, points out that an explicit reference to Al Qaeda and its leader Osama bin Laden does not apparently move public opinion in either direction.

<sup>22</sup> The question was worded as follows: “In any case [COUNTRY] is to take or has already taken decisions about which policy should be applied now. Among the following measures which ones seem appropriate to you ...? ... to send [NATIONALITY] troops to fight with the US forces.”

<sup>23</sup> In the United States, 48% of the public answered the US was “taking into account the interests of its allies” and 41% that they were “acting mainly on its own interests.”

<sup>24</sup> The question recited as follows “There has been some discussion about whether the US should use its troops to invade Iraq and overthrow the government of Saddam Hussein. Which of the following positions is closest to yours: The US should invade Iraq even if they have to do it alone, the US should only invade Iraq with UN approval and the support of its allies, or the US should not invade Iraq.”

<sup>25</sup> The question was worded as follows: “Do you think the war in Iraq was worth the loss of life and the other costs of attacking Iraq, or not?” Those who answered No were coded 1, those who don’t know 2 and those who answered Yes, it was worth the costs 3.

---

<sup>26</sup> For this second half of the sample the question was: “Do you think the war in Iraq *to liberate the Iraqi people* was worth the loss of life and the other costs of attacking Iraq or not?” For both groups 1 was not worth and 2 worth the costs.

<sup>27</sup> The question was in 2002: “How do you rate the George W. Bush administration’s handling of the following problems? Would you say the American administration's handling of [overall foreign policy] has been excellent, good, fair, or poor?” 1 excellent, 2 good, 3 fair, 4 poor. In 2003 and 2004 the question was “Do you approve or disapprove of the way the president of the United States George Bush is handling international policies? very much or somewhat?” 1 Approve very much, 2 Approve somewhat, 3 Disapprove somewhat, 4 Disapprove very much.

<sup>28</sup> It was measured in terms of years spent in education in 2004 while using formal degrees obtained in four classes in 2002 and 2003.

## References

- Abravanel, M. and B. Hughes (1973) “The Relationship between Public Opinion and Governmental Foreign Policy: *A Cross-National Study*.” In Patrick J. McGowan (ed.). *Sage International Yearbook of Foreign Policy Studies*. Vol.1, Beverly Hills/London, Sage, pp.107-134.
- Asmus Ronald, P. E. and P. Isernia (2004a) “Power, War and Public Opinion.” *Policy Review*. 123: February-March.
- Asmus Ronald, P. E. and P. Isernia (2004b) “*Across the Atlantic and the Political Aisle: The Double Divide in U.S.-European Relations*.” Paper [Available at <http://www.transatlantictrends.org>]
- Craveri, P. and G. Quagliariello (eds.) (2004) *L’Antiamericanismo in Italia e in Europa nel Secondo Dopoguerra*. Soneria Mannelli, Rubbettino.
- Crockatt, R. (2003) *America Embattled: 9/11, Anti-Americanism and the Global Order*. London, Routledge.
- Cunliffe, M. (1986) “The anatomy of anti-Americanism.” In Rob Kroes and Maarten van Rossem (eds.). *Anti-Americanism in Europe*. Amsterdam: Free University Press, pp. 20-36.
- D’Attorre, P.P. (ed.) (1991) *Nemici per la pelle. Sogno Americano e Mito Sovietico nell’Italia Contemporanea*. Milano: Angeli.
- Debouzy, M. (1996) “L’antiamericanismo nella stampa di sinistra francese, 1946-1954”, *Acoma. Rivista Internazionale di Studi Americani: Culture nella Guerra Fredda*, 3: 7, pp. 63-74.
- Defleur, M. L. and M.H. Defleur (2003) *Learning to Hate Americans: How U.S. Media Shape Negative Attitudes Among Teenagers in Twelve Countries*, Spokane WA: Marquette Books.

- 
- Diner, D. (1996) *America in the Eyes of the Germans: An Essay on Anti-Americanism*. Princeton: Markus Wiener Publ.
- Eichenberg, C. R. (1989) *Public Opinion and National Security in Western Europe*. London: MacMillan.
- Elwood, D.W. (1999). "Anti-Americanism in Western Europe: A Comparative Perspective", *Occasional Paper European Seminar Series*. N.3, Johns Hopkins University, Bologna Center.
- Everts, P. and P. Isernia (2005, forthcoming) "The Polls – trends: the war in Iraq." *Public Opinion Quarterly*. II.
- Fabbrini, S. (2002) 'The Domestic Sources of European Anti-Americanism'. *Government and Opposition*, 37, 1, pp. 3-14.
- Fabbrini, S. (2004) 'Layers of anti-Americanism: Americanization, American unilateralism and anti-Americanism in a European perspective'. *European Journal of American Culture*, 23, n. 2, p. 79-94.
- Flynn, H. G. and H. Rattinger (eds) (1985) *The Public and Atlantic Defense*. Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Allanheld.
- Haseler, S. (1985) *Varieties of Anti-Americanism: Reflex and Response*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Hollander, P. (1995) *Anti-Americanism: Irrational & Rational*. Transaction Pub.
- Hollander, P. (2004) *Understanding Anti-Americanism: its Origins and Impact at Home and Abroad*, Ivan R. Dee, Inc.
- Johnston, G. and L. Ray (2004) *Balancing Act? Anti-Americanism and Support for a Common European Foreign and Security Policy*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, New Orleans, January 7-10.
- Kagan, R. (2003) *Paradise & Power. America and Europe in the New World Order*. London, Atlantic Books.
- Kroes R. and M. van Rossem (eds.) (1986) *Anti-Americanism in Europe*. Amsterdam, Free University Press.
- Kuisel, R. (1993) *Seducing the French. The Dilemma of Americanization*. Nerkeley, CA: University of California Press.

- 
- Lacorne, D. et al. (1986) *L'Amérique dans les Têtes. Un Siècle de Fascination et d'Aversions*. Paris, Hachette.
- Larson, E. V., N. D. Levin, S. Bak and B. Savych (2004). *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korea Attitudes toward the U.S.* Rand Corporation, TR-141-SRF.
- Nye, J. S. jr (2004) *Soft Power. The Means of Success in World Politics*. New York, NY: Public Affairs.
- Pells, R. (1997) *Not Like Us. How Europeans have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture since World War II*. New York: NY: Basic Books.
- Rubinstein, A. Z. and D. E. Smith (eds) (1985) *Anti-Americanism in the Third World: Implications for U.S. Foreign Policy*. New York, NY: Praeger Publishers.
- Sardar, Z. and M. W. Davies (2002). *Why Do People Hate America*. Icon Books Ltd, Cambridge.
- Schattschneider, E.E. (1960) *The Semisovereign People. A Realist's View of Democracy in America*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Shirayev, E. (2000) *Anti-Americanism in Russia: From Stalin to Putin*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sloan, S. R. (2003) *NATO, The European Union, and the Atlantic Community*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Smith, S.K. and D.A. Wertman (1992) *US-West European Relations during the Reagan Years*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.
- Spiro, H. J. (1998) "Anti-Americanism in Western Europe." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Vol.497: 120-132.
- Strauss, D. (1978) *Menace in the West: The Rise of French Anti-Americanism in Modern Times*. Greenwood, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Tai, C.-S., E.J. Peterson and T. R.Gurr (1973) "Internal versus External Sources of Anti-Americanism: Two Comparative Studies." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 17: 3, pp.455-488.
- Teodori, M. (2002) *Maledetti Americani. Destra, sinistra e cattolici: storia del pregiudizio antiamericano*, Milano: Mondadori.
- Teodori, M. (2003) *Benedetti Americani. Dall'alleanza Atlantica alla guerra al terrorismo*, Milano : Mondadori.
- Toinet, M.-F. (1988) « French Pique and Piques Francaises." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Vol.497: 133-141.

---

Woodward, B. (2002) *Bush at War*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.