



The Force of American Modernity: World War II and the Birth of a Soft Power Superpower

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Abstract

As the result of a wide debate in the US during WWII on the causes of that war, the American governing class decided that the best way to avoid yet another conflict was to export the American understanding of the link between economic progress under capitalism and the survival of liberal democracy. The Marshall Plan was the fullest expression of this world-view, launching the era of productivity and growth in Europe. But this project, renewed ideologically in the era of ‘globalisation’, began to meet increased resistance by the 1990s, as societies everywhere looked at its effects on their traditional conceptions of modernity, sovereignty and identity. While American capitalism continued to propose innovations large and small, in Europe and elsewhere their disruptive effects could set off intense political conflict. The classic example is the Uber car-sharing company.

Keywords: American Century, change and modernity, economic democracy, globalisation, growth and productivity, soft power

Premises

We are told on all sides that the ‘liberal’ international order born during and after World War II, apparently reconfirmed by the end of the Cold War, is now in crisis, undermined by globalization, and above all, by the

contemporary reaction of those who are presumed to be the losers from globalization.¹ According to a *Project Syndicate* summary of April 2017, former Spanish Foreign Minister Ana Palacio believes that the world is now awaiting ‘a very different international model that has yet to emerge – one that will be distinct from both the nineteenth century’s “balance of power” and the twentieth century’s “community of states”’.² In this view America is a declining power, no longer competitive economically; deeply divided politically, economically, socially, ideologically; unable and – under Trump – unwilling to provide the moral and strategic leadership the West desperately needs in the contemporary chaos.³

But a more detached view can see that living in the American Century has not just been about the Cold War, NATO, crisis management, the rule of the dollar, trade liberalization, Russia, China, Islam and so on. It has also been about confronting and dealing with America’s historically unique ability to generate and deploy models of change and innovation, and to identify them as modernity: showing the world, society, the individual, possible ways to advance for the better, however defined. Such models offer what the sociologist Peter Wagner, in his essay on *Modernity*, calls ‘the interpretative and practical power of (their) normativity and functionality’; in other words – those of his colleague Gerard Delanty – their ‘normative salience’, the disruptive setting of new standards.⁴

The way an upstart company like Uber pushes its ‘normative salience’ is just what long-established firms in the taxi sector fear most. Their highly political struggle against Uber in much of Europe would seem to confirm the judgment on the Old World pronounced recently by the head of Google in Europe: that too many of the continent’s institutions are dedicated to ‘protecting the past from the future’.⁵ The parallel stories of Uber and Google are classic cases of American involvement – conscious and unconscious, willing and unwilling, friendly and menacing – in the politics of change in Europe, one of a long, long line, whose evolution I attempted to trace in *The Shock of America*.⁶

This is not a particularly fashionable approach in today’s historiography, as any H-Net search will confirm.⁷ But as Alvin Toffler put it on page one of his 1971 classic of applied sociology, *Future Shock*: change is the process by which the future invades our lives, and it is important to look at it closely, not merely from the grand perspectives of history, but also from the vantage point of the living, breathing individuals who experience it.⁸

While we may leave to journalists the vantage points of living, breathing individuals,⁹ here it is my professional duty to provide a perspective of history. Let us now go back to the announcement of ‘the American Century’.

From February 1941 to the Marshall Plan

As is well-known, a different America emerged silently from the chaos and misery of the 1930s, a consensus that the time had come for a new kind of assertion of American power. This would not be military or commercial or financial, but it would be visionary, offering a plan to reform the world more ambitious than anything Woodrow Wilson had ever dreamed of. When Luce’s *American Century* article appeared in February 1941, it announced a quite new determination to bring America’s solutions to benighted peoples everywhere, so that they might transform their living standards, their faith in the future and their belief in America.¹⁰

Behind this startling act of ideological and moral projection, there lay a long intellectual maturation process, involving the great foundations, thinkers in universities and analysts in newspapers as well as experts across business and government. This élite had built up a comprehensive diagnosis of the world’s ills – and Europe’s in particular – and had identified in America’s experience of the connection between liberal democracy and capitalist economic progress a series of lessons which, they felt, all might emulate. In the blazing successes of the New York and San Francisco World’s Fairs of 1939–1940, nations across the world were invited to contemplate exactly what these lessons were. Just as Europe plunged into the near-death experience of Hitler’s war, here was the mass communications, civic and business leadership of the United States daring to organise a pair of immense shows of national pride, dedicated to no less a theme than ‘Building the World of Tomorrow’. Compared to the American cities of the future portrayed here, with their opulent suburbs, freeways, airports, phone systems and television for all, the majority of the European shows by contrast looked static and rooted in the past.¹¹

The New York World’s Fair suggested implicitly that democratic progress in the contemporary world meant giving the masses access to

the fruits of technological progress. Some commentators took up this message to declare that this was precisely the point where Europe's traditional governing classes had failed, and where the totalitarians would find their mass support: not simply in war, misery and dislocation, but in the revolution of rising expectations which, unwittingly, mass democracy, mass production and mass communication had unleashed since the Great War. In 1939 Vera Micheles Dean, journalist, political scientist and international relations expert, wrote that what Nazism and Communism represented was 'an effort to realize the promises held out by the political democracy of the nineteenth century, which the possessing classes had too often failed to translate into terms of economic democracy in an age of mass production'.¹²

This was the key American perception and understanding of the roots of the world wars, of the great depression, of totalitarianism, which fed the determination of that nation's government to place the peace of the world on a different, non-European footing. By the time America entered the war, the world knew what that foundation would look like: the plans were already in place.

Just seven weeks after December 1941, one of Roosevelt's most ardent journalistic admirers, Anne O'Hare McCormick, interviewed the President on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday. She found a man who wanted to be 'the peace leader':

(...) how he would enjoy reconstructing the world! His eye lights up when he turns for a moment from the dreary planning for war to speak of a world without passports, of a Europe with federalized public services, of the ever-normal granary on a world scale, of international control of rubber and other essential raw materials, of a world police force (...).¹³

By the time Roosevelt left for the Yalta conference three years later, he had gone far to show that these had been much more than flights of fantasy. His latest urgent message to Congress sought approval for another of his comprehensive plans of American action for the peace. At the top of the list was a request for rapid approval of the Bretton Woods agreements. Roosevelt used the occasion to demand also:

The establishment of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, broadening and strengthening of the Trade Agreements Act of 1934,

international agreement for the reduction of trade barriers, the control of cartels and the orderly marketing of world surpluses of certain commodities, a revision of the Export-Import Bank, and an international oil agreement, as well as proposals in the field of civil aviation, shipping and radio and wire communications.¹⁴

Since 1941, with the Four Freedoms, the Lend-Lease Act and the Atlantic Charter, the three great criteria for the American construction of the post-war world had been clear for all to see: collective security redefined, multilateral free trade and raising living standards everywhere. This latter promise would, in theory at least, not just to cut the material ground from under the feet of would-be dictators, but show how all could enjoy the fruits of prosperity on display in the United States. The great wartime conferences in America which dealt with food, labour, money and civil aviation, crowned by the creation of the United Nations, were Roosevelt's method for turning these aspirations into functioning institutions.¹⁵

It seems impossible to convince the hundreds of scholars who have studied the American origins of the Cold War that Roosevelt and his followers were not only not interested in geopolitics but were convinced that their methods – overwhelmingly emphasizing economics and the New Deal precedent – would leave geopolitics far behind.¹⁶

The Marshall Plan expressed the supreme demonstration of this outlook. Nowhere more clearly than there can one see the force of American convictions concerning the link between economic growth and democratic stability. In 1948, as Communism loomed in much of Western Europe, and just as the Marshall Plan was beginning, Cordell Hull published his memoirs. There we can read his judgment on the roots of the disasters of the preceding decades:

A people driven to desperation by unemployment, want, and misery, is a constant threat of disorder and chaos, both internal and external. It falls an easy prey to dictators and desperadoes. In so far as we make it easier for ourselves and everyone else to live, we diminish the pressure on any country to seek economic betterment through war. The basic approach to the problem of peace is the ordering of the world's economic life so that the masses of the people can work and live in reasonable comfort.¹⁷

His later successor, Dean Acheson, had this to say when explaining the Truman Doctrine of military help for Greece and Turkey to an ordinary American crowd in 1947: 'Not only do human beings exist in narrow economic margins, but also human dignity, human freedom and democratic institutions. It is one of the principal aims of our foreign policy today to use our economic and financial resources to widen those margins'.¹⁸ But what made the Marshall Plan special was the enormous effort it made into teaching the Europeans through a vast array of information and propaganda efforts just how the link between economic progress and democratic stability worked, and how it could be emulated by those willing to work for an American standard of living. As I wrote some time ago, the implied message of the Marshall Plan was 'You Too Can Be Like Us' (or as we imagine ourselves to be). But it was a conditional promise. It would work only if the peoples of western Europe and their leaders followed the Plan's two great policy prescriptions: ever higher productivity across every sector of national economies, and ever greater economic integration between them.¹⁹

These of course were unprecedented challenges to established European ways of doing things, and produced far more friction than is ever suggested by the golden haze of myth which still surrounds the Marshall Plan. The politics of productivity in Europe were full of conflict, and not just of the variety supplied by the Communist and Socialist Left, whose suspicions went well beyond those dictated by the party line. Specialists have long demonstrated how much diffidence those Marshall Plan propositions provoked, ranging from the industrialists in Italy who thought that the American mass-production-for-mass-consumption model would only encourage the workers, to that textile manufacturer in Lyons who when asked by a US technocrat, 'Wouldn't you like to make more money?', replied 'No. Not particularly'.²⁰

It was to people like him that Plan's great agent in France, Jean Monnet, spoke when he said:

We are in a world undergoing a total transformation. You can no longer think of the future in the context of the past. We Europeans are still haunted by past notions of security and stability. Today the principle idea is that of expansion. That is what is happening in the United States. They are always ready to evolve and search out progress.

So the Frenchman should take on ‘the psychology of an American (...) the disposition to change constantly’.²¹ This was 1949, when a great battle over Hollywood’s presence in the French film market was in full swing, with militant nationalists on right and left all engaged. As Richard Kuisel has shown, it was also the time when a much smaller, but no less eloquent battle was going on between the French producers of wine and traditional soft drinks, and those who wanted to import Coca-Cola into France for the first time. The intensity of these conflicts was due to their engaging an enfeebled nation in three of its most significant areas of susceptibility: sovereignty, identity and modernity.²² As we shall see, these great battlegrounds of normative salience between America and Europe are still with us.

From the Era of Growth to the World of Globalization

When that Marshall Plan offshoot, the Organisation of European Economic Cooperation, came to write its seventh report, at the beginning of 1956, it confirmed that ‘a new phase of post-war economic development’ was under way, with total output ‘on a sharply rising trend’ for the third consecutive year. But by far the most portentous novelty in the report’s text was the use of new words to describe and characterise the processes unfolding. Alongside ‘upsurge’, ‘expansion’, ‘development’ and ‘prosperity’, there now appeared the phrase ‘economic growth’.²³ In the remainder of the decade, as the ‘miracle’ of consumer durables surged forth in western Europe, this word ‘growth’ – and its associated numbers of gross national product (GNP), gross domestic product (GDP), unit costs per capita/per hour and all the rest²⁴ – came to sum up the newness of the era and to dominate the objectives of economic policy, if not of all policy, for governing classes throughout the Old World. Finally, it seemed, the West Europeans had learned how to organise for themselves ‘built-in, automatic, incremental economic growth extending indefinitely into the future’. A common narrative of material progress began to unite its beneficiaries on both sides of the Atlantic. As progress was redefined in economic consumerist terms, and the very bases of democratic legitimacy shifted, politics began to adapt.²⁵

But there were always sceptics, as well as a mass of minorities left on the margins. The wide ranging arguments about ‘Americanization’

in the 1950s reflected an awareness that the ability of the Americans to project their way of life, or at the very least to render it so easily accessible, expressed soft powers more challenging than the variety bought by their dollars or manipulated by their national security state. On that side of the Atlantic creative energies were at work which were far more dynamic and appealing than those which had built the welfare state after the war in Western Europe. What the U.S. now displayed to greater effect than ever before was its capacity to invent, produce and distribute popular culture on an unrivalled, industrial scale. This gave America a potential for influence almost wholly lacking in the Old World at the time, and one which brought back old worries to its governing élites, but now with a new intensity.

The editor of *Esprit*, the review of the socially engaged Catholic intellectuals in France, noted in 1960:

Ten years ago we could still look down on the snack bars, the supermarkets, the striptease houses, and the entire acquisitive society. Now all that has more or less taken hold in Europe. This society is not yet ours, but it – or one that resembles it – could be our children's. The United States is a laboratory exhibiting life forms into which we have entered whether we like it or not.²⁶

Reflections of this sort, and their political equivalents, accompanied the birth of commercial television in Britain, the development of supermarkets in Italy as Victoria de Grazia has shown, the spread of McDonald's worldwide, and of course the swelling, pulsating of youth culture everywhere. Patterns of resistance first established when Hollywood arrived in the 1920s reasserted themselves, and have proved extraordinarily enduring over time. In late 2016 prelates in the Vatican still objected to the planned arrival of a new McDonalds and a Hard Rock Café near the Holy See, denouncing their vulgarity, commercialism and threat to traditional Roman cuisine.²⁷

I believe that the 1990s were the era in recent time when a new consciousness of the stakes in these issues began to spread, guaranteeing the success and future development of the 'soft power' formula launched by the Harvard international relations expert, Joseph Nye, in his 1990 book *Bound to Lead*.²⁸ This was an era much like the 1920s seen from America's point of view, with a booming economy, a vast

new range of consumer innovations coming from Silicon Valley, a swelling ideology of free markets and cheap credit, and the stars and fashions to go with them. It was the time of CNN and EuroDisney, of the ‘Washington Consensus’ and the World Trade Organisation, of Internet, Silicon Valley and Windows 1995. Bill Clinton’s Presidency seemed to offer a new model for centre-left governments across the West. In 1998 the World Economic Forum in Davos was ‘dominated by the US’, said the press, and Hillary Clinton, ‘the first lady of the world’, was identified as ‘the real star of the show’.²⁹

But almost all these developments provoked controversy everywhere and opened up new divisions within Europe, as well as between Europe and the US. The dominant ‘globalize or die’ ideology – I quote Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times* – meant liberalize, privatize, financialize, commercialize. As such it provoked turmoil in the politics of change everywhere, and vast efforts in Europe to contain it. Two 1990s episodes are worth mentioning, as their consequences are still with us.

The birth of the WTO came after a bitter transatlantic confrontation on the liberalization of film and TV markets in Europe, with the French leading the way in insisting that, as President François Mitterand put it:

Creations of the spirit are not just commodities; the elements of culture are not pure business. Defending the pluralism of works of art and the freedom of the public to choose is a duty. What is at stake is the cultural identity of all our nations. It is the right of all peoples to their own culture. It is the freedom to create our own images.³⁰

Eventually the two sides agreed to disagree, and European nations have maintained their tight controls over their various film and TV markets.³¹ What is more, that sector has been excluded from the draft provisions of TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Pact), just as it was under the old treaties of GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, 1946). But there is another connection between these affairs and TTIP. The year 1998 saw the official abandonment of the Multilateral Investment Agreement, proposed by the US in an effort to create a much freer market for the investments of multinational companies. This set-back for the forces of globalization was a victory for what the Press called ‘one of the first global debates and political movements in history’.³²

TTIP, among other things, is an effort to compensate for that defeat, but looks as though it will suffer exactly the same fate as the MIA.³³

There were of course other antagonistic confrontations. EuroDisney's opening in 1992 attracted much scornful comment from French intellectuals; the arrival of Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List* in 1994 upset a whole gamut of German commentators anxious to reassert national ownership of that society's past amidst the identity crisis provoked by the end of the Cold War and reunification.³⁴ Whilst the McDonalds empire planned to open eighty franchises per year in France alone in 1996,³⁵ José Bové led a farmers' revolt against the chain and the Slow Food movement was born in Italy.³⁶

But this was not the whole picture by any means. The leaders of the 'Third Way' governments then in power in the US, France, Italy, Germany and the UK met in Florence in 1999 to talk up their common interests and receive inspiration from the most successful of their number: Bill Clinton. Afterwards two of the participants – Tony Blair and his German counterpart, Gerhard Schroeder – issued a joint declaration saying that the knowledge-based service economy was the inevitable route to the future, and Europe must adapt to it. Seizing the modernizing opportunities of the time would 'offer Europe a chance to catch up with the United States'.³⁷ The result was the official Lisbon Agenda of March 2000, which talked of building 'a competitive, dynamic, knowledge-based economy' with no social exclusion and full employment, by 2010.³⁸ Meanwhile Friedman of the *New York Times*, in his best-selling *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* of 1999, could be found lecturing certain of his foreign readers in these terms:

As long as the Japanese and West Europeans stick with their rigid, protected welfare systems, which by making capitalism less destructive also make it less creative and enriching, they won't be a challenge to America. But the farther ahead America gets in this age of globalization, the more I expect these countries will seek to mirror and mimic America. This inevitable adjustment will be enormously painful, but they will be forced to do it in order to maintain anything like their current standards of living.³⁹

The outcomes of all this are hard to define. But of one thing we can be sure amidst all the sound and fury: with the exception of British governments, no-one displays an urge to 'to mirror and mimic America'.⁴⁰

All those intense 1990s debates about Americanization and anti-Americanism – or at least that component in it which rejected American ideas of modernity – are over.

Conclusion

In his famous editorial Henry Luce explained that by 1941 there was more to America's place in the world than institutions, money and geopolitics:

(...) there is already an immense American internationalism. American jazz, Hollywood movies, American slang, American machines and patented products, are in fact the only things that every community in the world, from Zanzibar to Hamburg, recognizes in common. Blindly, unintentionally, accidentally and really in spite of ourselves, we are already a world power in all the trivial ways – in very human ways. But there is a great deal more than that. America is already the intellectual, scientific and artistic capital of the world.

The things that Luce called 'trivial' lie at the heart of the presence of the US in the world as the *only* nation to have developed the production of popular culture on a truly industrial scale, over decades, and ensured its distribution – in a hundred different, ever-changing ways – across the globe.⁴¹ And whenever experts attempt to define rankings of 'soft power' in world, they inevitably place America's intellectual, scientific and artistic achievements at or near the top.⁴²

Luce anticipated an era when governments and others would choose soft power methods from the conviction that their nations, institutions, values, personalities are endowed with a charisma of their own which can be deployed to generate prestige, attention and respect in the world. Call it 'the force of example', a way for countries to promote their formulas of life which is persuasive, not coercive, attractive and not manipulative, consensual and not brutal. The most effective forms of soft power are based on well-developed narratives which project the successes of a society's ideas of identity and modernity, examples which can be enduring and inspirational. They tell a story. Like the New Deal, the New York World's Fair and the Marshall Plan, the 'American

Century’ was, in some ways still is, such a story, which is one reason why historians and public intellectuals like Joe Nye keep coming back to it.⁴³ The true effect of the ‘American century’ story is that everyone – willingly or unwillingly, gladly or resentfully – ‘makes room for “America”’, as Rob Kroes has put it, hoping simply to do so ‘in a context of meaning and significance that is ours’.⁴⁴

At the heart of European endeavours to reconcile what the Americans identify as modernity with their own notions of sovereignty and identity has always been the urge to ‘retain the best and re-invent the rest’, as the saviour of an ancient brand-name once put it. Historians call it ‘defensive modernization’, and know it is an old story. It is what the Irish writer Sean O’Faolain saw as a search for that ‘formula of life as between the old traditions and the new world rushing into us from every side’.⁴⁵

The last time an open trans-Atlantic debate on these themes took place was probably at the time of the Iraq war in 2003. The philosopher Susan Sontag told a German audience:

In the end, the model for whatever understanding – conciliation – we might reach lies in thinking more about that venerable opposition, ‘old’ and ‘new’ (...) the opposition of ‘old’ and ‘new’ is genuine, ineradicable, at the center of what we understand to be experience itself (...) We are told we must choose – the old or the new. In fact, we must choose both. What is life if not a series of negotiations between the old and the new?

What made dealing with America difficult in this context, said Sontag, was its own very peculiar mix of the inherited and the invented: ‘It is the genius of the United States, a profoundly conservative country in ways that Europeans find difficult to fathom, to have devised a form of conservative thinking that celebrates the new rather than the old’.⁴⁶

But as Jürgen Habermass and Jacques Derrida pointed out in the same debate, the European concepts of citizenship, political and juridical, pre-dated the arrival of full-blown American-style capitalism by a very considerable length of time, during which the evolution of class politics had rendered Europe’s peoples at all levels particularly sensitive to ‘the paradoxes of progress’. So the search for that ‘formula of life’ as between tradition and modernity, mediated by highly developed conservative, liberal and socialist political cultures, had come down in Europe to the consideration of two main alternatives: ‘Do the benefits

of a chimerical progress outweigh the losses that come with the disintegration of protective, traditional forms of life?’ In other words, ‘do the benefits that today’s processes of “creative destruction” promise for tomorrow outweigh the pain of modernity’s losers?’⁴⁷

Whether the traditional taxi-drivers of Europe – the category most conspicuously faced by this dilemma in the years after 2010 – could take any consolation from the fact that thanks to globalization, their pain was felt around the globe, we shall probably never know.

Notes

- 1 From many possible sources, Pankaj Mishra, ‘Welcome to the age of anger’, in *Guardian Weekly*, January 13, 2017; various authors in ‘Problems from Hell’, in *Project Syndicate*, 7 April 2017; ‘Out of order’, special edition of *Foreign Affairs*, 96/1, 2017.
- 2 *Project Syndicate*, 7 April 2017.
- 3 Cf. Richard Haas, *A World in Disarray. American Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Old Order* (New York, 2017).
- 4 See David W. Ellwood, ‘A “Reference Culture” That Divides. America and the Politics of Change in the West From Nietzsche to Soft Power’, in *International Journal for History, Culture and Modernity*, 3 (2015) 35–52 (DOI: <http://doi.org/10.18352/hcm.493>).
- 5 http://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/31/technology/google-europe-antitrust.html?emc=edit_th_20161031&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=58280402. Accessed 31 October 2016. I have discussed the Uber case at <http://blog.oup.com/2016/06/uber-in-europe/>.
- 6 David W. Ellwood, *The Shock of America. Europe and the Challenge of the Century* (Oxford, 2012).
- 7 <https://www.h-net.org/>.
- 8 *Future Shock*, (New York, 1971) 1.
- 9 An outstanding example is James Meek, ‘Somerdale to Skarbimierz’, in *London Review of Books*, 20 April 2017, on the context, and human and political consequences, of the transfer of a great chocolate factory from Britain to Poland under the rules of globalization as interpreted by the EU and Polish governments.
- 10 Cf. Alan Brinkley, ‘The Concept of an American Century’, in R. Laurence Moore and Maurizio Vaudagna, eds., *The American Century in Europe* (Ithaca, 2003).

- 11 Full historical description offered by New York Public Library at <http://archives.nypl.org/mss/2233>; intellectual context described in Ellwood, *Shock of America*, 206–10.
- 12 V.M. Dean, *Europe in Retreat*, (New York, 1939) xv–xvi.
- 13 Report of conversation, printed Jan. 25 1942, in Marion Turner Sheehan ed., *The World at Home. Selections from the Writings of Anne O’Hare McCormick*, (New York, 1956) 321–329, quotation at 327–8.
- 14 *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, 1944–1945 Volume (New York, 1950) 548–54, message of 12 Feb. 1945.
- 15 On the conference sequence, Ellwood, *Shock of America*, 225–9.
- 16 For a recent general history of the Cold War: John L. Harper, *The Cold War* (New York, 2011); cf. Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. 1 (New York, 2010), which gives no attention to the economic dimensions of Roosevelt’s strategy for the post-war world. One volume which does so is David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission. Modernization and the Creation of an American World Order* (Princeton, 2010) 63–76 and Chapter 2 in general.
- 17 C. Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, Volume 1 (New York, 1948) 521.
- 18 Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation. My Years in the State Department* (New York, 1969), 229; speech of 6 May 1947.
- 19 Ellwood, ‘Italian Modernization and the Propaganda of the Marshall Plan’, in Luciano Cheles and Luciano Sponza eds., *The Art of Persuasion. Political Communication in Italy from 1945 to the 1990s* (Manchester, 2001).
- 20 Quoted in Constantine C. Menges ed., *The Marshall Plan From Those Who Made it Succeed* (Lanham, Md., 1999) 23.
- 21 Quoted in Richard Kuisel, *Capitalism and the State in Modern France* (Cambridge, 1981) 244; the long effort to educate French people to the idea of growth and abundance is analysed in Sophie Chaveau, ‘Il consumo di massa in Francia dopo il 1945’, in Stefania Cavazza and Emanuela Scarpellini eds., *La rivoluzione dei consumi. Società di massa e benessere in Europa 1945–2000* (Bologna 2010) 33–51.
- 22 Richard Kuisel, *Seducing the French. The Dilemma of Americanization* (Berkeley, 1993) 69.
- 23 Organisation for European Economic Co-operation, *Economic expansion and its problems: seventh report of the OEEC* (Paris, 1956).
- 24 H.W. Arndt, *The Rise and Fall of Economic Growth. A Study in Contemporary Thought* (Melbourne, 1978) 50–51 and Chapter 4 in general;

- Matthias Schmelzer, *The Hegemony of Growth. The OECD and the Making of the Economic Growth Paradigm* (Cambridge, 2016).
- 25 Cf. Martin Conway, 'The Rise and Fall of Western Europe's Democratic Age, 1945–1973', in *Contemporary European History*, (2004) 67–88; the Cold War dimension of this adaptation is discussed in Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire. America's Advance through Twentieth Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA, 2005) 350–8.
- 26 Jean-Marie Domenach, 'Le modèle américain', in *Esprit*, July–August 1960, quoted in Kuisel, *Seducing the French*, 109.
- 27 *La Repubblica*, Rome, 15 October 2016; *idem*, 18 October 2016.
- 28 J. Nye, *Bound to Lead. The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York, 1990) 32–5, 188, 191–5.
- 29 Dominique Moïsi, 'America the triumphant', in *Financial Times*, 9 February, 1998; according to Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times*, America had already been the star at Davos in 1997; Friedman, 'Cut Out for Globalization and Feeling Quite Good' in *International Herald Tribune*, 10 February 1997.
- 30 François Mitterand speech in Gdansk, 21 Sept. 1993, quoted in Jean-Pierre Jeancolas, 'From the Blum-Byrnes Agreement to the GATT affair', in G. Nowell-Smith and S. Ricci eds., *Hollywood and Europe. Economics, Culture, National Identity 1945–95* (London, 1998) 57–9.
- 31 Latest provisions of European Parliament listed in *La Repubblica*, 3 October 2018.
- 32 *Financial Times*, Feb. 14, 1998; Canadian objections to the MIA and unrestricted global investment markets are summed up in the 1997 speech by the Parliamentarian Paul Hellyer at <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/25/047.html>. Accessed 8 October 2018.
- 33 President Trump made clear his opposition to all such trade treaties. The Canadian speech noted above (note 32) feared that the US would overwhelm all its neighbours and competitors in the global investment market; Trump's objection is that the US has lost out in this game, as testified by the nation's very large trade deficit and the loss of jobs abroad. Official position as of April 2017 at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-signing-memorandum-regarding-investigation-pursuant-section-232b-trade-expansion-act/>. Accessed 8 October 2018.
- 34 Specific examples from France and Germany in Ellwood, *Shock of America*, 465–6.
- 35 David W. Ellwood, 'Comparative Anti-Americanism in Western Europe', in: Heide Fehrenbach and Uta G. Poiger eds., *Transactions, transgressions*,

- transformations: American culture in Western Europe and Japan* (New York, 2000), 26–44, at 37. Full contextualization at <http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/born-in-the-usa-made-in-france-how-mcdonalds-succeeds-in-the-land-of-michelin-stars/>, Wharton Business School, University of Pennsylvania.
- 36 Early phases of Bové story in *Le Monde*, July 1, 2000; *Nouvel observateur*, July 6–12, 2000; and in J. Bové and François Dufour, *Le monde n'est pas une marchandise. Des paysans contre la malbouffe* (Paris, 2000); on Slow Food, de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 467–73.
- 37 Tony Blair and Gerhard Schröder, 'The Third Way/Die Neue Mitte', reproduced in Bodo Hombach, *The Politics of the New Centre* (London, 2000), Appendix, 169, 177. Tony Blair repeated the message on many occasions, e.g. his address to the Congress of the Party of European Socialists, Milan, 1–2 March 1999, in *Corriera della Sera*, March 3, 1999, and his remarks at the World Economic Forum in Davos, in January 2000 (comment in *The Independent*, 31 January 2000).
- 38 Original EU announcement at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/00100-r1.eno.htm. Accessed 8 October 2018.
- 39 Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York, 1999) 304; although Friedman was unaware of the evolutions in European welfare systems which happened in this era, he had no illusions over the many high-risk features embedded in the American model; Friedman, *Lexus*, 32–3, 106, 161, 216–7, 241, 305, etc.
- 40 I have discussed this long-running effort at a sort of top-down Americanization in David W. Ellwood, 'Britain's Future in Hindsight', in John L. Harper ed., *A Resolute Faith in the Power of Reasonable Ideas. Essays in honour of David P. Calleo* (Bologna, 2013).
- 41 Large-scale, detailed map of this reality in Frédéric Martel, *Mainstream. Enquête sur cette culture que plaît à tout le monde* (Paris, 2010).
- 42 The Wikipedia entry on 'Soft Power' offers four rankings from 2015–2017, two of which place the US in the no.1 spot: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soft_power; one of those cited is at <https://softpower30.com/>. The page was updated on 3 November 2017.
- 43 Cf. Joseph Nye, *Is the American Century Over?* (Malden MA, 2015).
- 44 Rob Kroes, *If You've Seen One, You've Seen the Mall* (Urbana, 1996) 176.
- 45 Philip D. Curtin, *The World and the West. The European Challenge and the Overseas Response in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge, 2002) 143, 153–154, 170–171 (Japanese version), 179, 183–4 (Ottoman case); Sean O'Faolain, *An Irish Journey* (London, 1940) 305–6.

- 46 S. Sontag, 'Literature is Freedom', in Daniel Levy, Max Pensky, John Torpey eds., *Old Europe, New Europe, Core Europe: Transatlantic Relations after the Iraq War* (London, 2005) 215, 217.
- 47 J. Habermas and J. Derrida, 'February 15, Or, What Binds Europeans Together: Plea for a Common Foreign Policy, Beginning in Core Europe', in *ibid*; quotation at 11 (emphasis in original). These comments are discussed in Ellwood, *Shock of America*, 521–2.

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