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Anti-Americanism and Popular Culture

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Here's the rub: America is at war against people it doesn't know, because they don't appear much on TV.

Arundhati Roy (2001)

"I like taxis. I was never good at geography and I learn things by asking the drivers where they come from."

"They come from horror and despair."

"Yes, exactly. One learns about the countries where unrest is occurring by riding the taxis here."

Don DeLillo (2003: 16)

The core of globalization is to achieve economic hegemony of a few rich states, the United States of America in particular, as well as the hegemony of Western consumer culture, threatening the peoples' cultures, methods of living and spiritual values.

Tariq Aziz (quoted in Landers 2000)

Too bad the terrorists of the 11th of September learned life in Hollywood movies.

Woody Allen (quoted in Augé 2002: 148)

[T]here appears to be no empirical evidence to support the claim that Arabs have a negative view of the US because "they hate American values".

Zogby International (2004: 7)

1. Introduction

It's a crude measure but an irresistible one. A visitor to <google.com> who entered "Anti-Americanism" and "popular culture" as search terms on 15 June 2004 received no fewer than 21,500 hits. There has been a flurry of debate recently about the connection of these themes for some time, much of it brought on by the plaintive cry uttered by a woman as she made her ashen way from the falling towers of September 11, 2001: "Why do they hate us?" Her words were used by George W. Bush in his address to Congress on September 20 of that year, and finding an answer has been a preoccupation ever since.

Some representative US responses include the following:

- CBS TV news anchor Dan Rather said that the US was attacked "because they're evil, and because they're jealous of us" (quoted in Navasky 2002: xv);
- former House of Representatives Speaker Newt Gingrich blamed Hollywood for the country's abject world status, calling for a new public diplomacy that would "put the world in touch with real Americans, not celluloid Americans" (Gingrich and Schweizer 2003);
- Chair of the House of Representatives International Relations Committee Henry Hyde referred to the "poisonous image" of the US overseas (quoted in Augé 2002: 161); and
- novelist Don DeLillo (2001) told readers of *Harpers Magazine* that "the power of American culture to penetrate every wall, home, life and mind" was the problem.

But the writer Arundhati Roy has powerfully queried the claim that September 11 was an assault on the US as a symbol of freedom, asking why the Statue of Liberty was left untouched, while symbols of military and economic might were targeted. She suggests that this should encourage us to understand the attack as a brutal critique of power, not of liberty, and that subsequent responses would illustrate much about the US and supposed anti-Americanism (2001).

The hard data support her claim. A study by the International Federation of Journalists in October 2001 found blanket global coverage of the September 11 attacks, with very favorable discussion of the United States and its travails—even in nations that had suffered terribly from US aggression. Gerhard Schroeder announced "unconditional solidarity," NATO described it as an attack against all its members, and *Le Monde* simply stated "Nous sommes tous américains" (We are all Americans) (quoted in Council on Foreign Relations 2003: 1). But shortly thereafter, the giant advertising firm McCann-Erickson's evaluation of 37 states saw a huge increase in cynicism about the

US media's manipulation of the events (Cozens 2001). The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press (2002a) study of 42 countries in 2002 found a dramatic fall from favor for the US since that time, while its 2003 follow-up (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press 2003b) encountered even lower opinions of the US nation, population, and policies worldwide than the year before, with specifically diminished support for anti-terrorism, and faith in the UN essentially demolished by US unilateralism and distrust of the Bush regime. In 2004, the advertising giant DDB declared that the US Government had ceased to be a "credible messenger" in the Middle East (quoted in Teinowitz 2004). *The Next Generation's Image of Americans* project from 2002 interviewed 1,200 middle-class teens in a dozen countries, including five that are Muslim. The study found views of US residents as selfish, domineering, violent, and immoral. It attributed these views to popular culture (DeFleur and DeFleur 2002). In June 2004, Zogby International found dramatic reductions across the Middle East in favorable ratings for the US since 2002, especially over Palestine and Iraq.

As John Le Carré (2003) sorrowfully put it in the London *Times*, "The United States of America Has Gone Mad." The Council on Foreign Relations' President sorrowfully noted that "negative opinions of the United States and its policies has metastasized" due to a "fundamental loss of goodwill and trust from publics around the world" (Gelb 2003: v). No wonder many Chinese believe the US started SARS and Nigerians are refusing the polio vaccine because it is seen as a Washington plot to infect Muslims with diseases (J. Rubin 2004).

"Which country poses the greatest danger to world peace in 2003?," asked *Time* magazine of 250,000 people across Europe, offering them a choice between Iraq, North Korea, and the United States. Eight per cent selected Iraq, 9% chose North Korea, and ... but you have already done the calculation about the most feared country of all (Pilger 2003). A BBC poll in eleven countries in mid-2003 confirmed this. It found sizeable majorities everywhere disapproving of the Bush regime and the invasion of Iraq, especially over civilian casualties (Poll 2003). When Vice-President Dick Cheney immediately and repeatedly spoke of the need for war against "40 or 50 countries" after September 11, who could be surprised by such a reaction (quoted in Ahmad 2003: 16)? In the words of the philosopher Leopoldo Zea (2001) this was a shift from "la Guerra fría a la sucia" (from the Cold War to the Dirty War).

During the 1980s, through the height of the Second Cold War and then a series of grisly interventions in Latin America, the US was unpopular around the world because of its policies. There was a change under Bill Clinton (though not in most of the Middle East), because of his outlook and style as much as his Administration's policies. But the policies of the second Bush group have spread anti-Americanism rapidly and profoundly, with Brazil and Russia two striking instances of majorities favoring the US a few years ago turning into minorities (Kohut 2003). Again and again, US foreign policies in the Middle East feature in the data as sources of anti-Americanism in the region (Zogby International 2004). If something about anti-Americanism has really changed since 2001, popular culture can hardly be blamed. But if the attitudes expressed and the policies enacted by the US population and government synchronize with the methods and messages of popular culture, then a proportion of anti-American feeling can be attributed to its influence.

The rich vein of anti-US sentiment relates to four issues, each of which is given considerable attention in most parts of the world:

- economics;
- militarism;
- politics; and
- culture.

This report is principally concerned with the last category, though as we shall see, it is inseparable from the others. The bulk of the report examines points of continuity since 2001 rather than rupture, since most of the infrastructure and impact of US popular culture on export were in place before that time. There is some consideration of new diplomatic attempts to influence the country's image abroad. The report discusses the following topics:

- key terms;
- US cultural dominance;
- opposition;
- role of the state; and
- conclusion and recommendations.

2. Key Terms I: Anti-Americanism

[The] nightmare or negative utopia of a world that, thanks to globalization, is losing its linguistic and cultural diversity and is being culturally appropriated by the United States, is not the exclusive domain of left-wing politicians nostalgic for Marx, Mao, or Che Guevara. This delirium of persecution—spurred by hatred and rancor toward the North American giant—is also apparent in developed countries and nations of high culture and is shared among political sectors of the left, center, and right.

Mario Vargas Llosa (2000)

For all the Olympian nature of the remarks quoted above, they contain a kernel of truth—that concern about popular culture *flows from* anti-Americanism, rather than informing it. But before addressing that key concern of this report, we need to define some terms. Historically, anti-Americanism derives from a quasi-Darwinian belief that the genetically-inferior migrants who had left Eastern and Mediterranean Europe for the US would turn it into a physically and mentally degenerate space of ill-mannered brutes (J. Rubin 2004). In the 1850s, this had turned into a grudging admiration, and critics now feared “Americanization,” the poet Charles Baudelaire’s term for a “vast cage, a great accounting establishment” (quoted in Grantham 1998: 60), and others saw as a new mass populism that would undo hierarchies. This became an ongoing, dual fear—that the US would be a model for the rest of the world; and that it would do so by imposing its will (B. Rubin 2004). Such anxieties were added to by critiques of its racism during the period of mass de-colonization and the emergence of Third-World blocs, and then of its untamed power in the post-Cold War era. We shall see further discussion of this in the section on cultural dominance.

Today there are several distinct, sometimes overlapping types of anti-Americanism. The first two are domestic, the remainder international:

- domestic anti-Americanism identifies US history with colonialist expansion elsewhere and favors a more pacific foreign policy; and
- domestic anxieties about anti-Americanism identify critics of US foreign policy as anti-American *tout court*, and construct loyalty tests for them.

Overseas, there is:

- opposition to US cultural domination and the spread of values associated with secular transcendence through money and sex;
- rivalry with the US over specific economic and cultural markets;
- bemused and contingent anti-Americanism that is specific to the Bush regime’s means of pursuing foreign-policy aims;
- populist anti-Americanism, expressed in violence, demonstrations, and elections;

- leadership anti-Americanism, expressed in public denunciations, or privately, under Chatham House rules separate feelings for US governments and corporations, as opposed to the US populace, although this is changing as the US public becomes identified as a militaristic theocracy—the Middle East increasingly sees distinctions erased between attitudes towards the US Government and towards its citizens (Center for Arts and Culture 2004: 1);
- rejection of the US based on experience of it as an occupying power;
- disappointment at the distance between the promises of US capitalism and its realities;
- identification of the US with unpopular IMF, World Bank, and WTO policies; and
- reaction to US opposition to international law and its infrastructure.

There are also geographical varieties of anti-American discourse. First, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America continue longstanding debates about local democratic participation and control. Second, the major economic powers of Western Europe argue about the need to build pan-Europeanism in contrast to the homogenizing forces of Americanization. Third, the former state-socialist polities of Eastern and Central Europe seek to develop independent civil societies with privatized media (Mowlana 1993: 66-67).

3. Key Terms II: Popular Culture

A recent poll tells us that one in two Americans now believe Saddam [Hussein] was responsible for the attack on the World Trade Center. But the American public is not merely being misled. It is being browbeaten and kept in a state of ignorance.

John Le Carré (2003)

A famous middle-aged rock-and-roller called me last week to thank me for speaking out against the war, only to go on to tell me that he could not speak himself because he fears repercussions from Clear Channel. “They promote our concert appearances,” he said. “They own most of the stations that play our music. I can’t come out against this war.”

Tim Robbins (2003)

“Popular” denotes “of the people,” “by the people,” and “for the people.” In other words, it is “made up” of the people, in the form of:

- their experiences, which it turns into drama, sport, and information;
- their work, undertaken as performance and recording;
- their businesses, which own the output; and
- their appreciation, as audiences who receive the ensuing products.

“The popular” clearly relates to markets. Neoclassical economics assumes that expressions of the desire and capacity to pay for services stimulate the provision of entertainment and hence—when the product is publicly accepted—determine what is “popular.” Conversely:

- a discourse about art sees it elevating people above ordinary life;
- a discourse about folk-life expects it to settle us into society through the wellsprings of community; and
- a discourse about pop idealizes fun, offering transcendence through joy by referring to the everyday (Frith 1991: 106-07).

For its part, the term “culture” derives from tending and developing agriculture. With the emergence of capitalism, culture came both to embody instrumentalism and to abjure it, via the industrialization of farming, on the one hand, and the cultivation of individual taste, on the other (Benhabib 2002: 2). Culture has usually been understood in two registers, via the social sciences and

the humanities—truth versus beauty. This was a heuristic distinction in the 16th century (Williams 1983: 38), but it became substantive as time passed. Culture is now a marker of differences and similarities in taste and status within groups, as explored interpretatively or methodically. In today's humanities, theater, film, television, radio, art, craft, writing, music, dance, and electronic gaming are judged by criteria of quality, as framed by practices of cultural criticism and history. For their part, the social sciences focus on the languages, religions, customs, times, and spaces of different groups, as explored ethnographically or statistically.

What happens when we put “popular” and “culture” back together, with the commercial world binding them? The canons of aesthetic judgment and social distinction that once flowed from the two dominant approaches to culture, keeping aesthetic tropes somewhat distinct from social norms, have collapsed in on each other. Art and custom are now resources for markets and nations (Yúdice 2002: 40)—reactions to the crisis of belonging and economic necessity occasioned by capitalist globalization. As a consequence, popular culture is crucial to both advanced and developing economies, and provides the legitimizing ground on which particular groups (e.g. African Americans, gays and lesbians, the hearing-impaired, or evangelical Protestants) claim resources and seek inclusion in national and international narratives (Yúdice 1990). This intermingling has implications for both aesthetic and social hierarchies, which “regulate and structure ... individual and collective lives” (Parekh 2000: 143) in competitive ways that harness art and collective meaning for social and commercial purposes.

In 1996, cultural-industry sales (of film, music, television, software, journals, and books) became the United States' largest export, ahead of aerospace, defense, cars, and farming. Between 1977 and 1996, the US culture industries grew three times as quickly as the overall economy (UNESCO 2002). In 2000, services created one dollar in seven of total world production, and US services exported \$295 billion. The sector generated a \$80 billion surplus in balance of payments, at a time when the country relied on trade to sustain its society and economy, and boasted 86 million private-sector jobs in the area (Office of the US Trade Representative 2001: 1, 10, 15).

US production is adjusting away from a farming and manufacturing base to an ideological one. It now sells feelings, ideas, money, health, laws, and risk—niche forms of identity, AKA culture. The significance of this for the country's image elsewhere is of course immense, while the domestic correlatives are important in terms of wealth, job creation, and ideology. At the same time, cultural identity is turned into a commodity for those in the Third World, with attendant reactions. It is no accident that the push for the Third World to constitute itself as a diverting heritage site and decadent playground for the West has seen the emergence of sex tourism to the South and the transformation of Luxor, Bali, and Mombasa into targets for terrorism (Downey and Murdock 2003: 84). This is the point where anti-Americanism meets popular culture—at the site of dominance. For it is claimed that US popular culture attenuates the cultures that it encounters, such that sex, violence, consumption, individualism, gender equality, meritocracy, and fun threaten older values (Rehman 2004: 414). As we shall see, the story is more complicated than that might suggest.

4. Cultural Dominance

America is not just interested in exporting its films. It is interested in exporting its way of life
Gilles Jacob, Cannes Film Festival director,
quoted in "Culture Wars" 1998

[W]hen Saddam Hussein chose Frank Sinatra's globally recognized "My Way" as the theme song
for his 54th birthday party, it wasn't as a result of American Imperialist pressure.
Michael Eisner in Costa-Gavras *et al.* 1995: 10

Variety colorfully used the headline "Earth to H'wood: You Win" for an article estimating that U.S.
films earned 90 percent of the global box office

Frederick Wasser 2001: 193

In 1820, the noted essayist Sydney Smith asked: "In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book? or goes to an American play? or looks at an American picture or statue?" (1844: 141). Not surprisingly, the US soon became an early-modern exponent of anti-cultural imperialist, pro-nation-building sentiment. Herman Melville, for instance, opposed the US literary establishment's devotion to all things English, questioning the compatibility of this Eurocentrically cringing import culture with efforts to "carry Republicanism into literature" (Newcomb 1996: 94). At the same time, an identical discourse in opposition to West European imperial and cultural domination was also developing amongst Islamic leaders in the Middle East (Mowlana 2000: 107-08).

Things changed rapidly. A century later, *Time* magazine referred to Hollywood as "the new maharajahs" of India (Movies Abroad 1959). By the 1980s, Wim Wenders (1991) said "Hollywood has colonized our unconscious." Today, Rupert Murdoch modestly predicts that three companies will soon dominate the world's media—Comcast, Fox, and Time Warner (Schulze and Elliott 2004). But there are losses as well as gains for these new maharajahs of the unconscious. For example, the European Audiovisual Observatory (2002) warns that regardless of its cultural messages, Hollywood was "involved" in the 2001 attacks because of the part it played in an international economy that excluded and dominated most of the world's population, while Standard & Poors' 2002 survey of the industry refers to it as an "expanding global empire." How and why these changes happened is discussed in the next section (see also Miller *et al.* 2001a and 2001b for material on sport and film).

In 1998, the major US film studios increased their foreign rentals by one-fifth on 1997; overseas box office of \$6.821 billion virtually equaled the domestic figure of \$6.877 billion. The most popular 39 films across the world in 1998 came from the US, and as that happened, the condition of other major filmmaking countries was declining: the percentage of the box office taken by indigenous films was down to 10% in Germany, 12% in Britain, 26% in France, 12% in Spain, 2% in Canada, 4% in Australia, and 5% in Brazil—all dramatic decreases, to record low levels in some cases (*Screen Digest* August 1997: 177, 183). In Eastern Europe, the story was equally dramatic. Whereas the USSR had released 215 films in 1990, the number was just 82 by 1995, half the number of US imports (Rantanen 2002: 86). The US proportion of the world market is double what it was in 1990, and the European film industry is one-ninth of its size in 1945. Hollywood's overseas receipts were \$6.6 billion in 1999 and \$6.4 billion in 2000 (the reduction was due to foreign-exchange depreciation rather than any drop in admissions (Groves 2001b). In 2000, most "star-driven event films" from Hollywood obtained more revenue overseas than domestically, with eighteen movies accumulating over \$100 million internationally, figures not attained by even one film from any other national cinema (Groves 2000). For 2001 and 2002, all the top twenty films in the world were from the US, if one controls for such co-production conceits as that *Scooby-Doo* (2002) is Australian, *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001) British, and the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy (2001-03) New Zealand. Between 1996 and

2002, of the most remunerative twenty films released in Europe, each one was from the US with the exception of *Notting Hill* (1999) and some co-productions that used British studios, such as the James Bond franchise (European Audiovisual Observatory 2003a: 9, 25; Calder 2003).

In 2002, Hollywood box office overall increased by 13.2%, the biggest growth in two decades. International revenue was \$9.64 billion, up 20% from 2001 (European Audiovisual Observatory 2003a: 4, 11). PriceWaterhouseCoopers estimates that US companies make almost \$11 billion by exporting film, and that Hollywood will receive close to \$14 billion in export revenue in 2004 (Winslow 2001). In 2003, Hollywood accounted for the preponderance of revenue in all major markets:

Table 1
**Percentage Market Share for US Films on the
European Union Market (1996-2001)**

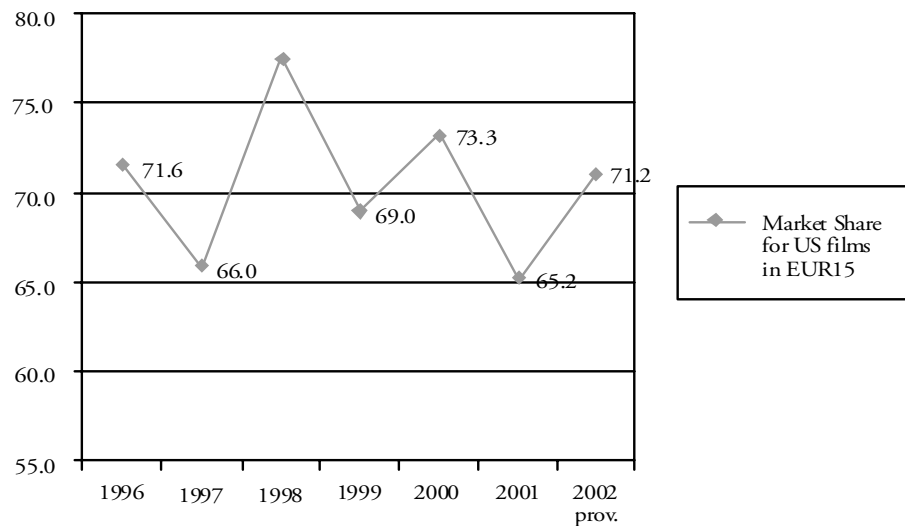
Site	US market share %
<i>Britain</i>	82
<i>France</i>	52
<i>Italy</i>	65
<i>Spain</i>	70
<i>Netherlands</i>	68
<i>Australia</i>	92
<i>Russia</i>	75

Source: Adapted from Guider *et al.* 2004

To give an idea of how new this trend is, the corollary numbers for the 1970s saw Hollywood's market share at 33.7% in Italy, 35.2% in France, and 35% in Spain (Cook 2000: 21). The past decade has seen a truly foundational change (Augros 2000: 157; Schatz 1997: 297). For example, in 1985, 41% of film tickets bought in Western Europe were for Hollywood fare. In 1995, the proportion was 75%. And 70% of films on European television come from the US. Measured in box-office receipts, Europe is Hollywood's most valuable territory. Overall revenue there in 1997 was half the US figure, but twice that of Asia and four times larger than Latin America. In 1999, 65% of US film and tape rental exports were to Western Europe, 17.4% to Asia and the Pacific, 13% to Latin America, and 2.3% to the Middle East and Africa (Scott 2002: 970). The majors collected over 60% of their box-office revenues from outside the US in the top five European markets, and Hollywood's share of the market in 1996 ranged from 45-55% in France, Italy, and Spain, to 70-80% in Germany and the UK. Hollywood's proportion of total video revenues mirrored theatrical box office—between 60 and 80% across Europe (*Screen Digest* September 1999: 232; *Screen Digest* November 1999: 296; *Screen Digest* January 2000: 30; De Bens and de Smaele 2001).

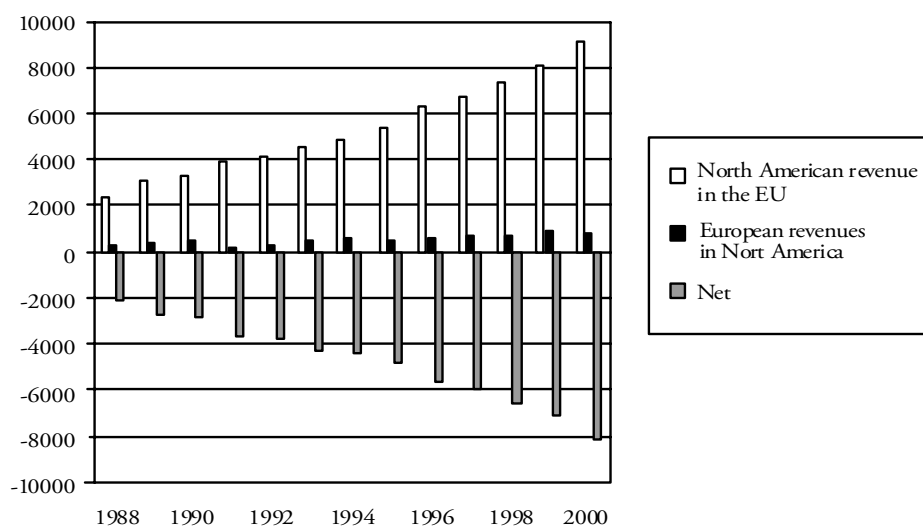
In 2001, Hollywood's European market share was 66%, down from 73% in 2000 and the lowest since 1997. But the trend was distinct: in 2000, Europe had a \$8.2 billion deficit in cultural trade with the US, an increase of a billion dollars on 1999. And the exchange of audiovisual programs between 1992 and 2000 followed a distinctly lop-sided shape, with the deficit growing from \$4.1 billion to \$9 billion (European Audiovisual Observatory 2002: 5, 24, 12). In 2002, Hollywood's European market share was restored to its prior level, at 71% (European Audiovisual Observatory 2003a: 20). And there is only minimal reciprocity.

Graph 1
Percentage Market Share for US Films on the European Union Market (1996-2001)



Source: European Audiovisual Observatory 2003b

Graph 2
Estimates of the Trade of Audiovisual Programs between European Union and North America (1988-2000)—USD millions



Source: European Audiovisual Observatory, 2002

International Hollywood receipts in theatres attained record levels in 2002 at \$9.64 billion, 20% up on the previous year. Fifty per cent came from Europe/Middle East/Africa, followed by the Asia-Pacific, with 40%, and Latin America, with 10% (Motion Picture Association of America Worldwide Market Research 2003). Beyond Europe, the percentage of imports from Hollywood has shown astonishing growth: US films accounted for 57.4% of screenings in Barbados in 1970 and 97.8% in 1991; 39.7% in Canada in 1970 and 63.9% in 1990; 59.2% in Costa Rica in 1985 and 95.9% in 1995; 8.9% in Cuba in 1970 and 40.9% in 1993. Africa is the largest proportional importer of Hollywood films, which account for 70% of exhibition in Anglophone nations and 40% in Francophone countries. It is easier today to find an African film screened in Europe or the US than on home territory. Following the hyperinflation of the 1970s and 1980s, which decimated film production in Mexico and Argentina, the percentage of Hollywood films exhibited in Latin America has increased dramatically (Home Alone 1997; Woods 2000; UNESCO 2000a; Hayes 2001; UNESCO 2000b; Primo 1999: 190; Amin 1997: 322-24, 326).

Since the mid-1980s, Japan has been a critical source of Hollywood's revenue, providing 10-20% of worldwide grosses on blockbuster releases (Cook 2000: 21; Hayes, 2001), while 96% of the Taiwanese box office and 78% of the Thai go to Hollywood (Klein 2003). Great potential growth lies in this region, as China and India account for over two-thirds of film screens around the world (Guider 2000). Hollywood is optimistic about the market potential of China's 65,000 film theatres and India's 12,000, despite severe restrictions on imports since their revolution and independence respectively (European Audiovisual Observatory 2003a: 44). While total US revenues from the PRC are low, because only twenty films can be imported each year, many expect that a large percentage of its 1.3 billion people, who are used to a steady stream of pirated media product, will become "conventional" consumers. In January 2001, half of Shanghai's theatrical takings came from five of its 130 venues, and 80% of their screenings came from Hollywood (Groves 2001a; Chinese Film 2001). In 1999, of the 154 films released in Hindi, India's dominant language of entertainment, 16 were dubbed US titles (Ganti 2002: 298 n. 7). The benchmark for a successful Hollywood release there has ballooned almost 1000% over the past seven years, from \$100,000 to \$1 million. By 2015, Asia could be responsible for 60% of Hollywood box-office revenue (Major 1997).

Consider the depiction of Hollywood's market share of the 1999 trade in feature films in Table 2.

Of course, theatrical exhibition accounts for barely a quarter of Hollywood's global revenues (29% in 1999). Video provides 25% and television 46% (Global Media Breakdown 2001). In 1995, 89% of films screened on Brazil's cable channels were US imports, which occupied 61% of time dedicated to cinema on Mexican TV, while in Egypt, the last twenty years have seen Hollywood dominate over Arab national cinemas both theatrically and in video rental (Duke 2000; Nain 1996: 168, 170; Sánchez-Ruiz 2001: 100). When cable and satellite opened up in the Middle East across the 1990s, there was a scramble both to "secure access to Western content" and "Arabize existing Western shows," with US film channels extremely potent contributors, and a special Arab-dedicated Disney channel of dubbed "family" fare. By 1999, Disney was selling \$100 million a month in the Middle East (Sakr 2001: 93-94) and in 2002 Showtime offered ten new channels through Nilesat. From its earliest days in the 1960s, Malaysian television relied on US films for content. The trend has never let up and dominates prime time. The same is true in Sri Lanka and the Philippines, where local films are rarely seen on television (Mahendra 1996: 223; Kenny and Pernia 1998: 84, 99). Eurodata TV's analysis of films on television in 1999 found that fourteen Hollywood pictures drew the highest audiences in twenty-seven nations across all continents. And television drama in 2000 accounted for almost 50% of worldwide television exchange (2000). In 1974, the Soviet Union imported 5% of its programming and in 1984, 8%; but Russia imported 60% of its TV in 1997, much of it from the US (Rantanen 2002: 86).

Table 2
Hollywood's market share of the 1999 trade in feature films

Site	Total Imports	U.S. Imports
<i>Algeria</i>	26	21
<i>Azerbaijan</i>	47	42
<i>Bolivia</i>	118	102
<i>Bulgaria</i>	149	118
<i>Canada</i>	383	204
<i>Colombia</i>	222	126
<i>Croatia</i>	67	57
<i>Cyprus</i>	118	107
<i>Czech Republic</i>	135	84
<i>Denmark</i>	176	95
<i>Estonia</i>	79	57
<i>Germany</i>	347	134
<i>Iceland</i>	191	158
<i>India</i>	203	
<i>Ireland</i>	161	111
<i>Kenya</i>	389	
<i>Latvia</i>	118	86
<i>Lebanon</i>	557	455
<i>Libyan Arab Jamahiriya</i>	39	21
<i>Lithuania</i>	109	73
<i>Macao</i>	345	
<i>Mauritius</i>	232	
<i>Mexico</i>	306	203
<i>New Zealand</i>	191	133
<i>Nicaragua</i>	140	140
<i>Norway</i>	232	123
<i>Pakistan</i>	61	38
<i>Panama</i>	143	134
<i>Poland</i>	140	93
<i>Portugal</i>	166	118
<i>Republic Of Korea</i>	297	200
<i>Republic Of Moldova</i>	110	48
<i>Romania</i>	105	72
<i>Russia</i>	127	63
<i>Slovakia</i>	130	81
<i>Slovenia</i>	96	67
<i>Spain</i>	397	216
<i>Sweden</i>	210	108
<i>Macedonia</i>	26	23
<i>Tunisia</i>	88	60
<i>Ukraine</i>	105	76
<i>Zimbabwe</i>	36	26

Source: Adapted from UNESCO Office of Statistics

Television drama more generally shows the same trend. In 1983, the US was estimated to have 60% of global TV sales. By 1999, the US figure had grown to 68%, thanks to 85% of exported children's programming and 81% of TV movies. In 1998, Europe bought \$2 billion a year of US programming. The one failure was the decline of US soap opera in the face of indigenous productions that mimic it, and the loss of a domestic audience in prime time. But even the Latin American internal market in *telenovelas* meant that only 6% of imported television was pan-Continental in 1996—86% came from the US. US imports could be priced to best local costs very easily (Augros 2000: 228; Freedman 2003: 29-30, 32, 36; *Screen Digest* September 1999: 232; *Screen Digest* November 1999: 296; *Screen Digest* January 2000: 30; Durie *et al.* 2000: 87; Olson 1999: 1; A World View 1997; European Audiovisual Observatory 1998; O'Donnell 1999: 213; Sinclair 1999: 156; Tuohy, 2003).

The comparative data over four decades can be found in the following table.

Table 3
Percentages of US Programming

Site	1962	1972	1982	1992
<i>Japan</i>	7	9	4	5
<i>South Korea</i>	24	19	10	9
<i>Hong Kong</i>	69	28	9	2
<i>Taiwan</i>	36	21	9	20
<i>India</i>	N/A	3	0	0
<i>France</i>	0	3	6	22
<i>Spain</i>	13	24	11	31
<i>Sweden</i>	8	2	4	34
<i>Israel</i>	N/A	13	15	15
<i>Lebanon</i>	24	41	34	29
<i>Dominican Republic</i>	14	22	36	N/A
<i>Colombia</i>	18	10	23	N/A
<i>Chile</i>	4	38	28	22
<i>Brazil</i>	31	44	37	20
<i>Mexico</i>	38	26	35	24
<i>Anglo-Canada</i>	49	50	53	51
<i>Franco-Canada</i>	35	38	38	39
<i>Trinidad</i>	29	50	59	69
<i>Jamaica</i>	30	46	55	65
<i>Barbados</i>	31	31	52	N/A

Source: Adapted from Straubhaar 2001: 148

5. Role of the State

So where does all this success come from? Rather than being a source of anti-US sentiment, surely the success of these films and TV programs signifies the popularity of the country's culture? Neo-classical economics argues that way, as do mavens of the US industries concerned, based on their

contention that US entertainment simply gives people around the world what they want, because its culture industries are demand-driven, *laissez-faire* entities.

This claim about private initiative acting without the restriction of government intervention is a tired old shibboleth. The role of the state in aiding the development and success of US popular culture is venerable, powerful, and undimmed. From the mid-19th century, when the first international copyright treaties were being negotiated in Europe, the US refused to protect foreign literary works—a belligerent stance that it would denounce today as piratical. As a net importer of books seeking to develop a national literary patrimony of its own—an “American Literature”—Washington was not interested in extending protection to foreign works that might hinder its own printers, publishers or authors from making a profit and building a culture industry. This mix of indebtedness and *ressentiment* characterizes the relation of import to export cultures, where taste and domination versus market choice and cultural control are graceless antinomies. It also characterizes the dependent relationship of development, a lesson that the US learnt quickly, and used to do unto others as had been done to it. US business and government recognized that commercial empires must make modernity both mundane and extraordinary via control and consent, as per a history that stretched from Dutch art to British fiction (Hozic 2001: 32). The memo to self read: practice Import Substitution Industrialization, preach Export-Oriented Industrialization. We have seen this repeated in film, music, and television since. This section will focus particularly on film and television drama, as these areas have traditionally provoked the most caustic reactions to US culture.

The US state has a long history of direct participation in film production (Hearon 1938) and control of culture, starting in the silent era with screening Hollywood films on ships bringing migrants through to sending “films to leper colonies in the Canal Zone and in the Philippines” (Hays 1927: 50) and extending to formal and informal barriers to imports. During the First World War, films from the Central Powers were banned across the US. Immediately afterwards, the Department of the Interior recruited the industry to its policy of “Americanization” of immigrants (Walsh 1997: 10) and Paramount-Famous-Lasky executive Sidney R. Kent proudly referred to films as “silent propaganda” (1927: 208). In 1927, the fan magazine *Film Fun* printed an unsigned article by someone who had purportedly grown up in Paraguay:

Hizzoner, Uncle Sam, tells us it takes five years for a furriner to become Americanized. Hizzoner is looking up the wrong street; any furriner who goes to the movies in Europe can become an American in almost no time. ... When I got to America they told us we would have to go to Ellis Island the next day. I wanted to get into the swim right away. ... They turned me loose. I knew just what to do. The movies I had seen had taught me all about America. I bought a gun the second day, a horse the third, and the Woolworth building the fourth; the man who sold it to me was such a nice fellow, I'd like to meet him again some day. So you see, it really doesn't take long to become Yankeeized when one has seen the cinema (A. Yank 1927).

In the 1920s and '30s, Hollywood lobbyists regarded the US Departments of State and Commerce as its “message boys.” The State Department undertook market research and shared business intelligence and the Commerce Department pressured other countries to permit cinema free access and favorable terms of trade (Miller *et al.* 2001b).

In the 1940s, the US opened an Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs. Its most visible program was the Motion Picture Division, headed by John Hay Whitney, former co-producer of *Gone with the Wind* (1939) and future spy and front man for the CIA's news service, Forum World Features (Stonor Saunders 1999: 311-12). Whitney brought in public-relations specialists and noted filmmakers like Luis Buñuel to analyze the propaganda value of German and Japanese films. Whitney

was especially interested in their construction of ethnic stereotypes. He sought to change Hollywood movies, which were obstacles to gaining solidarity from Latin Americans for the US war efforts, and was responsible for getting Hollywood to distribute *Simón Bolívar* (1942) and produce *Saludos Amigos* (1943) and *The Three Caballeros* (1944). Some production costs were borne by the Office, in exchange for prints being distributed *gratis* in US embassies and consulates in Latin America. Whitney accompanied Walt Disney and the star of his film, Donald Duck, who made a guest appearance in Rio de Janeiro, and the Office had a film re-shot because it showed Mexican children shoeless in the street (Kahn 1981: 145; Powdermaker 1950: 71). The successful integration of Brazilian comic-book and cartoon characters into Disney products at this time paved the way for post-War success in opening the Brazilian market to extensive Disney merchandise (Reis 2001: 89-90). At the same moment, the radio network Voice of America was founded, broadcasting US propaganda. It was divided to deliver specialist Cold-War services promoting US culture after the War, generating Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe (Council on Foreign Relations 2003: 75).

During the invasion of Europe in 1944 and 1945, the US military closed Axis films, shuttered their industry, and insisted on the release of US movies. And the *quid pro quo* for the Marshall Plan was the abolition of customs restrictions, amongst which were limits on film imports (Trumpbour 2002: 63, 3-4, 62, 98; Pauwels and Loisen 2003: 293). In the case of Japan, the occupation immediately changed the face of cinema. When theatres reopened for the first time after the US dropped its atomic bombs, all films and posters with war themes had been removed, and previously censored Hollywood texts were on screens. The occupying troops immediately established an Information Dissemination Section (soon to become the Civilian Information and Education Section) in its Psychological Warfare Branch, to imbue the local population with guilt and “teach American values” through movies (High 2003: 503-04).

The Motion Picture Export Association of America referred to itself as “the little State Department” in the 1940s, so isomorphic were its methods and ideology with US policy and politics. This was also the era when the industry’s self-regulating Production Code appended to its bizarre litany of sexual anxieties two items requested by the “other” State Department: selling the American way of life around the world and, as we have seen, avoiding negative representations of “a foreign country with which we have cordial relations” (Powdermaker 1950: 36). Producer Walter Wanger (1950) trumpeted the meshing of what he called “Donald Duck and Diplomacy” as “a Marshall Plan for ideas ... a veritable celluloid Athens” that meant the state needed Hollywood “more than ... the H bomb” (444, 446). Motion Picture Association of America head Eric Johnston, fresh from his prior post as Secretary of Commerce, sought to dispatch “messengers from a free country.” President Harry Truman agreed, referring to movies as “ambassadors of goodwill” (quoted in Johnston 1950; also see Hozic 2001: 77). Meanwhile, with the Cold War underway, the CIA’s Psychological Warfare Workshop clandestinely employed future Watergater E Howard Hunt to fund the rights purchase and production of *Animal Farm* (1954) and *1984* (1956) (Cohen 2003). On a more routine basis, the United States Information Service, located all over the world as part of Cold-War expansion and what we now call public diplomacy, had a lending library of films as a key stratagem (Lazarsfeld 1950: xi).

The Legislative Research Service prepared a report for the House Committee on Foreign Affairs’ Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements in 1964 with a title that made the point bluntly: *The U.S. Ideological Effort: Government Agencies and Programs*. It explained that “the U.S. ideological effort has become more important than ever” because “The Communist movement is working actively to bring ... underdeveloped lands under Communist control.” The report included John F Kennedy’s instruction to the US Information Agency that it use film and television, *inter alia*, to propagandize. It noted that at that moment, the government was paying for 226 film centres in

106 countries with 7,541 projectors (1964: 1, 9, 19). Four decades later, union officials soberly intoned that:

Although the Cold War is no longer a reason to protect cultural identity, today U.S.-produced pictures are still a conduit through which our values, such as democracy and freedom, are promoted (Ulich and Simmers 2001: 365).

By that point, additional services had been constructed to help sell US culture, such as surrogate radio and sometimes TV broadcasting systems aimed at Cuba, Asia, Iraq, and Iran (Council on Foreign Relations 2003: 75; Gilboa 1998: 59).

Today's culture industries are a private-public amalgam of capitalist innovation, standardised production, and state support. They blend Northern Californian technology, Hollywood methods, Wall Street commerce, and military funding. The interactivity underpinning this hybrid has evolved through the articulation since the mid-1980s of Southern and Northern California semi-conductor and computer manufacture and systems and software development (a massively military-inflected and -supported industry until after the Cold War) to Hollywood screen content. Disused aircraft-production hangars were symbolically converted into entertainment sites (Aksoy and Robins 1992; Scott 1998b: 31; Porter 1998; Bureau of Labor Statistics 2000: 205; Vogel 1998: 33; Scott 1998a; International Labour Office 2000; Sedgwick 2002; Raco 1999; Waters 1999; Goodman 2001).

Links continue to be forged. Stephen Spielberg is a recipient of the Defense Department's Medal for Distinguished Public Service, Silicon Graphics feverishly designs material for use by the empire in both its military and cultural aspects, and virtual-reality research veers between soldierly and audience applications, much of it subsidised by the Federal Technology Reinvestment Project and Advanced Technology Program. This has further submerged new weaponry from public scrutiny, even as it surfaces superficially, doubling as Hollywood props (Directors Guild of America 2000; Hozic 2001: 140-41, 148-51). The connection was evident in the way the film industry sprang into militaristic action in concert with Pentagon preferences after September 11, 2001 and became a consultant on possible attacks (Grover 2001; McClintock 2002; Gorman 2002; Calvo and Welkos 2002). The University of Southern California's Institute for Creative Technologies uses military money and Hollywood directors to test out military technologies and narrative scenarios. And with NASA struggling to renovate its image, who better to invite to a lunch than Hollywood producers, so they would script new texts featuring the Agency as a benign, exciting entity (Hollywood Reaches 2002)? There is even a "White House-Hollywood Committee" to ensure coordination between the nations we engage and the messages we export (Chambers 2002). Recently-departed Motion Picture Association of America head and former Presidential apparatchik Jack Valenti (2003) went so far as to argue before Congress that policing ownership of copyrighted films overseas was a key initiative against terrorism, since copying funds transnational extra-political violence.

To add to decades of links between the US military and popular culture, the US Government has of course staged its own interventions in the area, to the consternation of allies and enemies alike. Consider the controversial case of Al Jazeera. The US State Department tried to disrupt it via pressure on Qatar's Emir Sheikh Hamid bin Khalifa al-Thani (International Federation of Journalists 2001: 20; Hafez 2001; el-Nawawy and Gher 2003) and the channel's Washington correspondent was "detained" *en route* to a US-Russia summit in November 2001 (Miladi 2003: 159). The network was assaulted by US munitions in Afghanistan in 2001 (where it was the sole broadcast news outlet in Kabul) and Iraq in 2003, and subject to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's denunciation of it as "Iraqi propaganda" and the Bush regime's moniker: "All Osama All the Time" (quoted in Getlin and Jensen 2003 and Rampton and Strauber 2003: 186). Then it was denied access by its US-based internet provider (Association for Progressive Communications 2003; Fine 2003). Throughout the 2003-04 US occupation of Iraq, Al Jazeera workers were subject to violent assaults by US soldiers,

culminating in murders (Parenti 2004; Eide 2004: 280). The attack on the network's Kabul operations was justified by Rear Admiral Craig Quigley, US deputy assistant defense secretary for public affairs, via the claim that Al Qaeda interests were being aided by activities going on there. Quigley's proof was that Al Jazeera was using a satellite uplink and was in contact with Taliban officials—pretty normal activities for a news service (FAIR 2003b; Gowing 2003: 234). Meanwhile, the New York Stock Exchange expelled Al Jazeera during the invasion of Iraq, following US Governmental criticisms of it for televising prisoners of war and Arab criticisms of the attack. The official explanation was that for “security reasons,” the number of broadcasters allowed at the Exchange had to be limited to those offering “responsible business coverage” (Agovino 2003; Al Jazeera Banned 2003). The NASDAQ exchange refused to grant Al Jazeera press credentials at the same time, for the same reason (FAIR 2003a).

The 2003 US assault on Al Jazeera was condemned by the Committee to Protect Journalists and Amnesty International as a violation of international humanitarian law, and that Committee, Reporters sans Frontières, the International Federation of Journalists, and the International Press Institute all condemned US bombing of Iraqi state television (Lobe 2003). *Index on Censorship* honored the network with its free-expression prize, and analysis indicated that the framing devices it used to explain stories were identical to media norms everywhere, other than the United States (Byrne 2003; Lobe 2003; Khouri 2003; Fisk 2003). In direct opposition to Al Jazeera, the US Government selected Grace Digital Media to run an Arabic-language satellite television news service into post-invasion Iraq. Grace is a fundamentalist Christian company that describes itself as “dedicated to transmitting the evidence of God’s presence in the world today” via “secular news, along with aggressive proclamations that will “change the news” to reflect the Kingdom of God” (quoted in Mokhiber and Weissman 2003). Alternative voices in Iraq were discouraged. The Associated Press Managing Editors sent an open letter of protest to the Pentagon, noting that “journalists have been harassed, have had their lives endangered and have had digital camera disks, videotape and other equipment confiscated” by the US military (APME 2003).

This period since September 11 has also witnessed, as we saw above, calls for a revitalized US propaganda effort coordinated between the state and business. The new public diplomacy is supposed to transcend the material effects of policies and businesses and instead permit closer communication at a civil-society level, directly linking citizens across borders to “influence opinions and mobilize foreign publics” (Council on Foreign Relations 2003: 15; also see Gilboa 1998) by, as the State Department puts it, “engaging, informing, and influencing key international audiences” (Brown 2004). The idea is to achieve these goals in ways that work for the interests of the US government, but avoid both that connotation, and potential opposition from other states.

Republicans had nearly ended public diplomacy once they took control of the Congress in the mid-1990s, diminishing funding and staffing by 20-25%, but quickly turned to it under Bush as a way of affirming that “misunderstanding” and the baleful impact of popular culture were responsible for the situation of the country internationally, creating the White House Office of Global Communications and a Policy Coordinating Committee on Strategic Communications. In 2002 they began Radio Free Afghanistan. That year also saw the advent of CultureConnect, which sent artists, writers, and musicians around the world to demonstrate US sophistication and decency and give young people a belief in their place in the world that was to do with something other than violence. Radio Sawa and Radio Farda began, offering Arabic- and Farsi-language music and news. Later they developed TV links. And the venerable Voice of America extended its Indonesian and Cantonese programming (Center for Arts and Culture 2004: 8; Council on Foreign Relations 2003: 9, 27, 75; Schaefer 2004). The State Department and the new White House Office of Global Communications

began an Arab magazine, *Hi*, in 2003 aimed at proving to young people that US and Arabic culture are alike (Center for Arts and Culture 2004: 27).

Many popular-culture performers were excluded from these initiatives, since their brashness and capacity to offend and innovate were considered dangerous. And so the recruits were all part of high and suburban culture. The Council on Foreign Relations did, however, perceive a role for “credible television properties and personalities,” mentioning MTV and *Sesame Street* (2003: 41).

The key difference with the new Middle-Eastern radio networks sponsored by the US is that they engage youth culture, in keeping with fears that it is young people who represent the greatest threat to US hegemony. The *problem* with all these plans is that public diplomacy is conceived as a means of promoting the country and its policies, rather than changing the way the country makes and presents policy to include respect for international public opinion and law—including the impact on others of US policies is critical (Brown 2004; Zorthian 2004).

6. Opposition

The Council on Foreign Relations maintains that anti-Americanism is partly fuelled by “the broad sweep of American culture. Hollywood movies, television, advertising, business practices, and fast-food chains from the United States are provoking a backlash” (2003: 24). Not surprisingly given these historic links between the US government and popular culture, critical reactions have come from many sources. Although anxieties about stereotypes are often identified with a contemporary liberal sensibility, they have in fact been a long-standing concern, both for domestic conservatives frightened by sex, and other nations objecting to stereotypes. Anti-Americanism based on popular culture has a long lineage.

In 1921, the Great Wall Motion Picture Studio was founded in New York by Chinese expatriates angered by US industry and government neglect of their complaints about representations of Chinese characters. The studio produced films for export home as well the US market (Hu 2003: 51-52). In 1922, Mexico placed embargoes on film imports because of the repugnant “greaser” genre. It was supported by other Latin American countries, Canada, France, and Spain (De Los Reyes 1996: 29-31). In 1926, the British Cabinet Office issued a paper to participants at the Imperial Economic Conference warning that “so very large a proportion of the films shown throughout the Empire ... present modes of life and forms of conduct which are not typically British.” By the following year, the *Daily Express* newspaper worried that the exposure of British youth to US entertainment was making them “temporary American citizens” (quoted in de Grazia 1989: 53).

French soldiers rioted against their portrayal in *Hot for Paris* (1929) (Trumpbour 2002: 28, 31, 40). And official complaints over cultural slurs were made during the same decade by Germany, England, France, Italy, and Spain (Vasey 1992). The industry’s 1927 list of “Dont’s and Be Carefuls” instructed producers to “avoid picturizing in an unfavorable light another country’s religion, history, institutions, prominent people, and citizenry.”

Throughout the 1920s and early 1930s, British authorities in India criticized Hollywood films as potential sources of nationalist unruliness, forms of contagion that might infect the precarious management of the native body politic as Hollywood film undermined whiteness (via caricature or hyperbole) through melodrama and comedy (Jaikumar 1999). The British Board of Film Classification of the 1930s insisted that Hollywood films released in imperial possessions follow the rule that “white men may not be shown in a state of degradation amidst native surroundings” (quoted in Barker 1993: 11). At the same time, the British Government in India banned foreign films “likely to encourage revolutionary tendencies,” for example, *Viva Villa* (1934), *Declaration of Independence* (1938), and *Give me Liberty* (1936) (Bagai, 1938; Abbas 1940: 192). Belgium’s 1945 decision to ban

Hollywood film in Congo came from concerns that it could incite anti-colonial agitation. The US itself wisely elected not to screen *Gone with the Wind* in Germany after the War, in the light of its racism (Trumpbour 2002: 101) and held back *Tobacco Road* (1941) and *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940) from foreign release lest they be “used as propaganda against the United States” in their focus on “the American dispossessed” which would “offer considerable embarrassment to our State Department” (Rosten 1947: 119). Franco’s Spain enthusiastically embraced the pro-capitalist side to Hollywood, and abjured its pro-worker, anti-fascist and libertarian films. *The Grapes of Wrath*, *The Great Dictator* (1940), *How Green Was My Valley* (1941), *To Be or Not to Be* (1942), and *Some Like It Hot* (1959) were too dangerous to be seen there until after Franco’s death in 1975, while Orson Welles’ International Brigade past was excised from *The Lady from Shanghai* (1948) (Wanger 1950: 445; Bosch and del Rincón 2000: 108-09, 111). The industry advised against any negative representation of the Fascist Spanish state, even after the War (Powdermaker 1950: 65). This was a period when its allies in the State Department supported the Fascists as a bulwark against state socialism. Meanwhile, the tendency of US culture to assume victory in “just” wars and ignore complicity in others has led to derision and anger. After both World Wars, complaints came from Australia, France, Britain, and Canada when Hollywood fictionalized those epic conflicts as exclusively US triumphs (Trumpbour 2002: 172, 184-85).

Pius XI’s 1936 Vigilanti Cura: Encyclical Letter on Improper Motion Pictures to US bishops offered the following remark:

We were deeply anguished to note with each passing day the lamentable progress—*magni passus extra viam*—of the motion picture art and industry in the portrayal of sin and vice. ... There is no need to point out the fact that millions of people go to the motion pictures every day; that motion picture theatres are being opened in ever increasing number in civilized and semi-civilized countries; that the motion picture has become the most popular form of diversion which is offered for the leisure hours not only of the rich but of all classes of society.

Countries emerging from colonialism have long had issues with US popular culture. The history of intersections with foreign governments is a particularly complex one in Asia and the Arab world. In China, the high point of Maoism and the Cultural Revolution saw Hollywood excluded after an early period of exchange that broke down with the Korean War until the late 1970s. The liberalization of film imports of the 1970s was set back when Hollywood turned to anti-China themes (Ye 2003: 15-16, 18) in *Kundun* (1997), *Red Corner* (1997—partially shot undercover in Beijing and including footage of executions) and *Seven Years in Tibet* (1997—partially shot undercover in Tibet). Star Brad Pitt was banned from entry to the PRC. Complaints came not just from the state; these texts were regarded by critics as “laughable gimmicks ... elaborately cooked up for the sake of ‘demonizing’ China” (A Renewed 2003: 50). And for decades, Thailand has banned Hollywood’s clumsy representations of its monarchy (Thailand 1999). Conversely, even at the height of the Iranian Revolution, many Hollywood films were still released, despite the opposition they drew (Naficy 2002). Disney’s lucrative 1990s deals in the Middle East were jeopardized by a bizarre exhibit at its Epcot theme park in Orlando that naturalized Jerusalem as Israel’s capital (Sakr 2001: 94), while the company has carefully re-calibrated its Latin American stereotypes in order to assist the sale of TV networks there (Wayne 2003: 74).

In short, the power of Hollywood has long triggered responses from both left and right. European progressives have admired the US for its secular modernity, egalitarianism and change, even as they have deplored its racism, monopoly capitalism, and class exploitation and their corollaries on camera, while the right has been disturbed by the *mestizo* qualities of African-American and Jewish contributions to the popular (Wagnleitner and May 2000: 5-6). Since the Second World War,

widespread reaction against the discourses of modernization has foregrounded the US capitalist media as crucial components in the formation of commodities, mass culture and economic and political organization in the Third World. Examples include the export of Hollywood screen products and infrastructure, as well as US dominance of international communications technology. Nigeria, for example, was first tied to US television through the supply of equipment, which was then articulated to the sale of programs, genres and formats (Owens-Ibie 2000: 133). Critics claim that the rhetoric of development through commercialism decelerated economic growth and disenfranchised local culture, with emergent ruling classes in dependent nations exercising local power, at the cost of relying on foreign capital and ideology.

This kind of sustained critique assisted in the development of a cultural-imperialism thesis during the 1960s. It argued that the US, as the world's leading exporter of culture, was transferring its dominant value system to others, with a corresponding diminution in the vitality and standing of local languages and traditions had nurtured national identity. The theory attributed US cultural hegemony to control of news agencies, advertising, market research, public opinion, screen trade, technology, propaganda, telecommunications, and security (Primo 1999: 183). US involvement in South-East Asian wars during the 1960s led to critiques of its military interventions against struggles of national liberation and in turn targeted links between the military-industrial complex and the media, pointing to the ways that communications and cultural corporations bolstered US foreign policy and military strategy and enabled the more general expansion of multinationals, which were seen as substantial power brokers in their own right.

During the 1960s and 1970s, cultural-imperialism discourse found a voice in the Non-Aligned Movement and UNESCO. In the 1970s, UNESCO set up the MacBride Commission to investigate cultural and communication issues in North-South flows and power. At the same time, Third World countries lobbied for a New International Information Order or New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO), mirroring calls for a New International Economic Order and a revised North-South dialogue. The MacBride Commission reported in 1980 on the need for equal distribution of the electronic spectrum, reduced postal rates for international texts, protection against satellites crossing borders and an emphasis on the media as tools of development and democracy rather than commerce. There continue to be annual Roundtables on the Commission's legacy, but the United States mounted a successful riposte to NWICO (Mattelart and Mattelart 1998: 94-97; Roach 1997: 48; Mowlana 1993: 61).

The NWICO position was vulnerable from all sides for its inadequate theorization of markets, the postcolonial condition, internal and international social relations, the role of the state, the mediating power of indigenous culture, and its own complex *frottage*—a pluralism that insisted on the relativistic equivalence of all cultures and defied chauvinism, but rubbed up against a distinctively powerful equation of national identities with cultural forms (Schlesinger 1991: 145).

Opponents of cultural-imperialism critique argue that such worries, and the cultural protectionism they inspire, derive from a Puritanism that denies the liberatory aspects of much US entertainment for stifling class structures—Federico Fellini famously equated “America, democracy ... Fred Astaire” (quoted in Hay 1987: 64). Critics of the cultural-imperialism thesis note that its analyses of transplanted culture are insufficiently alive to specificities, of region, nation, and audience (O'Regan 1992: 75). They argue that customization is critical, as evidenced in the capacity to fuse imported strands of popular culture with indigenous ones (e.g. Nigerian juju and Afro-Beat), to rediscover and remodel a heritage via intersections with imported musical genres. Mattel's Barbie doll has been successfully exported to 140 countries with company customization, but there are also local, unauthorized adaptations that trope Barbie while undermining proprietorial exclusivity (McDougall 2003). This is said to indicate the power of audience preferences *contra* US dominance.

Similarly, when national cinemas refuse to take a critical distance from Hollywood cinema as some damned other, seeking instead to imitate it—notably the 1980s *Si Boy* cycle in Indonesia, with its youth culture of fast cars and English-speaking servants—they are fusing imported strands of popular culture with indigenous culture. This embrace of imported Hollywood texts might indeed rework cultural identity, as in Irish cinema, or act as buffers against cultural imports that are too close for comfort, as when Pakistanis prefer the difference of North America to the similarity of India. In the case of *Moulin Rouge!* (2001), the oddity of Ewan McGregor bursting into song is cradled in a familiarity with Bollywood as much as Hollywood intertexts, while Bollywood itself has drawn on Hollywood story-lines and star images for decades, as have Chinese, Japanese, and Brazilians (Sen 1994: 64, 73, 129-30; Rockett *et al.* 1988: 147; O'Regan 1992: 343; Byrne 2002; Pendakur 2003: 108; Ganti 2002; Mishra 2002: 126; Ye 2003; Hu 2003; High 2003: 79; Shaw 2003).

A television survey by the *Economist* in 1994 remarks that cultural politics is always so localized in its first and last instances that the “electronic bonds” of exported drama are “threadbare” (Heilemann 1994: SURVEY 4). And it is certainly true that part of the talent of the cultural commodity is that it leads a lengthy career and can be retrained to suit new circumstances. As Liberace once put it: “If I play Tchaikovsky I play his melodies and skip his spiritual struggles. ... I have to know just how many notes my audience will stand for” (quoted in Hall and Whannell 1965: 70). Because culture covers aesthetic discrimination as much as monetary exchange, it is simultaneously the key to international cultural trade, and one of its limiting factors. Ethics, affect, custom, and other forms of knowledge both enable and restrict the processes of commodification. For example, Tokyo Disneyland is owned by the Oriental Land Company, a Japanese firm. It is a successful replica of Anaheim, modified to suit local culture (Raz 2003). Disney television in Australia consisted of rebroadcast US programs in the 1960s; by the 1990s, they went through a superficial localization, via young Australian presenters (Nightingale 2001: 73). And General Motors, which own Australia's General Motors Holden, translated its “hot dogs, baseball, apple pie, and Chevrolet” jingle into “meat pies, football, kangaroos, and Holden cars” for the Australian market.

While criticisms have been made of MTV Asia, for example, because of its preponderance of Western material, a logic of intercultural communication suggests that Saudi and Taiwanese audiences could be alienated by the “foreignness” of either culture on-screen, but feel familiar with the “internationalism” of US product. And in any event, when Rupert Murdoch bought the parent STAR TV, he insisted that market forces would make indigenous programming critical to success in China, Indonesia, and India (Reeves 1993: 36, 62; Fitzpatrick 1993: 22; Heilemann 1994: SURVEY 12). MTV gradually became regional rather than local or US in its global programming, as did other cross-national networks, such as news channels (Chalaby 2003: 465).

An additional problem with the NWICO version of cultural imperialism is that it risks cloaking the interests of emergent businesses seeking to advance their own market power under the sign of national cultural self-determination. Such a framework encourages cultural-imperialism theorists to champion hierarchical and narrow accounts of culture as discrete and super-legitimate phenomena that mostly serve as a warrant for an asphyxiating parochialism created and policed by cultural bureaucrats.

UNESCO has ceased to be the critical site for NWICO debate. The US and the UK withdrew from the Organization in 1985 on the grounds that it was illegitimately politicized, as evidenced by its denunciation of Zionism and support for state intervention against private-press dominance. The past decade has seen UNESCO distancing themselves from NWICO in the hope of attracting their critics back to the fold. The UN has also downplayed its prior commitment to a New Order (Gerbner 1994: 112-13; Gerbner *et al.* 1994: xi-xii). The US rejoined in 2003 in time to make noises about the Organisation contemplating a convention on cultural diversity that might sequester culture from

neoliberal trade arrangements (Fraser 2003). Negotiations saw the US arguing officially that the exchange of entertainment is outside culture, which it defined as the less commodifiable and governable spheres of religion and language (Ford 2003).

In a telling accommodation, the UN began to sponsor large international conferences in the late 1990s, such as the World Television Forum, to promote partnerships between commercial media managers, entrepreneurs and investors from the US and Europe and their poorer counterparts from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. And while UNESCO is a supporter of the “Screens Without Frontiers” initiative, which aims to facilitate a “readjustment movement of North-South information exchanges” within the rubric of quality and public service, i.e. to encourage First World broadcasters to give away non-commodity-oriented programs, even this project was endorsed provided it was not funded from the UNESCO budget (Tricot 2000). By 2003, there was talk of a NWICO *redux*—but this time under US hegemony, with UNESCO and culture displaced as sites and priorities by the WTO and commerce (Pauwels and Loisen 2003: 292).

Nevertheless, concerns about US cultural influence remain and multiply. At Mondiacult 1982, the Mexico City world conference on cultural production, the French Minister for Culture Jack Lang made the following remark:

We hope that this conference will be an occasion for peoples, through their governments, to call for genuine cultural resistance, a real crusade against this domination, against—let us call a spade a spade—this financial and intellectual imperialism (quoted in Mattelart *et al.* 1988: 19-20).

French President François Mitterand’s memorable argument of the mid-1990s stressed that cultural struggle over the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade was not “the culture of Europe” versus “the New World.” Rather, it was about the preservation of “the universality of culture” (quoted in Strode 2000: 67).

While the leftist connotations of this rhetoric are not universally welcome, its moral fervour resonate widely and profoundly, such that all Western European countries now echo it, and ASEAN issued a statement in the 1990s calling for “a united response to the phenomenon of cultural globalization in order to protect and advance cherished Asian values and traditions which are being threatened by the proliferation of Western media content” (quoted in Chadha and Kavoori 2000: 417). These states are caught between the desire to police representations and languages along racial and religious lines and financial commitments to internationalism. *Bruce Almighty* (2003), beloved by young fundamentalist US Protestants, was banned in Egypt because “it harms the Almighty by daring to have him incarnated by an actor,” according to censor Madkour Thabet (Egypt also banned *Matrix Reloaded* as sacrilegious). Marketers were, however, able to position *Bruce Almighty* in Jordan, despite official protests, after comic allusions to Moses parting the Red Sea were cut (Egyptian Censors 2003). It is no wonder young Indonesian and Egyptian artists called for a ban on the screening of US and British material during the 2003 invasion of the Middle East, while Chinese film critics worried about “a powerful cultural offensive” from Hollywood that was “a sort of plundering” of Chinese youth (Indonesian 2003; A Renewed 2003: 48-49). In Greece, the Union of Greek filmmakers organized a boycott of Hollywood, including the DVD release of *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* (2002) (Nathan 2003: 16).

Since a 1997 WTO decision in favor of the US that denied Canada the right to protect local print media through limiting the importation of split-run magazines (McKercher 2001), Canadian policy-makers have led efforts to create an international consensus on rules that would allow states to design policies to foster cultural diversity. In 1999, a coalition of Canadian civic organizations prepared the report *New Strategies for Culture and Trade: Canadian Culture in a Global World*. It recommended the creation of a New International Instrument on Cultural Diversity that would recognize trade

exceptions for domestic policies that seek to ensure cultural diversity. In subsequent trade talks, the Canadian government refused to make commitments which would restrict its ability to achieve cultural diversity goals until this international instrument was secured. The Canadians and other culture ministries formed an International Network on Cultural Policy that met in Mexico (1999), Greece (2000), and Switzerland (2001) to exchange information regarding diversity initiatives (Goldsmith, 2002). These and other efforts led UNESCO to create a working group on cultural diversity, which culminated in the adaptation of a Declaration on Cultural Diversity in November 2001.

Regional economic formations have sought to produce a front against the dominance of US popular culture. The Council of Europe set out to harmonize co-production rules and make access to funds easier for producers by creating the pan-European co-production fund Eurimages in 1989, and convened a European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production in 1992 to establish common criteria for eligibility. While the former European Economic Community sought economic unity for Europe, the Council was equally concerned with the cultural mission of “safeguarding and realizing the ideals and principles which are their common heritage.” The cinema was considered an important medium for giving expression to “European identity.” And when the 1992 Maastricht Treaty folded the Community into the European Union, culture was addressed in article 128: “The Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing their common cultural heritage to the fore”. The audiovisual policies of the Council and the European Union have set out to meet the economic imperatives of unification through cultural imperatives, to foster “unity in diversity” (Hainsworth 1994: 13-15, 29).

Latin America has very limited regional arrangements by comparison with the EU, though the Organisation of American States/Organización des Estados Americanos has set up a cultural ministers’ forum. The 1989 NAFTA between Canada and the US specifically exempted the culture industries, but permitted commercial retaliation against any exclusion of materials. Mexico did not seek an equivalent exemption in 1994. Indeed, according to Mexican negotiators, thirty centuries of cultural tradition dating back to pre-Aztec times would maintain Mexico’s autonomy (Miller and Yúdice 2002: 176). The Mercado Común del Sur of the southern cone and Brazil has introduced few cultural initiatives, other than a trade preference for intra-Mercado TV (Ó Siochrú *et al.* 2002: 61-63). In 2004, meetings were held between OAS, EU, and Canadian cultural officials to talk about joint initiatives against US dominance.

For its part, ASEAN held an Information Ministers event in 1989 to deal with globalization, principally the representation of the Third World in Northern media. Although media policies were agreed on, no binding principles or mechanisms were set up because of variant attitudes within the Association. Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia require centralized state control for fear of social dislocation from foreign media, but Thailand and the Philippines see openness to Western cultural exchange as part of economic development (Atkins 2002: 32-33, 73).

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

Recall Sydney Smith’s 1820 rant about the lack of US culture. He knew even then what potential the nation had, provided that it avoided “the insanity of garrisoning rocks and islands across the world.” Smith asked whether the new nation-state would become “a powerful enemy or a profitable friend,” querying the moral fiber of the US because “every sixth man is a slave, whom his fellow-creatures may buy and sell and torture” (1844: 139, 137). Today the United States garrisons over 130 overseas places, and its friendly and enemy status are blurred.

Clearly, US popular culture has transformed life elsewhere. On the one hand, it represents intense productive discipline; on the other, it promises transcendence through intense commodity consumption. Such links are encapsulated in two famous film scenes involving Clark Gable. In the 1930s, a deputation of Argentinian businessmen protested to the US Embassy about *It Happened One Night* (1934) because Gable was seen removing his shirt, revealing no singlet below. This supposedly created an undershirt inventory surplus in their warehouses—overnight! A quarter of a century later, *It Started in Naples* (1960) found Gable showing a local boy how to eat a hamburger, which produced public controversy about compromising Mediterranean cuisine. Thirty years on, the task of tying commodities to films was completed by another kind of envoy, as Disney coordinated the release of *Pocahontas* (1995) with McDonalds’ new “McChief Burger”—early fruit from their ten-year agreement for cross-promotion in 109 countries (Grantham 1998: 62; Wanger 1939: 50, 45; King 1990: 32; Sardar 1998: 26; McChesney 1999: 108). At the same time, it is too simplistic to view the protests at this influence as crucial parts of anti-Americanism. They are instead expressions of national sovereignty—and the interests of some state and business executives, of course.

Studies of the image of US film and TV in the Middle East in 2004 reveal that they are almost the only sources of positive feeling in the region engendered by this great, tumultuous force. There is also, of course, massive variation across the region. The US-enabled and -allied society of Saudi Arabia is much more opposed to US popular culture than Morocco or Jordan, and everywhere, the much-feared youth of each country are more positive than their elders. The Saudis receive almost no US films or TV drama for public screening, but are the most determined haters, whereas those most-exposed to US TV were most positive about the country. Across the board, reactions to US imports of entertainment are effectively unrelated to the questions that really make people angry: Washington’s policies on Iraq and Palestine (Zogby International 2004).

This should come as no surprise, since:

- popular culture’s contents are not clearly and demonstrably key contributors to anti-Americanism;
- the role of the US state in the success of popular culture is vastly greater than normally recognized;
- the corporate power and foreign and commercial policies of the US, notably its militarism, are key sources of anti-Americanism; and
- the efforts of public diplomacy to eschew popular culture, to counter-balance it, are fated towards a high-culture bias that will not address ordinary people’s needs.

So what needs to be done in the cultural area?

7.1 Recommendations

- The evidence collected in this report indicates the quality of data available for gauging the spread of US film and TV drama in Europe, but not elsewhere. And there is precious little information, other than of a very speculative kind, on the impact of this media dominance. Unlike other First World nations, then US is not renowned for collecting, analyzing, and freely distributing information about the culture industries. Most of that information is only available on a proprietary basis by for-profit firms that “sell to the trade.” For example, US companies spend \$6 billion annually polling foreign public opinion, while the Government spends just \$5-10 million (Council on Foreign Relations 2003: 10). Scholars, activists, and policy-makers need access to much more detailed results of such studies than is hitherto possible. In addition, unlike European nations and the other British white-settler colonies, national US research funding for addressing

these industries is severely limited, and in two senses. First, there is almost zero access by academic cultural-industries researchers to the National Science Foundation (unlike, say, anthropological research of every kind). Second, much of the extant research has been conducted in a very limited frame, focusing almost exclusively on the US, rather than its function abroad. We need an Audiovisual Observatory specifically dedicated to measuring and evaluating overseas US output and its reception and interpretation plus links between the US government. This needs to come from the private sector and the Federal Government.

- The new public diplomacy needs to be conducted with due regard to the real, material objections to US foreign policy, rather than being predicated on the notion of “misunderstanding” caused by popular culture as the problem that explains “why they hate us.” The evidence marshalled in this report indicates the longstanding nature of objections to US cultural domination, and their deliberate and accidental links to US commercial, military, and governmental power. Their content is not the problem.
- The US needs to support alternative regional arrangements for cultural production in the global South, rather than seeking to stifle them.
- The US needs to address the implications of its restless drive for profit through culture. At one level, this cannot be reversed—the infrastructure of primary and secondary domestic industries are already too thoroughly compromised to permit a turning-back from post-industrial, cultural economics. But the role of the state in these activities must be both admitted and addressed.
- The construction of ideas of foreign anti-Americanism within the US, especially by the right and the state, need further interrogation, both in their manifestations in popular culture and the rhetoric of public diplomacy.
- The US public and government need to understand why and how other nations express concern about their importation of US popular culture. Rather than being symptomatic of anti-Americanism, this is a concern about national cultural sovereignty. It is neither perverse nor aggressive, but ordinary. It is not new, but routine. The success of US exports is not simply about a market preference—rather, it is the result of sustained and powerful domination, utilizing the state on a regular basis. Retorts are only reasonable.
- The level of fit between US militarism, international violence, and production of violent spectacle as entertainment, is remarkable. In the final instance, the links between popular culture and US government aims and policies are key to anti-Americanism; not the *content* of popular culture.

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