

# МИР И БЕЗОПАСНОСТЬ

## ORIGINS OF ANTI-AMERICANISM IN EUROPE

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The Article is devoted to analyzing the origin of a phenomenon known as Anti-Americanism among the countries of Europe, which are considered the most loyal allies of the United States of America today. The origins of European Anti-Americanism go back to the very early ages of the existence of the first thirteen colonies. The second stage of development of anti-Americanism began with attempt of the first thirteen colonies to overthrow the tyranny of the British. Another reason for the lack of faith in the United States was that European elite was very much concerned with its lack of culture. Another reason for worries in Europe was the war between the United States and the Spanish. In the beginning of the XX century, Americans were not active enough in the sphere of international relations to give many reasons for hatred to the world. The roots of modern anti-Americanism have emerged mostly from this point — when USA became a superpower and was following the rules of the Cold War. Author concludes that anti-Americanism is a big obstacle in the way of successful interaction with the United States.

**Key words:** the United States of America, Anti-Americanism, Europe, national interest.

According to the Oxford dictionary, the word Anti-American is defined as «hostile to the interests of the United States» [4]. From this definition the term anti-Americanism has emerged — meaning a negative position or opinion on the United States government, political decisions and towards common Americans as well.

Throughout the history of this country, there have always existed negative attitudes towards it, and over the years, they have been changing along with the development of the USA.

Due to the recent events in the foreign affairs arena, the question of origin of such phenomenon as anti-Americanism seems to gain bigger and bigger importance. Especially in relation to our country — if we can understand where it takes place, we would be able to find better ways to treat the USA in international politics and, perhaps, increase our efficiency in such matters.

It is well known, that America was once just a number of colonies that belonged to Britain. From the very early ages of the existence of the first thirteen colonies there

have been tensions over the attitude towards the new continent from the Europeans. We can outline five basic stages of development of anti-Americanism in European countries.

The first stage starts as early as from the very appearance of the first thirteen British colonies in the «New World». Due to the fact that communication was very slow back then, it was only logical that people in Europe had little understanding of what the new continent was like. The lack of knowledge, as it happens, caused a bit of ignorance in European scientific elite. A number of European philosophers of that time seriously thought that American climate is unfavorable for the proper development of animals and humans [3]. That is why in their understanding both animals and indigenous people of Americas were feeble comparing to the ones in the «Old World». As an example they claimed, that so-called «American lion» [5] was small and cowardly comparing to the African lion. In case of people the same thinkers believed that the representatives of indigenous tribes are in many ways inferior to the white Europeans: they are less fertile, do not have any facial hair and etc. Of course, all of these conclusions had no empirical basis and were made on pure assumptions. To be fair I have to mention, that many of these scientists and philosophers had not even been to America. Nevertheless, no matter how foolish their ideas were, they stuck with European elite, which was more than happy to consider itself better in every way, than the people across the ocean.

At that time Europeans had no good reason to have negative attitudes toward America. It was not as much of a hatred, rather than an opinion, that everything American is inferior to European. To be fair it was in the spirit of that time — the world was Eurocentric and European dominance was foreseen as something natural.

The second stage of development of anti-Americanism began with attempt of the first thirteen colonies to overthrow the tyranny of the British. Now the primary reason for negative attitudes towards Americans has changed from the climate to low quality of human material. This is when people who saw no opportunities for them in the Old World started moving to the New World, seeking personal enrichment, religious freedom or social lift. Needless to say, the majority of people who were attracted to the idea of a fresh start overseas belonged to the low class: poor, uneducated, at times outlaws and etc. Theoretically, it seemed to European elite that these people were worthless and unable to create anything. And such opinion was understandable — there was no social lift in Europe, and high class Europeans thought that everything good exists only because of them. In their understanding, they were on the top of society for a reason (divine or otherwise) and those who were below them should silently deal with such order of things. Therefore, the idea of inferiority of Americans, who mainly consisted of the descendants of European «scum» and marginals, made perfect sense for everybody in the Old World.

Of course, it only got worse with the revolution. Now Americans seemed not only as low-quality human material, but also as rebels and savages, who are denying the only logical system of governance — monarchy. Needless to say, nobody believed in success of Americans. Even after they managed to overthrow the rule of the British, people thought that the newborn country would not last for long.

Another reason for the lack of faith in the United States was that European elite was very much concerned with its lack of culture. They believed, that the primary target of any society should be the enrichment of the global culture and Americans who had no such culture seemed to them quite barbaric and worthless.

However, that was only in theory. What particularly irritated Europeans — that despite their theories on the inferiority of Americans — they seemed to develop just fine. What was not taken into considerations is that people, who were constantly denied any opportunities for social lift and economic development in the Old World, could finally apply their energy to the development of the New World. And many of them had some serious achievements. The scenario when an outlaw escapes justice in Europe, goes to the United States and gets rich there was even used by Charles Dickens, famous English writer, in one of his most recognized books: «The Personal History, Adventures, Experience and Observation of David Copperfield the Younger of Blunderstone Rookery (which he never meant to publish on any account)». In addition, Americans did not consider themselves inferior to Europeans. On the contrary, they thought that Europeans are too petty and weak to do what is needed with their own hands. It was obvious during the presidential elections in 1824 — the slogan «Adams is a writer, Jackson is a fighter» shows us that people in the states preferred to see a man of actions in charge.

Before the middle of the 19-th century, not many countries considered the United States as a real threat to their interests. On the contrary, everybody was convinced, that this «joke of a country» is not going to last. However, after that a new stage of anti-Americanism emerged — when arrogance finally started to get mixed up with fear of «Americanization» [7].

After the civil war people finally started to realize, that the USA is going to stay for a long time. The confederates with their landowner basis and values were more resembling of Europe, than of an American country. And the North represented everything that was so much hated by the Europeans. When the North defeated the South, a slight notion of fear was planted in the minds of Europeans. «What if Americans are stronger than us? What if their model of development is more progressive and eventually they will impose their low-quality values and culture on us?» — All these questions started to become more and more significant.

The second reason for worries in Europe was the war between the United States and the Spanish. Americans kicked the Spanish out of the region without putting much effort into it, practically crushed one of the oldest forces in Europe. Of course, Spain was not in its' best shape, but even so this caused serious changes in minds of the European elite.

Fortunately for Europe, the United States with the appearance of ideas of pan Americanism voluntarily entered a period of self-isolation for the sake of preserving ultimate control over the Americas.

In the beginning of the century, Americans were not active enough in the sphere of international relations to give many reasons for hatred to the world. But despite this fact, the US have clearly been getting stronger and stronger — even with the self-isolation going on American leaders have taken several significant actions outside of

the region. One of them was becoming a mediator between Russia and Japan and single-handedly leading two countries to a peace treaty.

But during the First World War Americans could not stand aside when such important events were happening in Europe — de facto a new world order was to be carved out and Americans felt like they have to be a part of this. So eventually, the United States interfere, sending their troops to Italy. By doing so the United States have shown to the world that despite its geographical location it is a strong power, which should be taken into consideration. But when the Second World War arrived, Americans went even further. And even though they were the last to entered the war, they turned out to be one out of the two superpowers after the war. Europe, which has been in ruins after two world wars, could not compete now with such a strong country as US. The Americans did not lose this chance — at least half of Europe received financial help from America, which has for many years predetermined the dependence of these countries on the United States and predominant role of dollar in international transactions [6].

However, the roots of modern anti-Americanism have emerged mostly from this point — when USA became a superpower and was following the rules of the Cold War. That is when the fear of Americanization finally had become something more than just theories. And at the same time it is when the duality of such hatred was created — many countries feared to lose their identity, to become dependent on United States, but even more than that they feared the Socialists. So between the two evils many countries chose the United States, because even though they do not like them, being on the other side has even less benefits.

After winning the Cold War, United States became the only superpower in the world. This is when the majority of reasons for anti-Americanism found their source. It did not take Americans much time to understand how privileged such a position is, so they took all the necessary actions to ensure that their dominance would be guaranteed for a long time. Than includes bending many international institutions such as the World Bank or United Nations to their own needs.

Of course, as the conception of «the World Policeman» was introduced, United States have taken many disputable actions that on one hand were beneficiary to the American interest, but on the other hand created a negative image for the country, especially from interfering in the internal matters of the sovereign states. We all know about Iraq, Libya, Syria, Afghanistan, Kosovo — these are just the most evident examples of American failures in the sphere of international relations.

All that creates a negative image, that suggests that America is not only going to control every country in the world, but also will do everything to erase the cultural identity of its people — that is why many European countries right now have such a big percentage of people who are not supportive of the United States. When there is no threat to them and no necessity to stick closer to the US; they start criticize the actions of their primary ally. Such countries as Britain, France and Germany have a record of criticizing US, when in reality they are culturally, economically, politically and militarily bond to the States. Their current prosperous position in foreign affairs is ensured because of the US, but as it happens — when you get successful, you always start to want more.

Now Europeans feel like the patronage of the US over them is not necessary, but still keeps limiting their potential [2].

One of the most obvious example of the duality of such attitude is France — the French are historically quite nationalistic, but it is United States who came to their rescue twice, without the Americans France could be in a position of Italy right now. And such a duality exists for every European country — nowadays so-called European «values» are exactly the same as the values of the United States, which got transmitted to Europeans during the long-lasting patronage of the USA over the Western Europe.

So why America is hated so much? Is it because it is overreaching its natural sphere of interests by interfering into the matters of countries far away from its borders? However, any leading power known in human History has been practicing that: hasn't Britain been doing the same thing by setting up colonies in Asia and Africa? Was Napoleonic France any different, when declaring a war to the whole Europe? It is how a leader insures its' privileged place — sometimes that means that possible opponents should not be able to develop too fast. It is only logical that the USA are pursuing such a policy and it is only logical that other countries do not like it for it. The same thing happened to the British Empire for example or in fact to any leader-country in human history.

Among the common people anti-Americanism is rapidly spreading for one more reason — even though we have amazing possibilities such as Mass Media and internet, we still are too far away from each other for ordinary people of both countries to really get to know each other. Most of Russians, for example, have never seen the United States and an ordinary American and vice versa. This way it is impossible to understand what the people are like, what is their lifestyle, what are their values. However, what we do see — its Hollywood movies that often show Americans in a quite negative way. We also get to see the political struggle on the foreign affairs arena via news — thus considering at times aggressive American external policy for what American people truly want. Nevertheless, as it happens, such political actions like war in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and ect in general are not supported by the people.

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In overall it can be said, that anti-Americanism is a big obstacle in the way of successful interaction with the United States. For that we do not have to like America, we need to understand it. By doing so we will be able if not to adopt their logics, but at least to comprehend it, which would make US policy in Foreign Affairs much more predictable. And a predictable partner — is a reliable partner.

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## **ПРОИСХОЖДЕНИЕ АНТИАМЕРИКАНИЗМА В ЕВРОПЕ**

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Статья посвящена анализу происхождения явления, известного как антиамериканизм, среди стран Европы, которые сегодня считаются наиболее лояльными союзниками Соединенных Штатов Америки. Истоки европейского антиамериканизма связаны с первыми годами существования первых тринадцати колоний. Второй этап развития антиамериканизма связан с попыткой первых тринадцати колоний свергнуть тиранию англичан. Еще одна причина настороженного отношения европейской элиты к США была связана с отсутствием в Новом свете культуры. Новый повод для беспокойства дала война между Соединенными Штатами и Испанией. В начале XX в. американцы не были достаточно активны в сфере международных отношений, чтобы дать миру много причин для ненависти. Корни современного антиамериканизма появились, когда США стали сверхдержавой и следовали правилам «холодной войны». Автор приходит к выводу, что антиамериканизм является большим препятствием на пути успешного взаимодействия с Соединенными Штатами.

**Ключевые слова:** Соединенные Штаты Америки, антиамериканизм, Европа, национальный интерес.

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