

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86491-6 - Rethinking Anti-Americanism: The History of an Exceptional Concept in American Foreign Relations

Max Paul Friedman

Excerpt

[More information](#)

## Introduction

### *The Myth of Anti-Americanism*

“Why Do They Dislike Us?” asked the *New York Times*. The year was 1913, the “they” were Canadians, and the *Times* thought it had the answer: “unreasoning animosity” and “jealousy.”<sup>1</sup> It was not the first time the paper tried to explain to its baffled readers why there was resentment abroad toward what many considered “the best country in the world.”<sup>2</sup> In 1899, the *Times* editorial “Why They Hate Us” asserted that foreign hostility lay in “envy” of our “political and social and industrial success.”<sup>3</sup> The question would be asked again and again in the course of the twentieth century, and each time, the riddle was solved with the reassuring proclamation of foreign vice and American virtue.

Flash forward a century to a moment of national anguish. The horrifying attacks of September 11 were unprecedented in this country. Less new were the questions that followed. “Why do they hate us?” asked President George W. Bush in an address to Congress, the nation, and the world. He immediately provided his own answer: “they hate our freedoms.”<sup>4</sup> This was followed by a wave of investigations – official, journalistic, and scholarly – into the distressing phenomenon of anti-Americanism. Since that calamitous day in 2001, more than 6000 newspaper articles have referred to “anti-Americanism.”<sup>5</sup> A sampling of their headlines reads “Why the World Loves to Hate America,” “Anti-Americanism Is One ‘Ism’ That Thrives,” “An Irrational Hatred,” “Hating America, Hating Humanity.”<sup>6</sup> The consensus that emerged largely reaffirmed what Americans have heard for a hundred years: foreigners are irrational and ill-informed about the best country in the world.

The twenty-first century has brought a new urgency to the need to understand anti-Americanism, but for the most part, recent discussion has brought repetitions of misconceptions that we do not realize are repetitions because we have lacked a history of the concept. Taking the term *anti-American* at face value, many have gone straight to asking why certain groups or individuals have resented or opposed the United States, finding the answer in psychopathology, malevolence, and ignorance, “an irrational dynamic . . . that springs from the

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86491-6 - Rethinking Anti-Americanism: The History of an Exceptional Concept in American Foreign Relations

Max Paul Friedman

Excerpt

[More information](#)

need of human beings to explain and reduce responsibility for the misfortunes in their lives.”<sup>7</sup> We learn that anti-Americanism is “entrenched in the world’s psyche” because foreigners resist modernity or dislike democracy.<sup>8</sup> We have not stopped to consider that the term itself is embedded in the American past, and that studying its history is essential to understanding its meaning – and to revealing the circular effect it has produced in constricting American thinking about the world. This book demonstrates how frequently the concept of “anti-Americanism” has produced analytical failures about conditions abroad, contributing to ineffective policy decisions that have in turn increased hostility toward the United States.

“Anti-Americanism” is a phrase so unusual, so exceptional, as to cry out for examination. We do not often speak of “anti-Germanism” or “anti-Mexicanism,” even though hostility and historical grievances exist against every nation. When other countries are resented or hated, we do not elevate that hatred to the level of an ideology, or seek its cause in deep-seated psychology, or in opposition to first principles like freedom and democracy. Of course there is plenty of disparagement of the United States to be found around the world – national prejudices are an international sport – but why has this been turned into an “ism” in the case of only one country? When foreigners made fun of Italy’s former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, Italians did not launch inquiries into the outbreak of anti-Italianism. When Brazilians clash with Argentines over water rights or regional leadership, they do not assume that the true cause of conflict must lie in anti-Brazilianism or anti-Argentinism. The few vaguely comparable locutions that do exist have developed out of totalitarian or imperialist ideology, giving Americans some strange linguistic bedfellows. Defenders of the British Empire turned to “Anglophobia” to explain why their civilizing mission somehow met with opposition from the colonized, whereas imperial Russia, “defender of the Slavs,” saw “Russophobia” among peoples who stubbornly resisted its iron rule. Nazis called their opponents *undeutsch*, or un-German, while dissidents in the USSR were accused of “anti-Sovietism” for deviating from sanctioned doctrine. “Power tends to confuse itself with virtue,” in the words of Senator J. William Fulbright, making opposition to power a perplexing phenomenon to those exercising it.<sup>9</sup> That a democracy would take up the language of empire is a sign that something needs explaining.

We Americans are not accustomed to thinking of our country as another in a long line of empires, and it does differ in important ways from the empires of the past. Yet we have developed in “anti-Americanism” a word as transcendent as our nation’s sense of mission, assuming that it is the goodness inherent in America that inexplicably encounters resistance abroad. This book differs from all other studies of anti-Americanism by investigating the concept itself: how it developed, which meanings it has acquired over time, and what function it has served in American politics and foreign policy. The surprising discovery is that our thinking about anti-Americanism has repeatedly led to mistaken interpretations of the behavior of people and states, with results that were not in America’s own interest. Rather than asking “Why do they hate us? Why is

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86491-6 - Rethinking Anti-Americanism: The History of an Exceptional Concept in American Foreign Relations

Max Paul Friedman

Excerpt

[More information](#)*Introduction*

3

there so much anti-Americanism?" we may begin by asking, "Why this unique concept for America? And what has it done to us and to our relations with the world?"

**The Myth**

Myth-making and stereotypes have been the stock-in-trade of "anti-Americans" across the centuries, from the claim of eighteenth-century degeneracy theorists Cornelius de Pauw and the Comte de Buffon that America's inhospitable climate must inevitably stunt the growth of its people and animals to the post-2001 rumor that the attacks of September 11 were a Bush administration conspiracy. Such "anti-American myths" have been thoroughly dissected by a growing cohort of committed defenders who have come to be known as the "anti-anti-Americans."<sup>10</sup> Their torchbearer is Paul Hollander, a refugee from Hungary who settled into a long academic career in the United States.<sup>11</sup> Hollander joins other scholars who think that opposition to the United States is a symptom of psychological or moral weakness. "Primordial emotions such as envy, resentment, and self-loathing," writes Victor Davis Hanson, "explain why the world's elites damn Americans for who they are and what they represent rather than what they actually do."<sup>12</sup> Because "the United States sets a higher moral standard," asserts Russell Berman, "anti-Americanism is the expression of a desire to avoid the moral order."<sup>13</sup>

Other anti-anti-American scholars have compiled lengthy accounts of foreigners who have written or said mean-spirited and often absurd things about America and Americans, depicting a rogues' gallery of notorious "anti-Americans," and convincingly demonstrating that there has been a great deal of biased sentiment directed at this country over the years.<sup>14</sup> This book does not repeat their labors. Rather than cataloguing the recurrent themes in anti-American myths, the chapters that follow address what I call the myth of anti-Americanism: the conviction that criticism the United States encounters at home is produced by disloyal citizens, and opposition it meets abroad springs principally from malevolence, anti-democratic sentiment, or psychological pathologies among foreigners.

Myths are stories we tell ourselves to explain the world's workings and to give meaning to events. Anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss used the word *myth* not as a synonym for falsehood but to mean a story that, together with other stories, provides the basis of what a culture believes to be true.<sup>15</sup> He noticed, among other things, that myths tend to divide the world into binary opposites: good versus evil or insider versus outsider. Roland Barthes, whose ideas influenced Philippe Roger's exemplary study of French anti-Americanism, argued that myths are "naturalized" through frequency of repetition by a process of "sedimentation" until they are taken for granted as common sense (*doxa*).<sup>16</sup> The process has important political implications, because myths that achieve the level of self-evident truth can sustain political orthodoxy and exclude alternative views without having to be proved or defended.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86491-6 - Rethinking Anti-Americanism: The History of an Exceptional Concept in American Foreign Relations

Max Paul Friedman

Excerpt

[More information](#)

To say that there is a myth of anti-Americanism is not to say that anti-American sentiment does not exist. Blanket prejudice plays a distorting role in international affairs, by depriving its practitioners of a sober assessment of another country's intentions and behavior. When some foreign leaders explain U.S. policies by saying Americans are power-mad or godless materialists, they choose simplifying stereotypes no more useful than to say that Italians are disorganized, or Germans are rigid, or Asians are inscrutable. When some protestors see the endlessly complex phenomena that fall under the rubric of globalization as nothing but an American plot, or when they ascribe all unwelcome political change in their own countries to a superhuman Central Intelligence Agency as if it were the only actor on the international stage, they mislead themselves and undermine their own effectiveness in opposing policies to which they object.

If anti-American myths have offered some foreigners an unproductive way to explain the relative decline of their own societies in the face of growing American power, the myth of anti-Americanism has also had a damaging effect. In the United States, it has worked its own logic in a comparable process of sedimentation through repetition, and it now risks hardening into a scholarly consensus that has had profound and regrettable effects on policy makers and the American public. I have undertaken to write this book because those who are unaware of the history of the term – who, for example, erroneously believe that it originated in 1901, off by more than a hundred years – contribute to its proliferation as an explanatory category even though it does less to illuminate than to obscure.

The main function of the myth of anti-Americanism in the United States, and the central concern of this book, has been the constriction of political discourse about U.S. society and especially about U.S. foreign relations, as the concept stands between American policy makers and their ability to draw upon potentially useful information from abroad, or to improve their policies by knowing more about the world for which the policies are made. One recent example should make this clear.

In 2002, France's President Jacques Chirac warned the United States against invading Iraq, basing his advice in part on French – and his own – experience fighting in Algeria. The reaction was fierce and swift: Americans launched a boycott of French goods, burned French flags, and poured French wine down the drain. The Congressional cafeteria revised its menu to offer Freedom Fries and Freedom Dressing. Members of Congress gave speeches saying the bodies of dead American soldiers buried in Normandy should be dug up and brought home, because French soil was no longer fit to be the last resting place of American heroes. Meanwhile, the largest worldwide demonstration in the history of humankind saw millions of people around the globe urge the United States not to begin a war whose necessity was hotly contested. Ignoring this outpouring of “anti-Americanism,” most Americans united behind their president's decision as he ordered U.S. troops to march off into the worst American foreign policy debacle of the early twenty-first century.<sup>17</sup>

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86491-6 - Rethinking Anti-Americanism: The History of an Exceptional Concept in American Foreign Relations

Max Paul Friedman

Excerpt

[More information](#)*Introduction*

5

To an historian, the episode was eerily familiar. In the 1960s, France's President Charles de Gaulle warned the United States against military intervention in Vietnam, basing his advice in part on French experience fighting in Indochina, predicting that a war would last ten years and end in American defeat. When he continued to speak against the war and opposed other U.S. policies, Americans launched a boycott of French goods, burned French flags, and poured French wine down the drain. Members of Congress gave speeches saying the bodies of dead American soldiers buried in Normandy should be dug up and brought home, because French soil was no longer fit to be the last resting place of American heroes. Antiwar demonstrations around the world were labeled anti-American events. Government officials pronounced de Gaulle's "anti-Americanism" to be "a compulsive obsession" and ordered U.S. troops to march off into the worst American foreign policy debacle of the twentieth century.<sup>18</sup>

Decades later, a remorseful Defense Secretary Robert McNamara lamented that he had not paid more attention to de Gaulle's warnings, just as many Americans have come to rue the decision to invade and occupy Iraq.<sup>19</sup> The French have no monopoly on wisdom; each French president had an ambitious agenda of promoting France's interests, sometimes in competition with American ones. But the belief that French policies were driven chiefly by "anti-Americanism," rather than coming from French perspectives that should be judged on their merits, precluded a sober assessment of alternatives.

**Definitions**

This function of the myth of anti-Americanism – its ability to seriously mislead those who employ it – has been neglected in the scholarly literature and is largely absent from discussion in government and the media. The term *anti-Americanism* is variously defined as an ideology, a cultural prejudice, a form of resistance, a threat, or as opposition to democracy, the rejection of modernity, or neurotic envy of American success.<sup>20</sup> Most scholars agree that criticism of the United States in itself is not necessarily anti-Americanism, and they specify that at least two elements are necessary to make it so: *particularized* hostility toward the United States (more than toward other countries), and *generalized* hatred of the United States (in most if not all its aspects). Foreigners move from criticism to anti-Americanism when they are unfairly selective in focusing on the deficiencies of the United States instead of other societies, especially their own: they become "obsessive."<sup>21</sup> Theirs must be a totalizing view: "Anti-Americanism is a systematic opposition to America as a whole," says Ivan Krastev.<sup>22</sup> It implies "an across-the-board abhorrence of American politics, culture and people," writes Brendon O'Connor.<sup>23</sup> Anti-Americanism is a "rejection of America as a totality," says Peter Krause; "a generalized and comprehensive normative dislike of America and things American," says Andrei Markovits.<sup>24</sup> Barry Rubin and Judith Colp Rubin assert that anti-Americanism

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86491-6 - Rethinking Anti-Americanism: The History of an Exceptional Concept in American Foreign Relations

Max Paul Friedman

Excerpt

[More information](#)

views the United States as “completely and inevitably evil.”<sup>25</sup> The twin requirements of particularized and generalized hatred of the United States – hating the country more than any other, and hating everything about it – have the appeal of consistency and would warrant classifying anti-Americanism as both ideology and prejudice.

If we accept this definition, however, there will be few portraits left hanging on the walls of the rogues’ gallery. For it is the rare critic of the United States who is not also a critic of his or her own society, aside from state-employed ideologues and far-right national chauvinists. The most frequently cited “anti-Americans” saw both the mote in their neighbor’s eye and the beam in their own. The philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, often depicted as the preeminent anti-American in France, was an early critic of French complicity in the Holocaust at a time when his compatriots preferred to pretend that the whole nation had resisted the Nazis. He also spoke fervently against French control of Indochina and Algeria and attacked French and American racism alike.<sup>26</sup> The leading Mexican writer Carlos Fuentes, labeled “anti-American” by the State Department, grew prominent through decades of social criticism and frequent denunciations of Mexico’s state repression and corruption.<sup>27</sup> Among the best-known postwar German intellectuals routinely dubbed “anti-American,” Heinrich Böll, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Günter Grass, and others may have criticized U.S. military actions, but all of them spent far more time and ink criticizing aspects of their own society that they saw as undemocratic or inhumane, from the reintegration of former Nazis into the West German government to the turn to violence by the radical fringe of the student movement.<sup>28</sup> All of these figures praised aspects of American society that they approved of or admired. To analyze their thinking as obsessive anti-Americanism reverses the process actually at work: their criticism of the United States was an effect, not a cause, of their beliefs, which were diverse and evolving (and debatable) but stemmed from an intense commitment to engagement with the problems of their own societies.

There have been attempts to develop a less partisan application of the term. Some scholars have understood “anti-Americanism” as a synonym for opposition to U.S. power. In his sophisticated research on U.S.–Latin American relations, Alan McPherson uses “anti-Americanism” to describe “a collection of mass-based anti-U.S. strategies . . . an idealistic but confused resistance to idealistic but confused U.S. foreign policies.”<sup>29</sup> This is a sensible definition in the context of his scholarship, as is Richard Kuisel’s use of “anti-Americanism” to describe French cultural defensiveness, but public discourse and officialdom have been immune to the more careful usage in these academic texts.<sup>30</sup> The term has not shed the powerful pejorative connotations it acquired over two centuries of use as an epithet suggesting irrational prejudice and illegitimate slander.

Having read various thoughtful definitions of anti-Americanism, I have chosen not to argue for the superiority of one or another formula but to historicize the problem by taking a cue from Quentin Skinner, J.G.A. Pocock, and

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86491-6 - Rethinking Anti-Americanism: The History of an Exceptional Concept in American Foreign Relations

Max Paul Friedman

Excerpt

[More information](#)*Introduction*

7

Reinhardt Koselleck, early proponents of speech-act theory and the history of concepts, who urged scholars 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.<sup>31</sup> This book therefore traces how the term “anti-Americanism” has been used historically and how it has come to have a specific and, in my view, pernicious form of discursive power. Its effect may be the inevitable consequence of an abiding faith in American exceptionalism, the belief that the United States is intrinsically superior to other countries. If the United States is a city upon a hill, a model to the world, and its actions intended to spread the benefits of freedom and democracy, then to oppose it must be irrational or nefarious.<sup>32</sup> If the American way represents progress – indeed, as modernization theory in the 1950s and 1960s and neoliberalism in the 1990s and early 2000s argued, it is the only route to progress – then to oppose the United States must be perverse: in the view of modernization theorist Lucian Pye, anti-Americanism emerged from “a constellation of psychological insecurities and inhibitions.”<sup>33</sup> As long as American exceptionalism is central to the American creed, a belief in anti-Americanism as the motor behind foreign opposition is the logical corollary to that exceptionalist stance.

**“Anti-American” Americans**

If American nationalists look abroad and see a worrisome tide of anti-Americanism posing a threat to their survival, criticism from their fellow Americans seems even more sinister, a stab in the back by treasonous compatriots. This is the main argument of Paul Hollander’s influential jeremiad against an “adversary culture” he sees undermining America from within. To judge from his examples, all sorts of Americans exhibit anti-Americanism: environmentalists, feminists, voters who supported a black presidential candidate, Catholic advocates for the poor, even supporters of rights for the disabled.<sup>34</sup>

Hollander’s vision of an authentic, harmonious America rallying around politically conservative ideas is perhaps more sharply drawn than that of other anti-anti-Americans, but it exemplifies a tendency among those most outraged over anti-Americanism to eliminate from their idea of America so much of what is characteristic of the place. The United States is notable above all for its extraordinary diversity – its population drawn from around the world, its polity founded on a tradition of dissent. This truth does not sit well with some of America’s self-appointed defenders, which is why they sometimes find themselves in the ironic position of identifying criticism of authority at home with rejection of the idea of America, when the idea of America began with a challenge to authority. As for foreigners, they must never speak a discouraging word. Thus we encounter the curious effect of seeing European and Latin American writers labeled “anti-American” for calling attention to the mistreatment of African Americans, as if it could not be pro-American to defend the rights of Americans when those Americans are black. Students in Paris, Frankfurt, or Mexico City are called “anti-American demonstrators” when they put



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86491-6 - Rethinking Anti-Americanism: The History of an Exceptional Concept in American Foreign Relations

Max Paul Friedman

Excerpt

[More information](#)

into practice ideas and tactics knowingly borrowed from an American tradition running from Henry David Thoreau to Martin Luther King, Jr.<sup>35</sup> Members of Congress have gone so far as to call Dr. King, whom the country honors each year with a national holiday and whose statue on the National Mall is larger than Lincoln's, "anti-American." That vision of true Americanism is a narrow one indeed.<sup>36</sup>

Some scholars join George W. Bush in asserting that behind critical utterances about America lies a deeper hostility toward freedom. Jean-François Revel calls anti-Americanism "hatred of democracy."<sup>37</sup> Stephen Haseler says anti-American criticisms are "criticisms of democracy itself."<sup>38</sup> Dan Diner argues that German attitudes toward America are a litmus test for whether Germany belongs to "'Western' civilization based on the foundation of individual freedom and democracy."<sup>39</sup> We do have examples of anti-democratic hostility directed against the United States, especially from nineteenth-century monarchists, twentieth-century fascists and state communists, and twenty-first-century followers of al-Qaeda. But much of what winds up catalogued as anti-Americanism is the opposite of anti-democratic. Heinrich Heine, whose sarcastic comments about America appear in many books on anti-Americanism, dedicated himself to the movement for democracy in Europe and paid for it with half a lifetime spent in French exile. When Latin Americans seeking social and political progress were thwarted by direct U.S. military intervention in their countries or indirect U.S. support for anti-democratic regimes, they wanted more of the democracy the United States champions, not less.<sup>40</sup> Majorities of the same Middle Eastern publics who tell pollsters that they do not like the United States also say that they favor democracy.<sup>41</sup> These are not disagreements over first principles, but over how best to bring them to fulfillment.

### America as a Concept

Those quick to condemn "anti-Americanism" abroad often have in mind a particular meaning of "Americanism" that represents freedom, democracy, and progress. But there is no consensus on what Americanism is, because "America" as a concept is not stable. Even before the founding of the United States, "America" was a contested place in the European imagination, representing to some an earthly space for the mythical paradise in the West: the Elysian Fields, Eden, Atlantis. Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516) and Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627) were set in the New World.<sup>42</sup> But to others, it was a dystopia. After 1776, aristocrats looked with horror upon a political system that they believed was based on mob rule, whereas true democrats might find inspiration there even as they condemned a version of human freedom that allowed for human slavery. In the later nineteenth century, both left and right cast America as a materialistic Mammon, an industrial Moloch whose machinery would crush spiritual or communal values, the exemplar and source of much that was wrong with the modern world. These tropes appear in travel literature, political commentary, and fiction, and they proved remarkably enduring – in part because



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86491-6 - Rethinking Anti-Americanism: The History of an Exceptional Concept in American Foreign Relations

Max Paul Friedman

Excerpt

[More information](#)*Introduction*

9

they drew upon observable aspects of U.S. society. In the twentieth century, the left also deplored the power of finance capital, the Taylorist regimentation of labor, and military adventurism abroad. The right abhorred what it saw as the tendency toward social leveling, a mass culture that appealed to plebian tastes, an emasculated male population lacking a martial tradition and dominated by women who, in gaining political power, had lost their femininity. Above all, rightists recoiled at what they saw as rampant racial mixing in a country whose vulgar music (jazz) was black and whose economic power (Wall Street) was in Jewish hands.<sup>43</sup> In Latin America, the appropriation of the term *America* itself by the northern half of the hemisphere was contested. José Martí wrote defiantly of *Nuestra América*, “our America.” In 1901, José Enrique Rodó drew on Shakespeare’s *Tempest* when he wrote the most popular book of his era, comparing South America to a spiritual Ariel, guardian of Mediterranean culture, who challenges the soulless, materialistic Caliban of the North.<sup>44</sup> Most important, to the apprehensive critics America represented the likely future for their own societies, a prospect that was a source of hope when positive aspects were stressed, but not for those who saw American society taking the shape of their own fears. These symbolic meanings of America overlapped in complex ways, as Figure 1 demonstrates.

That America looms large in discussions abroad reflects its role as a site for the projection of ideas, a dream factory long before the establishment of Hollywood. For two centuries, “America” has often served in other countries as a symbol in internal political disputes about capitalism, technology, urbanization, immigration, gender roles, youth culture, and other issues in societies undergoing change, especially when they are destabilized by the industrializing process. As the first modern democratic republic and an early industrializer, America could seem to be blazing a path for other societies to follow, and so discourse about the United States often represents a position in a debate about one’s own world and how it should change.<sup>45</sup> This was true in the nineteenth century, and it is still true today, as arguments over social policy and government regulation are often articulated for or against “the American model” or “American conditions” – *amerikanische Verhältnisse, condizione americane, el modelo norteamericano, le modèle anglo-saxon*. (The French phrase combines the British and American models into one, thereby conflating two countries divided by a common tongue but often united by shared ideas on political economy – and simultaneously transferring the accumulated baggage of a thousand-year rivalry with the British onto their descendants across the Pond.)

These debates are principally about the relationship of the government to the market and to private life, using America as shorthand. “American conditions” usually refers to low taxes, weak labor unions, lightly regulated corporations, market-based health care and education, and so on, in the way that “Rhenish capitalism” or “Scandinavian socialism” can be shorthand for other models that involve more government intervention to guide development and protect workers, families, and the environment. In other words, “America” has

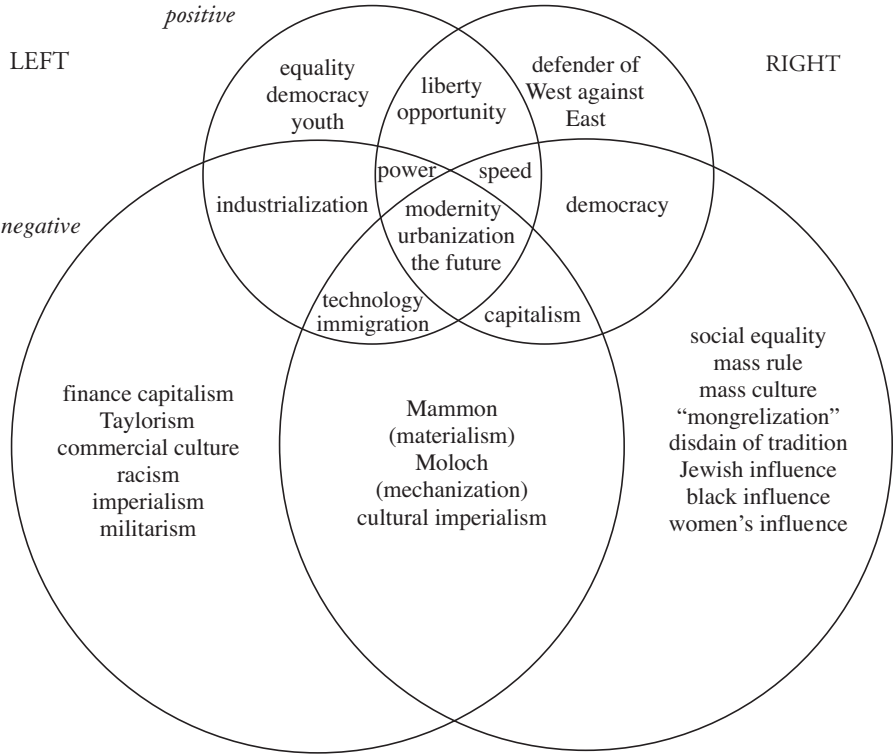


FIGURE 1. America as a concept. Here I use a Venn diagram to illustrate the overlapping attributes associated with the United States as they are viewed positively or negatively – or ambivalently – by left and right abroad. Because “America” and “Americanism” can have such diverse meanings, there is no necessary correlation between a given principle and a “pro-American” or “anti-American” stance, nor is approval of American policy or social attributes necessarily an indicator of a democratic or progressive orientation.

polyvalent meanings, and its appearance in political or cultural debates abroad is not necessarily a sign that anti-democratic anti-Americanism is at work, any more than praise for American ways is a reliable indicator of a fundamental pro-democratic position.

The anti-anti-Americans noted this function of America as a symbol in foreign debates. “A large portion of all critiques of the United States and American society are as much critiques of modernity as they are of American foreign policy or economic rapaciousness,” writes Hollander.<sup>46</sup> Indeed, the conflation of modernity with the United States makes some sense, because the United States underwent most of these developments earlier or more substantially or visibly than other countries, and the U.S. government often promoted policies that provided incentives or exerted pressures on other countries to follow suit.

The equivalence claim in the modernity thesis – the United States is modern; ergo, anti-Americanism stems from opposition to modernity – is where the