Empire, Terror, and Human Rights: Political and Intellectual Discourses in France and the United States since "9/11"

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EMPIRE, TERROR, AND HUMAN RIGHTS: POLITICAL AND INTELLECTUAL
DISCOURSES IN FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES SINCE “9/11”

By

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ABSTRACT

In this dissertation, I compare the discourses of key political and intellectual actors in France and in the United States, in order to better understand the ways in which they have articulated major global issues since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. I situate my investigation against three main themes - empire, terror(ism), and human rights - which have gained heightened prominence and coalesced in new ways since the attacks. Through its interdisciplinary and comparative framework, this dissertation explores the nature of “empire” in a globalized world and the increasing prominence of a human rights agenda in considering issues relating to both empire and terrorism.

Specifically, the two case studies presented in the dissertation examine areas of similarity and contrast in the post-September 11 discourses of 1) Presidents Bush and Chirac, and 2) French and American intellectuals. Through my analysis both of the language, and of the arguments which emerge in the pronouncements of these important actors, I aim to elucidate the manner in which the themes of empire, terrorism, and human rights have been debated in France and America since the September 11 attacks and in the light of subsequent international developments, most notably the Iraq War. In doing so, this dissertation aims to contribute to our understanding of present-day Franco-American relations, and the key role played by language in constructing collective perceptions of some of the most important issues in contemporary history and politics.
INTRODUCTION

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and the events which have followed in their wake have marked a new phase in Franco-American relations. While this phase has been characterized by a new configuration of issues ushered in by an act of international terrorism which has often been portrayed as unique in American and indeed world history, it has been closely connected with two other strands of debate which, like terrorist acts themselves, have a longer history. Those other strands of debate concern the nature of “empire” (particularly that of the United States) in a globalized world and the increasing prominence of a human rights agenda in considering issues relating to both empire and terrorism. This dissertation sets out to examine the ways in which these three elements – empire, terrorism, and human rights – intersect in the post-September 11 world, and in particular, the ways in which they have been debated in the context of contemporary Franco-American relations.

While it is true that elements of the empire-terrorism-human rights debate have been present in different forms in both France and the US prior to 2001, never have they held the centrality that they do today. France and the US offer particularly promising terrain for comparisons in this domain for a number of reasons. From a historical perspective, no nation illustrates more clearly than France the European experience of empire and decolonization. Heavily criticized by the US during the Algerian War, France is today the leading European critic of the American “war on terror.” The often heated dialogue between France and the US thus focuses with unique clarity the issues raised by the exercise of non-consensual forms of power in the global system.

Specifically, my investigation focuses on two forms of discourse that deal with these issues in both countries: official (state) discourses, and the discourses of prominent French and American intellectuals. Through these two case studies, I aim to elucidate a number of key questions. When discussing issues relating to empire, terrorism, and human rights, how divergent are the discourses in each country? In what ways are these
concepts (and key terms associated with them) understood by political and intellectual actors, and just as importantly, how do these key formers of public opinion want their audiences to understand these terms? In the domain of official discourses, to what extent have the French and American presidents articulated divergent viewpoints reflecting national or “realpolitik” imperatives, and what discursive strategies have they used to create a narrative conducive to the advancement of their respective national agendas? In the domain of intellectual discourses, how far, in their vision of the issues raised by the September 11 attacks and subsequent interventions in the Middle East, do these actors approach the empire-terrorism-human rights nexus in ways which may transcend national boundaries and/or distinguish them from political leaders? These are the key questions addressed in this dissertation.

During the post-September 11 period, the concepts of empire, terrorism and human rights have coalesced in new ways, and in some respects, they have each undergone processes of reformulation when they have been invoked by different commentators. Part of my objective in this dissertation is thus to analyze the underlying dynamics involved in these sometimes subtle reformulations. Throughout the discussion which follows, it will become apparent that the exact meaning of each of the terms and concepts which provide the analytical focus for the discourses that I investigate is contested, and is at the same time open to manipulation depending on the objectives of the speaker in question.

For largely practical reasons, the most important of which being the need to confine my research to a defined time period in order to keep it both manageable and clearly focused, I chose to limit my analysis to the time period spanning September 11, 2001 and the US Presidential election of November 3, 2004. During the research phase of the dissertation, it became apparent that the issues of central interest to me were widely discussed during this time period, and thus that the renewal of President Bush’s mandate would provide an appropriate “landmark” date together with the necessary scope that I would need to elucidate the questions at the heart of my research.
Dissertation Structure and Methodology

In the first chapter of the dissertation, I provide a review of the scholarly literature pertaining to the concepts of empire, terrorism, and human rights. Given that these three themes provide the overarching lens of analysis through which I investigate political and intellectual discourses in France and America, it is essential that these concepts (and their historical and present forms of usage) are firmly grounded. In addition, I outline various methodological approaches which scholars have employed in the field of discourse analysis, and I describe those which have helped guide my own research. Granted the incontrovertible pre-eminence of the French and US heads of state in speaking officially for their respective nations, the methodological issues relating to the first of my case studies were in many ways less complex than those relating to French and American intellectuals, who as objects of study are less self-evidently amenable to formal definition. Accordingly, while the literature review in chapter 1 covers the main issues relating to official discourses, it leaves a detailed survey of previous work relating to intellectuals, including the definition of them as an analytical category, to the case study itself, where it helps to structure my argument more effectively than if it had been artificially detached for separate treatment elsewhere.

In the second chapter of the dissertation, I present the first of my two case studies, namely the official discourses of Presidents Chirac and Bush, and here, I examine in detail the language used by the two heads of state to describe key issues arising in the post-September 11 context. To do this, I divide my analysis into three main sections which examine, consecutively, the manner in which they have discussed questions connecting to terrorism, empire, and human rights. The comparative aspect of this chapter was in a number of ways less complex than the case study of intellectuals and, as noted above, it was possible to demarcate the corpus of official discourses more readily than that of intellectual discourses. For these reasons, the case study of official discourses did not require the same length of exposition as that on intellectual discourses.

The third and final substantive chapter of the dissertation focuses on intellectual discourses. Here, as just noted, I was required to conduct a particularly detailed literature review in order to establish the manner in which different commentators in France and
the US have defined “intellectuals.” It was crucial that I devote careful attention to this, as the category of “intellectual” is not the subject of universal consensus in either country, and thus it was by no means obvious when I started my research exactly whom I should include in my corpus. Following the opening section of this case study in which I address these issues, I go on to highlight the various forms of intellectual engagement which have been visible since September 11. I also examine the ways in which the media in each country have treated the discourses of these social actors. I then proceed to examine in detail the ways in which the twenty French and American intellectuals that I ultimately selected have discussed post-September 11 questions surrounding empire, terrorism and human rights. To do this, I divided my analysis into three distinct sections. Firstly I examine intellectual commentary relating to September 11 and its immediate aftermath. Here I have attempted to draw out prominent themes and counter-themes which framed intellectual discussion during this time period. Secondly, I look at intellectual commentary surrounding the Iraq War of 2003. Again, I organize my analysis into specific arguments and counter-arguments with the intention of elucidating the logic on which these arguments were based. Finally, I consider the underlying arguments which have framed intellectual comments relating to United Nations reform.

The overall aim of the dissertation, as explained at the start of this introduction, is to consider the structure of the contemporary Franco-American relationship from new angles which have not prominently featured in the recent work of other commentators in this domain. My emphasis on discourse analysis, along with the interconnections which I analyze between the themes of empire, terrorism and human rights, provide an interdisciplinary dimension which is lacking in most other studies of the post-September 11 period.

A note on the use of the term “9/11”

The events of September 11, 2001 very quickly became known as “9/11” in the United States, and this term has subsequently become virtually standard among many English language media, politicians, and academic commentators. This compressed and now familiar term was initially used for brevity and convenience when people referred to
the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Subsequently, however, “9/11” rapidly came to signify a wider and more complex range of referents, including interpretations of the events of September 11 and opinions, often regarded as self-evidently valid, concerning appropriate responses to those events. A similar conflation of particular events with interpretative responses to them is present in referents such as “Munich,” denoting at one and the same time a set of negotiations conducted by European leaders in 1938 and a policy habitually condemned under the label of “appeasement.” More recently, the terrorist bombings which took place in London on July 7, 2005 have come to be denoted as “7/7” by certain sections of the British media. As I will attempt to show over the course of this dissertation, contemporary blanket terms and phrases such as “war on terror” and “9/11” must be treated with caution, as they compress complex events, facts, and interpretations into short sound-bites which, while superficially value-free, implicitly carry strong ideological overtones. Often, such phrases are used for rhetorical purposes and/or to elide certain complexities. Accordingly, I avoid the use of the term “9/11” in my own analysis. Instead, I refer to “September 11” which is less ideologically charged than “9/11,” and when I do make references to “September 11” I endeavor to distinguish, with far more clarity than has typically been the case with the term “9/11,” between the events of that date and subsequent interpretations of them.
CHAPTER 1

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to situate my case studies in relation to the existing body of scholarly literature on empire, terrorism and human rights. In doing so, I will draw attention to domains in which my dissertation aims to cover new ground. As each of the themes just highlighted features prominently in my later discussion, for my data collection and analysis, it was necessary that I conduct a detailed literature review in order to determine how these concepts have been defined, understood, and employed by academic and other commentators in the present context, and just as importantly, how the meaning of these concepts has evolved over time. Given that I was seeking to analyze the discourses of political and intellectual actors, it was also necessary for me to examine the ways in which different scholars have approached the study of discourse in various domains.

In some respects, this literature review also serves as a definition of terms, although it should be pointed out at this early stage that the meaning of many of the concepts which I go on to examine is contested. It should also be noted that my primary goal in this dissertation is not to personally redefine these terms or concepts, although I do at some points in my discussion offer some thoughts in this direction. Rather, my aim is to highlight how they have been used and/or redefined by the objects of my analysis, namely the French and American presidents on the one hand, and prominent intellectuals in both countries on the other.

As I stated earlier, the concepts of empire, terrorism, and human rights each have a long history, but they have each increasingly been the subject of, or provided a backdrop for, new debates over the meaning of present-day terrorism and the nature of
American power in the international sphere. Seldom, however, are these three concepts as systematically interconnected in the manner which characterizes my approach in this dissertation. Indeed, most research in these fields is rooted in one academic discipline, and thus lacks the interdisciplinary and comparative dimensions which have structured my research.

I have divided this literature review into four main sections, each one relating to one of the key conceptual fields underpinning my investigation. While my case studies examine these themes with specific reference to French and American perceptions of the post-September 11 world, significant parts of the conceptual apparatus through which these themes are articulated are used very much more widely, and the academic literature is correspondingly large. Some of the most valuable theoretical work pertinent to my case studies has indeed been conducted by scholars working on other periods or regions. For this reason, the present literature review ranges much more widely than across purely contemporary research and publications relating directly to French and American perspectives on events since September 11, 2001.

Firstly, I provide an overview of the academic literature on past and present models of “empire.” Here, I pursue three main lines of investigation, which can be summarized as follows: 1) How have traditional models of empire, colonialism, and imperialism been formulated by different commentators? 2) In what ways, and under what logic, has the concept of “empire” been attached to the present-day United States? 3) When we consider past and present formulations of the concept of “empire” side by side, how appropriate is the application of this concept to the present-day United States?

Secondly, I consider the different ways in which academic commentators have sought to define “terrorism” in past and present contexts. What types of phenomena are typically described by this term, and how does speaker-oriented bias affect our perceptions of which acts should be classified as terrorist in nature? Thirdly I examine the concept of human rights, and trace its evolution up to the present. Because this concept has been debated in many different contexts, some of which lie beyond the scope of my case studies, the main aim in this section is to consider the ways in which human rights interface with debates over empire and terrorism, in both their past and present forms. Finally, I discuss the various methods which academics have used to conduct discourse
analysis, highlighting the different approaches which have guided my own research. For this part of the literature review, I devote more attention to political rather than intellectual discourses due to the more complex comparative methodology which I employed for my study of intellectuals, and due to the large volume of literature which exists on them. For these reasons, as I highlighted earlier, a significant part of my literature review for intellectuals is embedded in chapter 3.

Empire

In the domain of “empire,” a massive (and ever-expanding) body of literature exists which encompasses a myriad of historical contexts. As previously noted, the concept of empire has increasingly undergone a process of reconfiguration in recent years, and it is now frequently used to describe the nature of American power in the international sphere. While it would be impossible to provide an exhaustive review covering the entire corpus of literature on empire here, I will attempt to highlight a representative sample of such texts, and elucidate the various ways in which this material has shaped my two case studies.

Extensive scholarship exists on what one might broadly describe as “traditional” models of empire and colonialism, and much of this work provides detailed analyses of the functioning of 19th and 20th century European empires such as those of France and Great Britain. Not uncommonly such texts provide a useful conceptual lens through which we can interpret recent literature describing America’s rise to global prominence. Such texts typically discuss two interconnected dimensions of empire: 1) definitions and structural characteristics of European empires, and 2) the motivations for pursuing empire.

In a fairly general sense, Curtin (1971), Winks (1969), and Gann (1970) represent three early texts which examined, among other things, the operational features of the French and British empires, and the supposed contrast in motivations between them. Fieldhouse (1981) also provides a highly illuminating (and detailed) overview of the functioning of different European empires, and more recently, Hart (2003) and Cooper (2005) have conducted similar studies into European colonial expansion.
With regard to the ways in which one can define and conceptualize the various forms of European empires, two particularly insightful texts in this field are those of Wesseling (1997) and Osterhammel (1997), both of whom describe in detail the important distinctions between “colonialism” and “imperialism.” Both texts argue that these terms are not interchangeable, but describe quite different aspects of European empires. As will become apparent in my two case studies, the terms “empire,” “imperialism,” and “colonialism” have frequently been used in relation to US power as though they each describe the same phenomenon. Not uncommonly, little attempt is made to differentiate between these concepts, which is why the analyses provided by Osterhammel and Wesseling are particularly pertinent.

Osterhammel (1997) neatly distinguishes between different forms of colonial and imperial rule, and argues that part of the problem when analyzing colonialism is that no terminological precision for these terms exists due to the multi-faceted nature of the phenomena which they describe. He does, however, suggest several definitions against which he goes on to situate his analysis. Osterhammel describes “colonization” as a process of territorial acquisition, a “colony” as a particular type of sociopolitical organization, and “colonialism” as a system of domination (4). While he rightly explains that colonialism is a complex and protean phenomenon which has existed in a variety of different forms, he does outline some common denominators, including the fundamentally exploitative nature of such systems, and the fact that in most cases colonialism is imposed through military conquest with the overarching aim of economic exploitation and national prestige.

Colonialism, Osterhammel explains, can involve an extensive colonial presence (such as that of France in Algeria, which involved direct rule through French-dominated administrative structures and a significant settler presence), or a comparatively small colonial presence (such as that of Britain in India where power was operated largely through pre-colonial institutions, and did not involve large numbers of settlers). In all cases, however, the aim of European colonialism was to reap economic benefits from the territory in question through the farming of cheap land, the extraction of raw materials, and the exploitation of the indigenous populations (10-11).

With respect to the concept of “empire,” Osterhammel explains that this can be
understood as a situation in which multiple colonies are administered from a central metropolis. Empire thus assumes several peripheries which are all subordinated to the center (18). This can exist in a formal or an informal fashion. Formal empire replaces indigenous rulers with foreign rulers (20). In this circumstance, the pre-colonial political order ceases to exist or at least stops functioning freely. With informal empire, while there may be no colonial administration, the dominant power guarantees privileges for itself through trade regimes and the stationing of foreign troops. Under this form of empire, administrators, diplomats, consuls and so forth from the dominant state have an “advisory” capacity underscored by military threats where necessary to secure their interests (20).

Osterhammel goes on to define a final form of empire, i.e. “Non-colonial ‘determinant’ influence” which is particularly relevant to my investigation. Under this form of empire, he explains, there is no colonial system of domination between big and little brother, nor are special rights codified in “unequal treaties.” Instead, the economic superiority of the stronger national partner, along with its private enterprise and military protective function confers upon it opportunities to influence the politics of the weaker partner that its “normal” neighbors do not possess. Osterhammel argues that this, in fact, is the typical pattern of relations of international asymmetry in the post-colonial world (21). As we will see in chapter 3, numerous French and American intellectuals have formulated the nature of contemporary American power in ways which closely parallel this model.

With regard to “imperialism,” Wesseling and Osterhammel both highlight important specificities unique to this concept which distinguish it from “colonialism” and “empire.” This is of particular relevance to my case studies, as the term “imperialism” has been widely employed to describe American actions across the globe in recent years. Wesseling points out that the term “imperialism” originated in 19th century France, but came to acquire a specific meaning only during the 1900s. He explains that “imperialism” came to denote colonial exploitation connected to a particular stage in the development of capitalism. The journalist and economist J.A. Hobson was the first scholar to define it thus in his 1905 book Imperialism: A Study. Hobson argued that imperialism benefited the institutional interests of a tiny minority who disguised their
self-interest through appeals to patriotism. His analysis of the economic dimensions of imperialism was taken up by Lenin who pronounced, in a famous tract published in 1916 that imperialism was the “highest stage of capitalism” (Dubow, 2005: 13). “Colonialism” by contrast, while also French in origin, refers more to the presence of settlers, and it describes a process of political control by the European power in question. The term “colonialism,” Wesseling argues, does not necessarily refer to a particular stage in capitalism.

Osterhammel defines imperialism as “the concept that comprises all forces and activities contributing to the construction and the maintenance of transcolonial empires” (21). For Osterhammel, imperialism contains strong economic and international dimensions, characterized by the ability to indirectly influence a territory without necessarily establishing formal control over it (21). Thus, whereas colonialism describes the administering of a given territory by colonial authorities and “men on the spot,” imperialism is planned from afar by foreign ministries and ministers of war – it is a more comprehensive concept which allows for a worldwide protection of interests, and for capitalist penetration of large economic areas (21-22). Significantly, Osterhammel emphasizes that the distinction between colonialism and imperialism takes on a heightened importance when discussing the more contemporary time period.

Specifically, he argues that the concept of “imperialism” cannot be accurately applied to early colonial empires, as they were not in a position to achieve “imperial” objectives on a global scale. He argues that only Great Britain and the US have been imperial powers in the full sense of the term, although, he argues, the United States is a case of imperialism without a major colonial empire. Early European colonial expansion, by contrast, provides a case of colonial empires without imperialism (22).

The mentality which typically characterized colonialist attitudes has also been extensively examined by different scholars. It has often been highlighted, for example, that while European colonialism was generally predicated on the goal of economic exploitation, in many (if not most) cases, it was simultaneously justified under the pretext of bringing “civilization” to the territory in question. This “civilizing mission” (or “mission civilisatrice” in French) was based on the belief that the indigenous population was unable to govern itself for reasons of political immaturity or economic
backwardness. Chandra (1999) and Fischer-Tiné (2004), for example, provide detailed examinations of the British civilizing mission in India. Both point out the inherent contradictions in this mission, most notably the fact that the actual achievement of the civilizing mission would remove any legitimate pretext for the presence of the colonial power (which lends weight to the contention that civilizing the indigenous population was never the true aim of European colonialism). Chandra highlights the fact that the colonizer typically refused to grant equal rights and representation to the colonized people, thus further undermining the supposed “civilizing” aspect of the colonial exercise (Chandra, 1999: 18-19).

In addition to this, the civilizing mission was often pursued through the use of violence in order to eliminate dissent from the colonized peoples. This violence was deemed necessary by colonial regimes, who often justified it as a step on the road to civilizing the indigenous population. Indeed, the maintenance of colonial authority required a permanent military presence, with clear distinctions between the citizens of the metropolitan state and the original inhabitants of the colony. Thus the civilizing mission, as it was often framed, was based on a belief in the inherent superiority of the colonizer (reflected in paternalistic attitudes and language), which assumed a fundamental dissimilarity between colonizer and colonized. Osterhammel describes this attitude as one which constructed the notion of inferior otherness, and believed in the necessity for guardianship over the colonized peoples (108-110). As we will see in chapter 3, numerous intellectuals in both France and the US have applied the concept of the “civilizing mission” to recent American interventions in the Middle East.

In terms of definitions and descriptions of colonialisit structures, the above body of literature is highly useful from a conceptual angle. Not only do such commentators draw important distinctions between the operational features of different empires, but they also often outline the kinds of attitudes which underpinned colonialist projects. However, while they do highlight the fundamentally exploitative nature of colonialism, they do not typically approach their analyses from a human rights angle, nor do they typically discuss the role of terrorism as a strategy of opposition to colonial rule.

Two commentators who have examined empire through a broadly human rights lens (as I will outline in the human rights section of this literature review) are Conklin
(1998) and Maran (1989). Both of them have revisited the French experience of
decolonization in Algeria, and have discussed the contradictions inherent in the French
“mission civilisatrice” from a human rights angle.

Over the course of the last ten years, and particularly since the September 11
attacks, it has become increasingly common to see commentators describe American
power through the lens of “empire.” In the majority of cases, this concept has been
applied in a highly negative manner, i.e. as a way of denouncing what is considered to be
an American mission of global oppression. However, a small body of literature has
recently emerged which talks of the United States in terms of an altruistic or “liberal”
empire. Such commentators have used the concept of empire to defend the US mission in
the world, and have argued that the spread of western institutions and cultural values is
essential for the maintenance of international order (Dubow, 2005: 13). In this section, I
will attempt to draw out the ways in which different commentators have formulated the
concept of “empire” in recent years, along with the ways in which they have attached this
label to the US.

In the light of the recent direction of American foreign policy, it has been
increasingly common for commentators to frame the US “empire” as an oppressive,
militaristic, arrogant and exploitative force in the world. Literally hundreds of texts have
recently appeared which present this broad picture. To take an emblematic sample of
such works, in 2002, former military officer and Boston professor Andrew Bacevich
described American foreign policy as one of “unflagging self-interest” (4), and stated that
the US is not a reluctant superpower, but one which wants to perpetuate political,
economic and cultural hegemony on a global scale. Bacevich argued that America’s
reaction to September 11 reflects a continuation of a pre-established imperial grand
strategy (226). As will be shown in chapter 3, numerous French and American
intellectuals have framed recent US actions in precisely this manner.

In the aftermath of the Iraq war, the “US as empire” theme became particularly
pronounced in the scholarly literature, and led to the publication of a wave of texts which
condemned the invasion as emblematic of America’s imperial strategy across the globe.
Foster and McChesney’s Pox Americana: Exposing the American Empire (2004), Blum’s
Freeing the World to Death: Essays on the American Empire (2005), and Saul Landau’s The Pre-Emptive Empire: A Guide to Bush’s Kingdom (2003) are three good examples of this accelerating trend. In 2005, Walden Bello described the US as an “imperial republic” ruled by corporate elites, and he directly attributed the September 11 attacks to American economic imperialism across the globe. In 2003, Tariq Ali, a British left wing intellectual of Iraqi background, described the US invasion of Iraq as a de facto “recolonisation” of the territory (2003). In this text, Ali drew frequent parallels with the era of European colonialism and argued that the American “empire,” like all its predecessors, acts primarily out of self-interest and political and economic necessity (4). In Ali’s view, the American invasion of Iraq mirrored the same patterns and logic to that pursued by European powers during the colonial era, and he described the governing council set up by the US as a façade reminiscent of colonial indirect rule (41). Ali described both the first and second Gulf Wars as motivated by the US’s desire to enforce its global hegemony (143), and he maintained that the rationale which was constructed to justify the war was entirely fabricated. Like other intellectuals whom I examine in chapter 3, Ali argued that the Bush administration’s amalgamation of September 11 and the Iraqi regime served as nothing more than a tool for creating an atmosphere favorable to war. Ali concluded that the US is the first time in world history that a single Empire has become hegemonic (172), and added “the world is now dominated by a single empire” (197).

Noam Chomsky, who I examine in my intellectuals case study, has been a particularly persistent critic of American power in recent years, and has written extensively on what he describes as American abuses of power in the international arena. In Hegemony or Survival (2003), Chomsky criticized American foreign policy for its “dismissal of human rights and contempt for democracy, while professing dedication to both” (2003: 4). Like Bacevich, Chomsky has also described US interventions across the globe in terms of an “imperial grand strategy” (2003: 11), and has argued that the modern-day US empire is characterized by the use of preventive war and a dismissal of international institutions (2003: 12). The overarching goal of this empire, he maintains, is to construct a world system open to US economic penetration and political control. He concludes that while there have been historical precursors to the US empire, “never in
history has the monopoly of means of large-scale violence been in the hands of one state” (36). In 2005, Chomsky echoed many of these same points, and again outlined what he saw as the “imperial ambitions” of the United States.

A truly remarkable number of scholarly texts have been published over the last five years which describe American power in very similar terms to those just outlined. Back in 2000, however, the Marxist scholars Hardt and Negri attempted to reformulate the concept of empire more radically, and in their book entitled *Empire*, they described “empire” as a new form of global sovereignty along with the regulatory mechanisms controlling economic and social production and exchange. According to this neo-marxist interpretation, this empire is decentered and deterritorialized, and, unlike past empires, is not based on overt military domination. While Hardt and Negri consider the US to have a privileged status in this system, they do not directly attach the term “empire” to the United States. Instead, the term “empire,” as they use it, can largely be read as a synonym for “globalization,” which in their judgment constitutes a global system that is managed by the world’s wealthiest states (most notably, the US), multinational corporations, and international institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization. For the authors, this is essentially an exploitative, repressive, and undemocratic process which represents a radical break with past forms of imperialism. Throughout their analysis of the empire phenomenon, they describe this system as one in which all of humanity has been absorbed and subordinated within networks of capitalist exploitation. A symptom of empire, they argue, is the increased use of “just war” as a means of subduing any opponents of this process. They highlight that the US, as the strongest state, unilaterally takes control of this military action, and thus has the power to define a “state of permanent exception” in which these military operations can be forcibly contained. Many of these themes recur in the more recent *Multitude* published by Hardt and Negri in 2004.

The preceding texts produced by American and other scholars thus frame the US “empire” in highly negative terms, and typically employ the term as a means of criticizing American power. With regard to French scholarship on empire, in a recent conference paper delivered in February, 2005 at Florida State University entitled *Cassandra’s Policies: French Prophecies of an American Empire from the Civil War to*
Roger observed that since 2002, few French essays on the contemporary United States have had titles without the words *empire* or *imperial* in them – words which now seem to possess an unarguable descriptive value. A search for such texts on bookseller websites such as chapitre.com or amazon.fr confirms this observation. Recent French texts on empire include titles such as: *L’Empire en guerre, Le Monde après le 11 Septembre* by Rémy Herrera et al (2001), which argues that the American response to September 11 reflects an imperial mission; *Face à l’hyperpuissance: Textes et discours, 1995-2003* by former French foreign minister Hubert Védrine1 (2003) in which he argues that Europe must become an effective counterbalance to rampant US power; *La terreur et l’empire : La violence et la paix, tome 1-2* (2003) by Pierre Hassner, Director of Research

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1 In rare exception to the negative and critical “America as empire” formulation underpinning the list of French books cited in this paragraph, in reaction to Védrine’s attack on American “hyperpuissance,” Alexandre Adler, retorted in *L’Odyssée américaine* (2005) that American “hyperpower” had been dramatically exaggerated. Adler maintained that present US actions in the Middle East were all provoked by the September 11 attacks, and should not be perceived as reflecting an underlying imperialist impulse. Adler argued that those who framed the US as imperialist were propagating a myth, and were motivated primarily by anti-American attitudes.
at the Centre d'études et de recherches internationales (Paris), in which he argues that “empire” and modern day terrorism represent the two most significant threats to global stability facing the world today; *La France contre l'empire* (2003) by Pascal Boniface, in which he defends the French position on Iraq, and condemns what he describes as the US attempt to create a unipolar world based on its hegemony; and one could add many other similar texts to this list such as Rodrigue Tremblay’s *Le Nouvel empire américain : Causes et conséquences pour les Etats-Unis et pour le monde* (2004), Roland Lafitte’s *Etats-Unis : La Tentation de l'empire global* (2005), and Gérard Gourmel’s *Logique du pire, logique d'empire ou la guerre sans fin des Etats-Unis* (2003).

While many of the French texts just cited follow similar themes to those produced by American and other commentators, and typically describe the American “empire” in highly negative terms, Philippe Roger argues that the term “empire” has not, in fact, traditionally been understood in the same way by French and American commentators. He describes the French image of the US empire as the result of a long sedimentation of representations. Roger observes that the theme of empire is part and parcel of French anti-American discourse which evolved, in large part, in tandem with the decline in French power. This resulted in the widespread impression in France that the American “predatory” empire was capitalizing on the loss of France’s “civilizing” empire. Indeed, it is notable that as far back as 1920, in ways not dissimilar to Hardt and Negri in 2000, French discourse was designating the American empire as an immaterial, non-territorial, financial empire.

As we will see later in my case study on French and American intellectuals, some of the negative formulations of American power presented above have featured prominently in intellectual discourses during the post-September 11 period, and most notably during the run-up to the Iraq War.

However, alongside these negative interpretations of American empire, the post-September 11 period has also seen the emergence of an important counter-strand of argument which has described the US as a “liberal empire.” This notion has increasingly gained currency in the US in recent years, and has been advanced largely (but not uniquely), by American Neo-Conservatives. Unlike commentators such as Garrison
(2004) who have argued that the US should see itself as a “transitional empire,” striving to spread democracy across the globe and lead the world out of crisis but is not currently doing so, defenders of the “liberal empire” position argue that the US is already behaving as a global liberal empire, and is driven by the desire to secure humanitarian objectives and aid globalization (Dubow, 2005: 13). Among the most vocal supporters of this vision of American power are the signatories of the “Project for the New American Century” (2000), which advocates US global leadership through a more aggressive and interventionist foreign policy. This statement was drafted by the think tank of the same name (PNAC), first established in 1997 from which the Bush administration has borrowed over two dozen members to fill various government offices and panels. The current Chairman is William Kristol, a right-wing thinker and frequent media commentator, who in 2003 co-published a book with Lawrence Kaplan entitled The War over Iraq: Saddam's Tyranny and America's Mission which defended the war in Iraq. As Thomas Ricks explains in a 2001 Washington Post article entitled “Empire or not? A Quiet Debate over US Role” another prominent member of this group is Thomas Donnolly, the deputy executive director of the PNAC who has described the present-day US not as a conquering power, but one which has (and should have) a dominating global presence militarily, economically and culturally. Other proponents of the “liberal empire” view are Robert Kagan, who in 1998 spoke of the US as a “benevolent empire,” Lawrence Kaplan who, in addition to the text indicated above, has elsewhere described the US as “benign,” and the New York Times conservative columnist Charles Krauthammer, who has vehemently defended the US “empire.”

American Neo-Conservatives are by no means the only defenders of the “liberal empire” position. British historian Niall Ferguson has also been a staunch defender of the United States in recent years. In his 2003 book Empire, which provides a detailed overview of the British empire (which he describes as largely benevolent), Ferguson argues that the British experience contains many instructive lessons for the US today. His analysis on the US was crystallized in his 2004 book entitled Colossus: the Price of America’s Empire in which he focused specifically on American power, and argued that the US has always, in fact, been an empire, and that this role needs to be embraced rather than denied or rejected. Ferguson made his position on this issue abundantly clear in
Colossus, where he stated that he had “no objection in principle to an American empire” (2). Ferguson went on to argue that many parts of the world would benefit from a period of American rule, but that what the world needs is a “liberal empire” (2) which ensures free exchange of commodities, peace and order. Later he stated that he was “fundamentally in favor of empire” (24) in the face of new global threats and challenges, and that “empires need not be, by definition, exploitative” (24). For Ferguson, “liberal empire” makes sense in terms of American self-interest and altruism (27).

As we will see over the course of the official discourses chapter, while Bush never applies the term “empire” to the United States, he has at various points in his discourse described the US mission in ways which closely parallel the formulation of “liberal empire” as articulated by this group of commentators. In chapter 3, we will see that the pro-American position expressed by numerous French and American intellectuals hinged on many of the same premises to those just outlined, specifically that the US is an empire seeking to spread good in the world, and that the new dangers posed by international terrorism and rogue states necessitate a firm line of action such as that advocated by the American president. Indeed, as I will explain in chapter 3, some intellectuals (such as Francis Fukuyama and Paul Berman) have criticized the US for not behaving imperialistically enough in the face of these new challenges, and more specifically, for not fully embracing the role of “empire.”

Thus, as we have seen, the term “empire” has been used in a fairly dynamic fashion, by both French and American commentators, as a conceptual tool for both attacking and defending American power depending on the point of view of the commentator in question. It would seem that the term has adopted a certain versatility in this regard. However, the question still remains as to how appropriate this label truly is in terms of its descriptive value when attached to the US. To return to Niall Ferguson’s argument, Ferguson argues that the term “empire” is appropriate, as the US empire is characterized by indirect rule, and is thus close in structure to traditional models of informal empire. The characteristics of this modern form of American informal empire, according to Ferguson, are 1) a concern for national security, 2) a concern for the maintenance of international communications, 3) a desire to ensure access to raw
materials, and 4), a desire to retain a strong military presence in the world (13). Ferguson argues that some informal aspects of the American empire operate according to the logic of “soft power” as it has been described by Joseph Nye, i.e. the ability to influence other countries through enticement based on America’s culture and values as opposed to more overt military and economic power (19). This form of “soft power,” Ferguson argues, was, in fact, a key aspect of the British empire.

Others, however, have rejected the comparison of present-day US power and the British empire. While the British and US empires have been, on the face of it, driven by similar principles (or, to be more precise, were justified through the claim that they were seeking to bring good government, economic progress and sound institutions to the rest of the world), some key structural disparities must be taken into account. In Dubow’s view (2005), one major difference between the British colonial project and the present-day US is that Britain’s global empire was largely about the acquisition and control of colonies, whereas American imperialism is directed more towards extending its global reach in the economic and military spheres (14). Landau (2003) agrees that this is an important contrast. In response to Ferguson’s contentions that the US could learn from the British model of empire, Dubow argues that any US attempts to successfully replicate the more ostensibly “positive” aspects of the British colonial experience are wishful thinking. He contends that indirect colonial rule actually dissolved as a result of the modernity that it brought about. Industrialization, urbanization and market-based relations created the very conditions within which modern nationalism could flourish (14), and for this reason, along with the specificities of the contemporary era in terms of democratic expectations, global consumerism and nationalist assertion, empire, in any traditional sense is unlikely to return (ibid).

The range of commentary over empire, as I have sought to highlight during this section, suggests that this term, and others related to it, will almost certainly continue to be applied in a fluid manner for the foreseeable future. When the term “empire” is attached to the United States, it is clear that its exact meaning and connotations are dependent on the position of the commentator in question. I would argue that based on the literature reviewed in this section, Osterhammel’s more neutral formulation perhaps comes closest to accurately describing the nature of American power. To reiterate the
observations made by Osterhammel on this question, he argues that the US represents a case of imperialism without a major colonial empire, and that this power operates through “non-colonial ‘determinant’ influence.” As mentioned earlier, few of the social actors examined in my case studies make any rigorous attempts to define “empire.” In addition, very few draw interconnections between “empire” and the concepts of terrorism and human rights. Nevertheless, as I will seek to show in the next two sections, the questions of terrorism and human rights are inherent in virtually any context involving “empire.” In the section which follows, I focus my attention on the concept of “terrorism” and the manner in which it has been defined (and used) in different contexts.

**Terrorism**

In the domain of terrorism, as with the concept of empire, a large body of scholarly literature exists, and it would be impossible to provide an exhaustive account of it here. I will, however, consider how past formulations of terrorism in a number of pertinent historical contexts compare to recent formulations of terrorism in the light of the September 11 attacks.

The term “terrorism” has a long history, and has been applied to many historical contexts. Most scholars have traced the origin of the notion of “terrorism” to the French Revolution, although the word “terrorism” (as distinct from “terror”) emerged much later during the twentieth century. “La Terreur” as is came to be known describes a brutal phase of the Revolution which took place between September 1793 and July 1794. During this phase, radical and violent measures were instituted by the State to defend the principles of the Revolution and ostensibly protect the people from internal opponents. The “Reign of Terror” involved arbitrary arrests and mass executions, strict censorship and tight control of journalists, enforced conformism, and the frequent changing of laws in response to the rapidly changing and unstable political climate.

Thus, while the Revolution overthrew the absolute monarchy, and replaced it with a Republican system based on the humanitarian and universal principles of liberty, equality, fraternity, democracy and the rights of man, the violent events that took place during Reign of Terror stood in massive contradiction to these principles. In effect, the
State instituted a phase of state-terrorism to defend democracy. This underscores a tension which has always been inherent in democracy, and a question to which I will return later, notably: Does the declaration of a “state of emergency” (in response to a set of circumstances which in theory could threaten the integrity of the State and the democratic principles upon which it is predicated), mean that anti-democratic (and even terroristic) measures can be put into operation to defend these principles?²

As just noted, the term “terrorism” emerged during the twentieth century, and a review of the scholarly literature pre-dating the September 11 attacks reveals that “terrorism” has always been a highly contested concept, and one for which a universally accepted definition has never been established. Terrorism is an immensely controversial domain of investigation, raising many challenging questions. How should we define it? What types of actions qualify as “terroristic” in nature? Does the “asymmetry” of a situation in terms of power dynamics affect our judgment of whether a given act of violence is “terroristic” or “revolutionary” (thus, on the surface, more justified)?

A number of common themes emerge in studies of terrorism which predate the September 11 attacks. The first theme is that terrorism exists in numerous different forms, but can be characterized, at its root, in terms of violence perpetrated against civilians to incite a general climate of fear as a means of achieving broadly political objectives. While tactics, methods, motivations, and overarching contexts may differ, the common denominator unifying virtually all forms of terrorism is that unlike “conventional” forms of warfare which opposes two armies on a battlefield, terrorism deliberately targets civilians. Terrorist violence, while often portrayed as a “weapon of the weak” can be perpetrated by individuals, groups, or states (which is what happened during the Reign of Terror in the French Revolution, and has occurred in more recent cases of state-sponsored terrorism).

Some commentators such as Kronenwetter (1989) define terrorism quite narrowly as a “weapon of the weak,” while others such as Livingstone (1992) argue that terrorism can represent a tactic of the weak or the strong depending on the context. Nash (1998)

² While few commentators have attempted to link the post-September 11 context directly with the events of the French Revolution, some intellectuals and other commentators have argued more generally that President Bush has sought to institute a “state of exception” in the light of the attacks in which suspected enemies of the United States are not subject to normal laws and procedures required by the US Constitution and International Law. This is a point that I will develop in more detail later.
has described many diverse situations as terroristic in nature, ranging from assassinations, riots, kidnappings, lynchings, lootings, as well as other types of attacks on civilians.

With respect to the dangers posed by terrorism, numerous scholars such as Livingstone (1992) have argued that terrorism poses a significant threat to humanity. Lacqueur (1999) goes as far as to describe terrorism as one of “the gravest dangers facing mankind” (4), due to the fact that “new” terrorism is characterized by the willingness, and ability, of terrorists to kill without limit (7). Similarly, Nash (1998) maintains that recent Islamic terrorist groups are particularly problematic in that, unlike other past terrorist organizations, they are willing to kill as many people as possible (viii). A significant amount of recent pre-September 11 literature raises the technological aspect of terrorism in the modern world, and the fact that terrorists now have the capacity through nuclear, chemical and biological weapons to inflict massive damage which was not possible in past contexts.

Livingstone (1992), Wieviorka (1993) and numerous other commentators point out that the term “terrorism” has often been used in a manipulative and/or propagandist manner as a means of discrediting one’s enemies. Wieviorka concludes that the term “terrorism” can, in theory, be used to define virtually any groups and actions of such groups with which one disagrees. To coin a frequently-used expression, “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter” (Wieviorka, 1993: 21-22). As we will see over the course of my two case studies, political and intellectual actors have used the term “terrorism” and other associated terms in a highly fluid manner, and seldom are rigorous attempts made to clearly define this term.

A particularly illuminating study into the use of terrorism is Martha Crenshaw Hutchinson’s 1978 text entitled *Revolutionary Terrorism* which examines the use of terrorism in the context of the Algerian War. Even though this text is almost thirty years old, it still provides important insights in the underlying motivations and goals of terrorism, and this, of course, has important contemporary resonance. Unlike most studies into terrorism, Hutchinson explicitly situates her analysis against the backdrop of colonialism (in this case, France’s experience in Algeria), and she examines in great detail the terrorist methods employed by the Algerian FLN (the Front de Libération nationale). Algeria, she points out, represents a classic case of the use of “nationalist”
terrorism against a colonial power. In this context, terrorism was employed as a deliberate strategy designed to overthrow an oppressive system of governance. Hutchinson argues that in Algeria, terrorism was very much a weapon of the weak, as the FLN was of course vastly inferior militarily to France, and had been denied a peaceful means to advance its cause. In terms of the logic behind the terrorist acts themselves, she argues that FLN terrorism contained two dimensions, which she defines as “compliance” and “endorsement” terrorism. Compliance terrorism attempted to secure compliance or obedience from the Algerian population, while endorsement terrorism aimed to generate sympathy and ideological endorsement from the wider international community.

A key purpose of these two aspects of FLN terrorism was to evoke a violent response from the French colonizers, thus pushing alienated Algerians into the arms of the FLN, and creating a general climate of insecurity among Europeans. The French response to their terrorist acts was a key consideration for the FLN, as from a tactical point of view, FLN leaders were aware that French abuses (including torture and summary executions of Algerian civilians) would attract international condemnation, and further legitimize the FLN cause. This, of course, is what ultimately happened. Whereas France had military superiority, the response of the French army to terrorism was politically disastrous, and accelerated the building pressures for decolonization.

In the light of the recent challenges facing the United States in Iraq, parallels between this and France’s experience of counter-terrorism in Algeria have emerged in the French and American media. Indeed, 6 months following the outbreak of war in Iraq, the Pentagon screened Gillo Pontecorvo’s classic film “The Battle of Algiers,” which illustrates that key figures in the US administration were aware that the two contexts contained important parallels. However, I found that this parallel was not frequently discussed by the political and intellectual actors which I have investigated in my case studies.

For obvious reasons, a large volume of texts has appeared since the September 11 attacks which focuses directly on the United States, and upon the Islamic terrorist groups which have targeted it. Definitions of terrorism in the recent literature often closely mirror those set out in earlier texts which analyze this phenomenon. However,
“terrorism” remains a highly problematic concept when it is used in the contemporary context, as the United Nations does not have an official definition of terrorism. Moreover, a great deal of controversy has been raised over the official American definition of “terrorism,” which is set out in the US Code, a consolidation and codification by subject matter of the general and permanent laws of the United States made by the US Congress. The document itself is prepared and published by the Office of the Law Revision Counsel. According to Title 18 “Crimes and Criminal Procedure” Part 1, Chapter 113B, § 2331, the US Code officially defines an act of terrorism as “a violent act or an act dangerous to human life that is a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or any state, or that would be a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States or of any state; and (B) appears to be intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by assassination or kidnapping.”

As will become apparent over the course of my investigation, some commentators have argued that if one applies this definition of terrorism to American conduct in the international sphere, then the US itself has been guilty of committing terrorist acts.

Returning to the scholarly literature on terrorism, the most illuminating such text which I examined for this literature review was a collection of essays edited by Sterba (2003), in which the contributors analyzed numerous issues surrounding the question of terrorism, both past and present. Sterba sets out the overarching problematic of this volume through the following set of questions: Is terrorism always wrong, or are there morally justified acts of terrorism? What are the morally defensible responses? Is a war a morally defensible response to the terrorism of September 11, 2001? Sterba points out that many people think that terrorism must have some political purpose – that it must aim to achieve some change in a government or government institution or policy – and that it must directly target innocents. But historically, he points out, many movements classed as terrorist have not been as simple to define as this.

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3 See http://uscode.house.gov/lawrevisioncounsel.shtml for more information on the US Code, and a list of all of the titles contained within it.
In the same volume, Shannon French discusses the moral distinction between terrorists on the one hand and “legitimate fighters” in asymmetric conflicts on the other. Much of her analysis focuses on the ways in which “asymmetry” can structure our perceptions of a given conflict. She points out, for example, that all recent conflicts in which the US has engaged have been fundamentally asymmetrical in nature. At times, such conflicts have involved states (as, for example, during the Vietnam war). However, the September 11 attacks raise a new set of questions in that al Qaeda does not represent a “state” or seek national independence, unlike more traditional terrorist groups (such as the FLN). Thus, does this absence of a “nationalist” cause, or the fact that al Qaeda is not engaged in a fight for control of a state’s political apparatus, render al Qaeda’s targeting of the United States less legitimate than would be the case if the US was engaged in a conflict with a state power? Are Tibetans, Palestinians and Kurds not legitimate as they have no state? Should the fact that such movements aspire to statehood cause us to categorize or perceive them separately to al Qaeda? Could it be argued that al Qaeda is, in fact, aspiring to Global statehood? These are among the questions which are raised in Shannon French’s analysis.

Indeed, a crucial question with regard to terrorism is who we include in the category of “terrorist,” and why. In another contribution to Sterba’s volume, Tomis Kapitan describes terrorism as the deliberate use of violence, or the threat of such, directed upon civilians to achieve political objectives. However, he argues that an important speaker-oriented bias is involved in the use of the term. US actions, for example, are seldom defined as terrorist, even though one could argue (and numerous intellectuals have by drawing on the US Code, as we will see in chapter 3) that the US has engaged in numerous terrorist activities over the course of its recent history (the US sponsoring of contras in Nicaragua, which resulted in thousands of civilian deaths, is a commonly quoted example). This is a crucial point, as it underscores the fact that the term “terrorism” is not value-free - it can be (and has been) employed to describe a myriad of situations. Kapitan argues, for example, that the attack on the USS Cole\(^5\), while often described as a terrorist attack, should not be viewed as such, as it attacked a

\(^{5}\) On October 12, 2000, two suicide bombers linked to al Qaeda bombed the US Navy Destroyer, USS Cole, while it was harbored in the Yemeni port of Aden, killing 17 sailors.
military target. Indeed, Kapitan argues that when one closely examines certain recent US actions in the world, then one cannot escape the conclusion that many such actions have been “terroristic” in nature. Thus for Kapitan, the Bush administration’s declaration of a “war on terrorism” is meaningless, as the US would have to declare war on itself. Numerous French and American intellectuals have criticized the US on precisely these grounds. Chomsky, as we will see, has gone as far as to describe the US as a “leading terrorist state” (2001; 2003).

The value of Sterba’s text lies in the fact that the contributors focus a great deal of their attention on the use of terms and nomenclatures associated with terrorism, and how different actors have used such terms for their own purposes. My survey of recent literature on terrorism, however, revealed that many commentators have not been as scrupulous with their use of terms. As I will explain in chapter 2, the terms “war” and “terror” have been central to the Bush administration’s discourse on terrorism, and have been widely adopted in media and academic circles almost without question or deeper analysis. Indeed, many of the texts which I examined on post-September 11 terrorism contained the terms “war” and/or “terror” in their titles, or within the analysis itself, and it was striking how infrequently most commentators analyzed these terms, or justified their usage of them. Sinclair (2003), Hayden (2003) and Pyszczynski et al (2003), for example, make virtually no attempt to explain why they are using the term “terror” as opposed to “terrorism.” Part of my objective in my two case studies is precisely to highlight such instances of terminological imprecision in the discourses of political and intellectual actors.

**Human rights**

Up to this point in my review of the literature, I have sought to describe how different commentators have defined the concepts of empire and terrorism (both past and present) and in doing so I have attempted to highlight the various ways in which these concepts have interfaced with each other in different contexts. In this section, I turn my attention to human rights, and I will attempt to highlight in a similar way how this relates to notions of empire and terrorism.
As I briefly outlined during my opening comments on terrorism, the events of the French Revolution provide an important case study into how the application of the principles of democracy, equality, and rights can simultaneously entail (and, in the view of some, require) the use of potentially limitless violence. This contradiction was encapsulated by Robespierre\(^6\) who in 1794 declared “la terreur n’est autre chose que la justice prompte, sèvère, inflexible […] elle est une conséquence du principe général de la démocratie appliqué aux pressant besoins de la patrie.”\(^7\) [terror is nothing more than prompt, severe and inflexible justice (…) it is a consequence of the general principle of democracy applied to the pressing needs of the fatherland.] The apparent (and paradoxical) compatibility of the concepts of democracy and terror, as expressed by Robespierre, underscores with particular clarity the fact that the universalist principles of the Revolution were always under threat from within.

In recent years, the concept of human rights has gained heightened prominence, and has been discussed in many different contexts. Burns Weston (2000) points out that human rights can be traced back at least as far as the 1689 Bill of Rights in Britain, which provided not only the basis for revolutionary agitation in American and France, but also the inspiration for the American Declaration of Independence in 1776, and the 1789 Déclaration des droits de l’homme et du citoyen in France. As I will explain in more detail in chapter 3, the Dreyfus Affair in France at the end of the nineteenth century led to the creation (through the initiative of intellectuals) of the world’s first Ligue des droits de l’homme (League of Human Rights) in 1898, but it was after the rise and fall of Nazi Germany that the modern concept of human rights truly came into its own after the recognition that atrocities committed by this regime were wrong no matter what the circumstances (Weston, 2000). During the Nuremberg Trials which took place after the Second World War, German high officials were tried for “crimes against humanity.” This represented a defining step in international human rights law, as it made a state’s

\(^6\) Maximilien Robespierre was one of the most prominent leaders of the French Revolution, and an influential member of the Committee of Public Safety which was largely responsible for orchestrating the Reign of Terror.


A particularly contentious aspect of human rights which has surfaced in numerous historical contexts, and has provided the subject of heated debates since the September 11 attacks, is the apparent contradiction between the defense of civilian populations suffering human rights abuses within the jurisdiction of a nation state, and the UN charter which expressly forbids the UN from intervening in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state, except where the Security Council finds evidence of a “threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or an act of aggression.” As we will see in chapter 3, this contradiction has provided the subject of heated debates among French and American intellectuals over the rationale behind the Iraq invasion.

If we consider human rights against the background of empire, a number of key points emerge. Colonialism, as highlighted earlier, resulted in widespread human rights abuses (although they were not of course, at the time, referred to as such) and contradictions between the moral principles supposedly defended by the colonizing power, and the simultaneous use of violence to suppress opposition from the indigenous population. While it is true that these contradictions were already present in the context of the Reign of Terror during the French Revolution as noted above, France’s experience in Algeria raised all of these issues in a particularly acute form. As explained earlier, the French justified their presence in Algeria under the pretext that they were engaged in a civilizing mission, which would raise the Algerian population out of their present state of economic and political backwardness. However, this mission was operationalized through the use of extreme violence (during the early phases of colonization in the 1830s), which intensified after the Second World War as demands for national independence became more pronounced. At the exact time when human rights were becoming increasingly concretized in international law, the French government and army employed the use of torture, summary executions, arbitrary arrests and, in some instances, the massacre of civilians - in direct defiance of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights - as a means of counteracting the FLN insurgency. Terrorism was, of course, an integral component of the FLN’s strategy in opposition to French colonial rule,
and it was the use of this tactic against French settlers, and the state of emergency which this created, which largely paved the way for the violent French response. The contradiction between the French civilizing mission and the use of extreme violence by the French army has been examined in detail by Maran (1989), who underscores the contradictions between discourse and conduct which arose during the decolonization period. In recent years, scholars such as Raphaëlle Branche (2001) have examined in detail the mechanisms of torture, and the discourses of those involved in the Algerian war context.

Parallels between France’s experience in Algeria and the US invasion of Iraq began to emerge in 2002 with the release of a controversial mémoire by retired French general Paul Aussaresses, which defended the French army’s use of torture in Algeria, arguing that it was necessary and justified in the face of terrorist violence. Similar debates began to circulate in the American media in the midst of the US-led campaign in Afghanistan. Some argued that in order to counteract the extreme danger posed by modern-day terrorism, the US should consider employing methods of torture in order to gain precious intelligence which could prevent a future terrorist attack.\(^8\)

These debates reemerged in September 2003 when the Pentagon screened Gillo Pontecorvo’s 1966 film *The Battle of Algiers*, which graphically illustrates the cycle of violence that resulted from French counter-insurgency tactics. Although there has been some attempt by scholars to connect French experiences of torture and prisoner abuse with the ongoing debates surrounding recent US actions,\(^9\) to date these have been only fragmentary and unsystematic, with few serious attempts to situate the use of torture within the broader schematic of “empire.”

In the light of the Iraq War, numerous articles have circulated in the press which have been highly critical of American human rights abuses accompanying the “war on terror.” In a recent article featured in *Le Monde* (Mar. 1, 2005), Jean-Claude Magendie attacked the US on the basis that the tactics which were being employed were abuses of

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\(^9\) One notable exception to this is MacMaster (2004), who provides a highly illuminating comparison of torture during the Algerian War and recent instances of prisoner abuse by the American army at Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib prisons.
the very principles that they were intending to defend. Human rights organizations such as the Red Cross, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have repeatedly condemned the US government for allowing such abuses to take place. In a report released on January 13, 2004, Human Rights Watch denounced the US treatment of detainees at Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib, and accused the US of using torture as a deliberate strategy. It was also pointed out that the designation, by the US, of detainees as “illegal combatants” constituted an attempt by the US government to evade their obligations to adhere to international human rights law.\(^\text{10}\) Kenneth Roth, director of HRW, has emphasized that to abuse human rights as part of the war on terrorism is counterproductive as the war on terrorism is, in fact, a fight for human rights. As we will see in chapter 2, President Chirac has made not dissimilar comments to this. Indeed, only in July 2006, after sustained pressure, and a Supreme Court ruling, did the Bush administration accept that the Geneva Conventions should apply to captives in the “war on terrorism,” having denied that they should be applied to such captives in February 2002.

Thus the issue of human rights, central to France’s experience in Algeria, is central today in the midst of the US “war on terror.” However, I found that the interconnection which I have just highlighted between empire, terrorism and human rights (in both past and present contexts), did not feature with great prominence in the political and intellectual discourses which I investigated for my two case studies. While it was not entirely absent, as will become apparent most notably in chapter 3, this comparative absence of sustained commentary by the objects of my analysis, in many ways ran counter to what I had expected to find.

**Discourse analysis**

As noted in the opening part of this chapter, in addition to reviewing the literature on empire, terrorism and human rights, it was also necessary for me to examine various methods of discourse analysis in order to devise those most appropriate for my two case studies. Numerous articles appearing in legal journals debated this question. See, for example, Fitzpatrick (2002), Farer (2002), and Mundis (2002).
studies. In *Power Knowledge* (1980), Michel Foucault argued that discourse can be understood, at its core, in terms of a struggle for power, the primary reason being that those who possess power can control debate. In many ways, discourse can therefore be seen as a struggle to create interpretations and dominant narratives of events which will determine how others think about and discuss these events, along with key concepts linked to them. For my case studies, I chose to examine political and intellectuals actors precisely because their discourses play a key role in shaping public opinion and popular perceptions of events. As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, in the remainder of this section, I focus my attention primarily on official discourses, as my study of intellectuals required the use of a more complex comparative methodology for which the relevant literature is best reviewed within the case study itself.

The study of discourse covers numerous diverse disciplines, and many approaches exist of varying sophistication. Some are highly complex, and are rooted in the field of linguistics. Pickering (1980) examines discourse from a number of angles, ranging from semantic hierarchies, syntax, style, registers, and cultural-specific codes. The text is highly scientific, and breaks down sentence structures into their component parts and considers the effect that each component may have on the listener. While this text is in many ways informative from a broad perspective, Pickering does not explicitly set out to examine political discourses. Williams (1998) examines French discourse analysis through the lens of post-structuralism, and her analysis is couched largely in the field of social and linguistic theory. As such, like Pickering, she does not apply her analysis to the domain of political discourses.

Where political discourses are concerned, a number of studies helped to shape my thinking. Connolly (1983), for example, described the grammatical constructions of “essentially contested concepts” in political language, and described such language as a medium for creating meaning and channeling political thought. Riker (1986) has examined the “art of political manipulation,” and the ways in which this has functioned in different historical contexts. Riker uses the term “heresthetics” to describe the process of rhetoric, verbal persuasion, and the “elegance” with which politicians can structure the world through language (ix). Shapiro (1984) and Geis (1987) both examine in detail the use of rhetoric, metaphor and metonymy in political language, Geis drawing on the
Orwellian notion of Newspeak to illustrate how language can structure thought. Wilson, in Schiffrin et al. (2001) also refers to Orwell, and examines how meaning can be created in political language (400).

For the purposes of my own analysis, the most useful text in the domain of political discourse analysis, however, was Chilton (2004), who has examined the rhetorical devices behind political rhetoric and persuasion. Chilton highlights that a key relationship exists between politics and language (5), and that politicians draw on a battery of assumed background knowledge when selecting their language. Chilton describes this as a process whereby the speaker seeks to create a “discourse world” or a “discourse ontology” (54) to affect the perceptions of his or her audience. Political speech, Chilton points out, involves the complex use of metaphor, indexicality and deixis (56), i.e. the use of expressions to prompt the interpreter to relate the uttered indexical expression to various situational features. As we will see in chapter 2, the discourses of presidents Bush and Chirac contain numerous such strategies, which I will highlight over the course of my analysis.

Chilton also looks at how a speaker can create distance or closeness between his or her audience and the object of their discourse (63). He looks at the language of self-legitimization (137) and numerous other aspects of political speech in his study. Using these types of analysis, a number of studies have analyzed the discourse of President Bush, and his use of binary structures such as “good” vs. “evil,” his use of religious rhetoric, and his frequent invocation of moral concepts (for example Singer, 2004; Domke 2004). Jackson (2005) has examined various aspects of the Bush administration’s language with regard to the “war on terrorism,” and the imagery which the American president has sought to generate in his speeches. However, while each of the above studies is illuminating, none contains the comparative dimension of my case study into the official discourses of presidents Bush and Chirac.

In summary, my dissertation aims to break new ground in a number of regards. Firstly, I aim to interconnect the three concepts of empire, terrorism and human rights in ways which have been absent from most research into these fields. Secondly, through this analytical framework, to the best of my knowledge this is the first systematic attempt
to compare and contrast the ways in which political and intellectual actors in France and the US have discussed these concepts in the light of the September 11 attacks.
CHAPTER 2

OFFICIAL DISCOURSES

Introduction

The new phase in Franco-American relations initiated by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, has been structured primarily around the “war on terror,” as it rapidly came to be defined by the Bush administration. During the three years which followed the attacks, relations between France and America deteriorated markedly, and, in the view of some commentators, reached new lows not seen since the Suez crisis.\textsuperscript{11} The extensive, and at times excessive, media coverage emanating from both countries during this bout of diplomatic friction has tended to engender the image that France and America are divided by irreconcilable differences. Such images, however, obscure the fact that President Chirac was the first international leader to visit the United States after the attacks, and the fact that France was a major contributor to, and supporter of, US-led military action in Afghanistan in late 2001. Although many countries, including Germany, Russia and China adopted positions similar to France on Iraq, France came under particularly close scrutiny from many sections of the US media during the run-up

\textsuperscript{11} See, for example, Gordon and Shapiro (2004) who make this point. The Suez crisis occurred in Egypt in 1956 after the Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal Company which operated the Suez Canal. Britain, France and Israel each had economic and strategic interests in the canal, and formed an alliance (largely one of convenience) to regain control of it. On October 29, 1956, Israel invaded the Egyptian-controlled Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula and, as had been agreed prior to the invasion, Britain and France offered to reoccupy the area and separate the warring armies. Under the pretext that this military action might evolve into a wider war with the Soviet Union (which had threatened to intervene on the side of Egypt) the US applied significant financial pressure on the UK and France to withdraw (primarily through threats to undermine exchange rates). In the midst of this pressure, and the extreme diplomatic tension which resulted, the French and British governments abandoned military intervention in Egypt. From the French perspective, the incident demonstrated the weakness of the NATO alliance, and showed that France could not rely on allies, especially the United States, when pursuing her foreign policy. This eventually led to France pulling out of the NATO military network. The Suez crisis is often cited as a key moment in the rise of American prominence in the Middle East and the subsequent decline in the power and influence of France and Great Britain in the region.
to the Iraq war, and has virtually monopolized the attention of American critics and commentators when discussing trans-Atlantic relations.

Numerous interpretations have been put forward as to which side was primarily to blame for the disputes that took place, ranging from Timmerman (2004) who described France’s opposition to the war as a “betrayal,” Stanley Hoffmann (2004), who defended the French position, and Gordon and Shapiro (2004) who provide, perhaps, the most neutral account of the events which took place at the United Nations, and conclude that neither side was entirely blameless for the diplomatic breakdown.

The purpose of the present chapter is not to provide a detailed factual account of this decline in Franco-American relations, which has already, arguably, attracted a disproportionate amount of attention in both academic and media circles. Rather, the goal of this case study is to highlight the ways in which the leaders of the two countries have conceptualized the post-September 11 world, and articulated their respective visions through official discourses.

During the five years which have elapsed since the September 11 attacks, Presidents Bush and Chirac have both, inevitably, been required to publicly address a series of challenging questions, ranging from why the September 11 attacks took place, the manner in which this new global challenge should be handled, and more recently, how the international community should tackle the threats posed by so-called “rogue states.” Through their pronouncements on these and other issues relating to the post-September 11 context, both leaders have, of course, sought to shape the opinions of their respective domestic and international audiences. While it is true that neither president personally writes his own speeches (these are produced in collaboration with political strategists, advisors, prominent members of government, and professional speech-writers), it is unequivocally the case that the French and American presidents represent the primary vehicles for the articulation of official government policy. To my knowledge, nobody has yet attempted to systematically compare the language of the American and French presidents since the September 11 attacks.

Thus, my goal in this chapter is to examine some of the key concepts and terminologies used in the official post-September 11 pronouncements of Presidents Bush and Chirac in order to investigate the ways in which they have both, in their own ways,
sought to construct a very specific world view within which their respective approaches towards issues of terrorism, rogue states, and international law more generally are to be understood. To this end, my investigation is presented in the form of a thematically-constructed discourse analysis which uses the interconnected themes of empire, terrorism and human rights as a conceptual grid for interpreting their post-September 11 comments. Within this framework, I aim to explore the ways in which they have formulated, and at times reformulated, these concepts in such a fashion as to render them more amenable to their underlying national perspectives. In doing so, my analysis seeks to address a number of key questions. Which codes do Chirac and Bush use to “sell” their more narrow-minded national interests to their own populations and to the wider international audience? What are the fields of operation of these terms, and what discursive strategies are used to mask national self-interests? In what form do we see confusion between national and universalistic proclamations? These are among the issues explored in this chapter.

My analysis proceeds in the following manner. Firstly, I provide a broad contextual background against which the presidential discourses that I examine can be situated. Here, I look at 1) the manner in which the two presidents have defined what they consider to be the roles of their respective nations in the world, 2) how they have articulated the values which they claim to defend and seek to advance internationally, and 3) the ways in which they have both sought to frame their national agendas in terms of a universal mission. I argue that, despite their mutual declarations of solidarity immediately following the September 11 attacks, the tensions which subsequently emerged between the two nations can, in many ways, be attributed to the different ways in which they have defined the universal values which they defend. Secondly I set out my methodological approach. Here, I describe the way in which I built my corpus of material and the techniques used for analyzing the presidential speeches which I selected. The sections which then follow represent the substantive part of the chapter. Over the course of my analysis I examine the discourses of presidents Bush and Chirac with respect to, consecutively, the themes of terrorism, empire and human rights. In doing so, I highlight a series of significant lexical disparities which, I argue, suggest that other
factors than universal principles or moral commitments are competing for priority behind the official rhetoric.

Despite the friction which arose over Iraq, a striking feature evident within the respective pronouncements of Presidents Bush and Chirac has been the frequency with which they have each talked about universal values. Indeed, numerous common themes recur frequently within the discourses of the two leaders, most notably in connection with the historically shared traditions of democracy, freedom and rights which constitute the basis of each nation’s political system. In the immediate aftermath of the September 11 attacks, the two presidents went to great lengths to express the deep solidarity which, they argued, exists between them, along with their shared perception of the terrorist challenge. Not insignificantly, President Chirac was the first international leader to visit the United States following the attacks, and he unequivocally condemned what had taken place, expressing not only his own total support for Americans, but that of the French people as a whole. Chirac would convey such sentiments repeatedly in the months following the September 11 attacks. On the day of the attacks themselves, President Chirac stated: “jamais aucun pays dans le monde n’a été la cible d’attentats terroristes d’une telle ampleur, ni d’une telle violence” (Sept. 11, 2001[a]) [never has any country in the world been the target of terrorist attacks of such magnitude nor of such violence] and in a written letter to President Bush on the same day he expressed France’s “amitié et sa solidarité dans cette tragédie […] La France condamne sans réserve le terrorisme contre lequel il faut lutter avec une détermination absolue” (Sept. 11, 2001[b]) [friendship and solidarity in this tragedy (…) France condemns, without reservation, terrorism, against which we must struggle with absolute determination.] Chirac would frequently insist that he and Bush shared the same analysis of events. Even when serious disagreements over Iraq began to emerge in 2002, Chirac continued to emphasize the history of solidarity that exists between France and the US, asserting in an interview with the International Herald Tribune, for example, that:

[…] il y a toujours eu dans l’huiste une solidarité entre la France et les Etats-Unis dans les moments difficiles. Vous ne pouvez pas me trouver, je crois, un moment difficile où il n’y a pas eu solidarité […] Alors, la
France n’est pas un allié aligné mais elle est un allié fidèle. Et quand l’essentiel est en cause, elle est toujours présente (Mar. 20, 2002).

[...] throughout history, there has always been solidarity between France and the United States during difficult times. You will not be able to identify, I believe, a difficult moment when there has not been solidarity [...] Thus France is not an aligned ally, but a faithful ally. And when the essential is at stake, France is always present.

This statement and others like it clearly underscore Chirac’s desire to appear supportive toward a historical ally during a time of need. Chirac would also go to great lengths to reject any charges of anti-Americanism in France, and would do so in numerous statements. He repeatedly played down disagreements with Bush, describing them as natural - indeed healthy - quarrels between family members:

Je ne peux pas accepter l’idée qu’il y aurait un phénomène culturel d’antiaméricanisme en France […] Il n’y a pas d’antiaméricanisme. En tous les cas ce n’est pas vrai dans le sens de l’opinion publique. Alors, je le répète, il y a les choses qui agacent les Français, c’est vrai, mais cela relève des querelles naturelles de famille. Il n’y a pas, je le répète, d’antiaméricanisme. Dans une vraie famille il y a des personnalités, tout le monde n’est pas forcément aligné, mais lorsque la solidarité est nécessaire, elle est toujours là (Mar. 20, 2002).

I cannot accept the idea that there exists a cultural phenomenon of anti-Americanism in France [...] There is no anti-Americanism. In any case, not with regard to public opinion. Thus, I repeat, there are things which annoy the French, it is true, but this comes down to natural family quarrels. I repeat, there is no anti-Americanism. In a true family there are personalities, and not everyone is necessarily going to be in full agreement with each other, but when solidarity is necessary, France is always there.
He would also highlight the fact that the US and Europe shared, essentially, the same values. During Bush’s visit to France in May 2002 Chirac underscored “au-delà des considérations superficielles, le lien profond qui existe entre l’Europe et les Etats-Unis, qui est fondé sur des valeurs partagées, c’est cela qui est l’essentiel” (May 26, 2002). [beyond superficial considerations, the deep link which exists between Europe and the United States, which is based on shared values - that is what is essential.]

As for the American president, on September 18, 2001 Bush referred to France as one of America’s “strongest allies,” and during his official visit to France in May 2002, he stated that he and Chirac shared the same view of events. During this visit, Bush noted: “As he [Chirac], himself, said, [...] we're in a fight to defend civilization, and I couldn't agree more with him [...] And I want to thank the French people for not only the sympathy shown for my country after September the 11th, but the strong support in the war against terror” (May 26, 2002).

Yet ultimately, as the Iraq crisis revealed, Bush and Chirac would arrive at deeply opposed policy positions pertaining to the types of actions needed to tackle international terrorism and threats from nations that might support terrorist networks. These differences are rooted in the respective roles which they have each defined for their nations in the international arena. At the same time, a close reading of their post-September 11 pronouncements reveals that, not uncommonly, the two leaders have sought to advance their national positions on post-September 11 questions (with the Iraq invasion representing the most obvious instance of this) by appealing to a higher global mission of which each considers their respective nation to be at the forefront. The discourses of each president have been replete with such assertions since the terrorist attacks. During an interview with the *International Herald Tribune* in March 2002, for example, President Chirac emphasized the continuing importance of the French Revolution in making concrete the key principles of liberté, égalité and fraternité which, he argued, form both the basis of modern-day human rights, and offer a model for the world to emulate. He remarked, “c'est aujourd'hui, je crois, ce message qui doit être porté au niveau international : liberté, égalité, fraternité. En l'adaptant bien entendu au monde moderne” (Mar. 20, 2002). [It is today, I believe, that message which must be carried to
the international level: liberty, equality, fraternity - adapted, of course, to the modern world.] Two months later, during his investiture ceremony speech after being elected for a second term, Chirac reaffirmed the importance of France’s role in the world, and outlined the general principles of French foreign policy with the following comments:

Notre pays a un rôle essentiel à jouer pour mobiliser la communauté internationale. Il saura agir pour réduire les incertitudes et l'instabilité d'un monde troublé par les conflits entre les peuples, par le sous-développement, par la violation des libertés et des droits fondamentaux, et par l'irruption de nouvelles formes de terrorisme [...] Pour contribuer à faire progresser l'organisation du monde, la France doit être forte, affirmer sa place et son rang (May 16, 2002).

Our country has an essential role to play in mobilizing the international community. It must know how to act to reduce the uncertainties and instability of a world troubled by conflicts between peoples, by under-development, by the violation of liberties and fundamental rights, and by the eruption of new forms of terrorism [...] In order to contribute to progress in the organization of the world, France must be strong and affirm her place and her status.

Similarly, President Bush has frequently stated that the United States has been “called to a unique role in human events” (Jan. 29, 2002), and has a historical duty to lead the world towards a path of freedom and democracy. In June 2002 the American president asserted: “History has called our nation into action. History has placed a great challenge before us: Will America - with our unique position and power - blink in the face of terror, or will we lead to a freer, more civilized world? There’s only one answer: This great country will lead the world to safety, security, peace and freedom” (June 6, 2002). On the anniversary of the September 11 attacks Bush reiterated his belief that “This ideal of America [freedom] is the hope of all mankind” (Sept. 11, 2002).
What emerges from statements such as these is the desire of each president to be seen not merely as a national leader, but as the representative of a higher system of values best exemplified by their respective political and economic systems. It would seem that since the September 11 attacks, the two presidents have been increasingly inclined to articulate their national positions, and assert their nation’s power and prestige, through appealing to the universal concepts that they each claim to represent. In effect, by affirming the universality of the values upon which their national systems were built, each president has explicitly suggested that by serving his national interest, he is simultaneously serving the interests of mankind as a whole. While it is true that French and American leaders have used such rhetoric in many past contexts, the fact that the two nations have collided so publicly, yet with each leader apparently defending similar principles, is a new development in Franco-American relations which the post-September 11 period brings out in a particularly acute form.

In spite of the shared moral, ethical and democratic principles expressed by the two presidents since the September 11 attacks, a major source of contention has been how they intersect with new imperatives surrounding national security, and how in concrete terms, these principles should be implemented internationally. French leaders, for example, have claimed that their opposition to the US-led invasion of Iraq was motivated by a desire to uphold the integrity of the UN and preserve global peace, yet ironically, the Bush administration pressed for military action on virtually the same grounds. Much of this comes down to how the two leaders understand the role of the UN in the post-September 11 world. Eight days after the September 11 attacks, Chirac made the French position on possible military interventions abundantly clear, stating: “Je crois qu'aujourd'hui, on comprend que c'est dans ce forum [the UN] que l'on peut mobiliser le mieux les énergies pour lutter, pour éradiquer par tous les moyens conformes à nos valeurs, naturellement, le terrorisme” (Sept. 19, 2001). [I believe that today, it is understood that it is in this forum [the UN] that energies can be best mobilized to struggle against, to eradicate terrorism by all means conforming of course to our values.] He has been equally explicit in his reservations over US unilateralism, declaring in August 2002:
Par ailleurs, on voit poindre la tentation de légitimer l'usage unilatéral et préventif de la force. Cette évolution est inquiétante. Elle est contraire à la vision de la sécurité collective de la France, une vision qui repose sur la coopération des États, le respect du droit et l'autorité du Conseil de sécurité. Nous rappellerons ces règles chaque fois que nécessaire et notamment à propos de l'Iraq. Si Bagdad s'obstine à refuser le retour sans condition des inspecteurs, il faudra alors que le Conseil de Sécurité et lui seul soit en mesure de décider des mesures à prendre (Aug. 29, 2002).

Now we see the emergence of a temptation to legitimate the unilateral and preventive use of force. This evolution is worrying. It is contrary to France’s vision of collective security – a vision which rests on the cooperation of States, the respect of law and the authority of the Security Council. We draw attention to these rules each time this is necessary, and most notably with regard to Iraq. If Baghdad continues to obstinately refuse the return of inspectors, it will then be necessary for the Security Council – and it alone, in a measured fashion, to decide on the measures to take.

Chirac would also remark in an interview with the New York Times: “Je serai très franc avec vous, et je l'ai déjà dit au président Bush, je suis très réservé sur cette doctrine [preventive war]. A partir du moment où une nation se donne le droit d'agir préventivement, cela veut dire naturellement que d'autres nations le feront” (Sept. 9, 2002). [I will be very frank with you, and as I have already said to President Bush, I am very concerned about this doctrine (preventive war). From the moment when one nation gives itself the right to act preventively, then this means, naturally, that other nations will do likewise.] In 2004, Chirac continued to voice his opposition to unilateralism in the world, stating:

Il est certes toujours possible d'organiser le monde selon une logique de puissance. Mais l'expérience nous enseigne que ce type d'organisation est
par définition instable et même, tôt ou tard, à la crise ou à l'affrontement.
Un autre choix s'offre à nous. Celui d'un ordre fondé sur le respect de la 
règle internationale et la responsabilisation des nouveaux pôles du monde,
par leur association pleine et entière aux mécanismes de prise de décision.
Seule cette voie est susceptible de fonder, dans le long terme, un ordre
stable, légitime et accepté. C'est pourquoi nous devons travailler ensemble
au renouveau du multilatéralisme. Un multilatéralisme qui doit s'appuyer
sur une Organisation des Nations unies rénovée et renforcée (Nov. 18,
2004).

It is certainly possible to organize the world according to a logic of power.
But experience teaches us that this type of organization is, by definition,
unstable and leads, sooner or later, to crisis or to opposition. Another
choice presents itself – that of an order based on respect for international
rules and the full involvement of new international actors, by their clear
and complete association with decision-making mechanisms. Only this
path can lead to the long-term establishment of a stable, legitimate, and
accepted order. This is why we are working together to restore
multilateralism. A multilateralism that is derived from a renewed and
reinforced United Nations.

US leaders would argue that they were not the aggressor at all during the Iraq
crisis, but were acting to enforce the UN Security Council’s Resolution 1441 and defend
international peace through the removal of an openly aggressive and imminently
dangerous regime. One year after the September 11 attacks, Bush stated, for example:
“Saddam Hussein's defiance has confronted the United Nations with a difficult and
defining moment: Are Security Council resolutions to be honored and enforced, or cast
aside without consequence? Will the United Nations serve the purposes of its founding,
or will it be irrelevant?” (Sept. 14, 2002). In his first re-election rally speech in March
2004, President Bush made his position on the UN and America’s right to act alone
explicit when he stated: “I'm all for united action, and so are our 34 coalition partners in
Iraq right now. Yet America must never outsource America's national security decisions to the leaders of other countries” (Mar. 20, 2004).\textsuperscript{12} Statements such as these encapsulate the positions of the two presidents with regard to the UN in the post-September 11 context more generally. They also reflect some of the more fundamental features operating in the background of the contemporary Franco-American relationship. Specifically, whereas French leaders now see France’s power and prestige as operating through the conduits of the European Union and the United Nations, American leaders have recently tended to adopt a more unilateralist approach on divisive international questions such as military intervention in Iraq, and have justified the US approach towards these issues under the pretext of spreading American conceptions of democracy and freedom. As I have just highlighted, an increasingly apparent tendency on the part the two presidents has been to express their national power through moral concepts represented in Chirac’s case by human rights (les droits de l’homme), and a distinctly American political and economic model in Bush’s rhetoric. Thus, a key background feature of the contemporary Franco-American relationship has been the use of universalistic moral rhetoric as an instrument for articulating national power and influence. Throughout this period both leaders have claimed to hold the moral high ground, and this has fuelled the tensions that have subsequently emerged.

Ironically, the attempts of both leaders to articulate consistent policy positions in their official declarations have been compounded by ongoing questions surrounding their true commitment to human rights and democratic principles. Chirac, for example, has come under fire for continuing to avoid acknowledging the crimes committed by the French state during the Algerian War of 1954-1962, while simultaneously condemning torture and human rights abuses across the globe today. For their part, certain sections of the US media have consistently argued that France’s opposition to the Iraq war is indicative of an intrinsically anti-American attitude on the part of the French leader. On the US side, as I will show over the course of this chapter, President Bush’s discourses have been replete with universalistic rhetoric during the post-September 11 period, central to which lies the idea of an almost sacred mission to spread freedom across the

\textsuperscript{12} Bush’s reference to “outsourcing” is interesting here, as it reflects a business-oriented perspective not present in the discourses of Chirac.
globe and bring about stability in the Middle East. Yet, as will become apparent during the next chapter, intellectuals and other commentators in both countries have called many aspects of his rhetoric into question in the light of the Iraq invasion. It has been argued, for example, that the Bush administration constructed a false rationale for invading Iraq in order to fit a preconceived (and imperialistic, according to some commentators) policy to remove Saddam Hussein from power. Bush’s shift in rhetoric, describing the war as justified on humanitarian grounds - irrespective of whether Saddam Hussein was developing WMD or not - has been viewed in some circles as hypocritical and inconsistent, given that Bush has adopted very different stances on the issues of democratization and WMD proliferation with regard to other seemingly aggressive regimes such as North Korea which has, in fact, openly developed WMD in defiance of the UN. In addition to these inconsistencies, US attempts to establish democracy in Iraq have been overshadowed by the Abu Ghraib torture scandal, and ongoing human rights questions surrounding the treatment of inmates at Guantanamo Bay prison.

In the analysis which follows, I will attempt to interpret the evolution of recent Franco-American relations through a thematically-constructed discourse analysis which is structured according to the empire/terrorism/human rights nexus. In doing so, I hope to shed new light on how the two national leaders view the roles of their respective nations in the world, and to deepen our understanding of how they have each carefully constructed a discursive world through which their foreign policies with regard to terrorism and “rogue states” are to be understood.

**Corpus and Methodology**

In order to elucidate the specific disparities observable in the discourses of Bush and Chirac, I conducted a series of keyword searches to statistically determine the prominence accorded by each president respectively to certain terms or concepts. I began with President Bush and used, primarily, the White House website to identify presidential speeches and other statements containing pronouncements relating to post-September 11 issues of terrorism, empire and human rights. While this site does contain a large volume of presidential speeches which are categorized by date, it is not possible to input a
specific search term or phrase, and attain a comprehensive list of speeches in which the
term or phrase appears. This was inconvenient from a comparative research perspective,
as the French Ministère des Affaires étrangères [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] website,
which I used to examine Chirac’s discourse, does provide such a search option. Because
of these differences in how speeches can be accessed on the two websites, I was not able
to construct my corpus of pronouncements by Bush in an identical fashion to those by
Chirac.

As the sheer volume of US presidential pronouncements made it impractical to
search them all manually to identify those containing my keywords, I decided instead to
select the major speeches and other declarations by Bush during the time period under
analysis which seemed most likely to contain my keywords.13 There were 75 such
statements in all. I converted them into a Microsoft Word file, and conducted keyword
searches using the resulting 340-page document. Most of the speeches that I selected had
terrorism as their primary theme (or contained commentary on empire and human rights
in varying degrees), while others covered broader policy themes as, for example, with the
State of the Union addresses. In all cases, however, issues pertaining to the post-
September 11 questions under analysis were prominently featured, and this allowed me to
build a fairly accurate picture of the relative proportionality with which President Bush
used certain terms or phrases compared with others. With this corpus of speeches thus
established, I then conducted statistical searches for English words and phrases relating to
the post-September 11 themes of terrorism, empire and human rights which could be seen
to recur frequently on reading Bush’s speeches in detail.

The next step was to analyze similar data for the French president in order to
determine the relative proportionality with which he utilized comparable key terms and
phrases. The French Ministère des Affaires étrangères website14 provides a data base
containing all of the official French foreign policy declarations (including formal
speeches, interviews, press statements and other texts) delivered by prominent French
leaders since 1990, ranging from domestic and foreign speeches to daily press briefings
and television interviews. When conducting a keyword search, the database searches

13 I excluded, for example, any speeches which had a narrow thematic focus, such as those relating solely to
healthcare reform, social security and so forth.
14 This site is accessible at http://www.doc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/BASIS/epic/www/doc/SF
many thousands of documents and displays all those in which a specific term or phrase was used.

Although the site does not disclose the exact number of documents through which it searches (probably due to the massive volume of documents contained in the database, coupled with the fact that it is updated on a daily basis), nor the exact number of times a term is used in each document in which it appears, I was able to establish how many statements by Chirac contained certain words or phrases. (In the present context, the words “documents” and “statements” are to be understood interchangeably as embracing all forms of pronouncement included in the data base.) By examining the context of each occurrence, I was able to eliminate instances in which a term was used in a context not related to the post-September 11 issues under analysis. By tabulating the number of occurrences of a range of key terms after eliminating those which appeared in contexts unrelated to September 11 and its aftermath, I was able to establish the relative proportionality in his use of certain words or phrases compared with other terms with potentially similar meanings (for example, the frequency with which Chirac used the word “terreur” [terror] compared with his use of the word “terrorisme” [terrorism]).

At times, my keyword searches of Chirac’s speeches used more or less direct translations from English to French of terms frequently used by Bush. In some cases, however, a direct translation did not capture the same idea or concept in the other language or it was clear from reading Chirac’s pronouncements that they contained important recurrent terms which featured little, if at all, in Bush’s statements. To offer just one emblematic example of this, Bush frequently used the word “war” when discussing terrorism whereas Chirac avoided this word, preferring to describe the situation in terms of a “lutte” [struggle], a word which Bush largely avoided. These two terms are by no means equivalent (unlike, for example, “terrorism” and “terrorisme,” which are very close in meaning), and my analysis in the next sections of this chapter offers many other examples of such differences in vocabulary. In instances where it became evident that Chirac would favor certain words or phrases which did not appear with such prominence in Bush’s discourse, where I had not initially counted them, I revisited Bush’s 75 speeches and conducted new searches for English equivalents and/or
related terms which Bush could in principle have employed. Words and phrases of this type include “struggle” and “struggle against terrorism”.

Whereas for President Bush, I was able to use the “find” facility available on Microsoft Word to quantify exactly how many times a certain word or phrase was used in the 75 speeches that I selected, for the more “rolling” corpus of President Chirac, I was typically only able to ascertain the number of documents in which a term was used, particularly in instances where a search term appeared in 100 or more documents (as was the case with the words “démocratie” and “liberté” for example). In some instances the term itself was not central to my analysis, and did not thus justify a time-consuming manual counting process. For this reason, I cannot demonstrate exhaustively how many times Bush used a certain word during the time period under examination compared to how many times Chirac may have used a comparable French word. This, however, was never my primary intention. The absolute number of occasions on which given terms were used was less central to my analysis than the relative proportionality with which each president selected certain words or phrases consistently above others within the corpus of his statements. My data highlight (quite dramatically in some instances) the extent to which each leader has tended to focus repeatedly upon certain set words, phrases and concepts showing significant differences with those favored by the other when talking about the post-September 11 world.

The three following sections of this chapter have been organized around the three themes of terrorism, empire and human rights, which constitute the primary analytical framework of the dissertation as a whole. In each case a series of theme-specific keyword searches were used to determine the frequency of certain terms, the semantic fields around these terms, and the contexts in which these terms were used.

Findings

Key findings

My investigation into the official discourses of Presidents Bush and Chirac led to the following six key findings:
1) Throughout his post-September 11 pronouncements, President Bush has consistently employed the term “war” to describe the American stance on global terrorism, and the term “terror” to describe the object(s) of this new war. The phrase “war on terror” rapidly became the official nomenclature to define the overall American policy on international terrorism and, later, regimes judged to represent threats to American national security. The reasons for this, I suggest, have been i) to elevate the September 11 attacks above any historical precedents, ii) to justify exceptional measures which would be necessary to tackle this new threat, and iii), to define the post-September 11 situation in relatively fluid terms in order to allow for the subsequent addition of new enemies under this rubric.

2) President Chirac, by contrast, has specifically avoided the French equivalents of these two terms, i.e. “guerre” and “terreur” and has instead consistently employed the phrase “lutte contre le terrorisme” to define the anti-terrorist challenge. This refusal to replicate Bush’s terms also represents a discursive strategy with its own logic; one which has been aimed, primarily, at constraining American power and ensuring that France would not become marginalized in the international sphere.

3) I also highlight the importance of religious rhetoric on the part of Bush – and specifically his frequent use of the term “evil” to define terrorists and dictatorial regimes – and the absence of religious language (and the avoidance of the term “mal”) in the pronouncements of Chirac.

4) This contrast is further underscored by Chirac’s frequent references to “les droits de l’homme” and Bush’s highly infrequent use of the concept of human rights. Again, Bush’s use of religious language and Chirac’s use of the concept of human rights reflect the attempts of both leaders to define the nature of the post-September 11 situation in ways favorable to their respective national agendas.
5) With regard to the question of “empire” I found that President Bush avoided narratives on empire (past and present) and globalization, and has tended to describe developing nations as “failed states” thus shifting attention away from the legacy of European colonialism and/or the globalization process in contributing to the creation of a climate for the “failures” that he identifies.

6) Chirac, by contrast, has been more willing to enter into such introspective dialogues, and has tended to speak of the “West” in its entirety when discussing the possible underlying frustrations upon which terrorist groups draw support. Through his willingness to acknowledge Western crimes of the past Chirac has been able to appear more honest and sensitive than Bush, particularly given the comparative lack of such seemingly introspective and honest commentary by the American president.

The “war on terror” vs. “la lutte contre le terrorisme”

This first section of my analysis examines the central policy issue confronting both nations since September 11, namely the kinds of actions to be undertaken by the US and the international community to tackle terrorist networks and “rogue-states.” Immediately following the September 11 attacks, and continuing to the time of writing, President Bush has consistently employed the term “terror” rather than “terrorism” when discussing September 11 and post-September 11 terrorist phenomena. In addition, he has conceptualized the US response to these acts in terms of a “war on terror,” denoting a multi-faceted strategy directed against international terrorist groups and other antagonists deemed to be enemies of the United States. Bearing in mind that “terror” (as distinct from “terrorism”) was seldom previously used by officials to denote enemy forces or their tactics, it is striking how quickly the newly coined notion of a “war on terror” gained currency within the administration,15 (most notably in the pronouncements of the

15 A keyword search of just under 300 Defense Department speeches (accessible from http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches) reveals that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz also frequently employed this phrase. Statistically, when their speeches are taken together, they used the phrase “war on terror” 168 times during the time period under analysis.
president himself), and the extent to which it has filtered down into popular usage.\textsuperscript{16} It is also striking how infrequently this phrase is questioned or analyzed in the media or in academic circles.

Table 1 - Summary of key words and phrases employed by Presidents Bush and Chirac with regard to terrorism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms/phrases used by Bush</th>
<th>Frequency of usage*</th>
<th>Terms/phrases used by Chirac</th>
<th>Frequency of usage**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>terror</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>terreur</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terrorism</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>terrorisme</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>war against/on terrorism</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>guerre contre le terrorisme</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>war on terrorism</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>guerre au terrorisme</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>war on terror</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>guerre à la terreur</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>war against terror</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>guerre contre la terreur</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>struggle against terror</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>lutte contre la terreur</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>struggle against terrorism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>lutte contre le terrorisme</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lutter contre le terrorisme</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>combat contre le terrorisme</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Bush = total number of occurrences in selected documents

** Chirac = total number of documents in which a term or phrase was used

\textsuperscript{16} In the aftermath of the July 7, 2005 London bombings, the British media has started to adopt the term “war on terror,” and has began to refer to the event as “7/7” in much the same way that the September 11 attacks are commonly referred to as “9/11” in the US and much of the English-speaking world.
Statistically, over the course of 75 major speeches delivered between September 11, 2001 and November 3, 2004, President Bush use the word “terror” a total of 328 times. His use of this word, while vague at times, has for the most part served to designate the broad phenomenon of “terrorism” in the conventional sense, but more specifically, to denote certain groups related (or suspected of being related) to the September 11 terrorists. He has also used the term to broadly describe the new international climate of uncertainty resulting from the attacks. Conversely, Bush used the term “terrorism” a total of only 71 times in the 75 speeches which I examined – almost five times less frequently than his use of the word “terror.” Among the occurrences of “terrorism,” seven were in utterances containing the phrase “war against terrorism,” but, despite popular perceptions to the contrary, in only two instances did the president employ the phrase “war on terrorism.” By contrast, he spoke of a “war on terror” and of a “war against terror” on 64 and 24 occasions respectively.

This new formulation took shape rapidly in aftermath of the September 11 attacks. While Bush’s first public response to this event, in a television address on the evening of September 11, spoke of the need to “win the war against terrorism” (a phrase he would use little thereafter), in the same address he condemned the attacks as “evil, despicable acts of terror” (Sept. 11, 2001). The following day he stated, “The deliberate and deadly attacks which were carried out yesterday against our country were more than acts of terror. They were acts of war” (Sept. 12, 2001). Here, in the references to “terror” and “war” were the building blocks from which, a week later, emerged the phrase “war on terror,” which Bush uttered for the first time in his speech to Congress on September 20, 2001. On this day, he stated: “Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated” (Sept. 20, 2001). From this date onwards, Bush would consistently prioritize the phrase “war on terror” when making statements related to the post-September 11 context. He would use the word “struggle” in various contexts in connection with anti-terrorist action on 35 occasions, but would employ the phrases “struggle against terror” and “struggle against terrorism” only once in each case.
President Chirac, by contrast, would avoid talking about anti-terrorist action in the manner adopted by President Bush, preferring the term “lutte contre le terrorisme” [struggle against terrorism], and less frequently “combat contre le terrorisme” [fight against terrorism] as outlined in Table 1. In an interview with CNN two days after the attacks, Chirac stated, for example: “Ils [les Américains] ont réalisé l’unanimité autour d’eux dans la lutte contre le terrorisme” (Sept. 13, 2001). [They (the Americans) have achieved unanimity around them in the struggle against terrorism.] This would become Chirac’s standard terminology when talking about anti-terrorist action after September 11. He would use the expression “guerre contre le terrorisme” [war against terrorism] only once, and this was during a reply to a journalist’s question rather than during a prepared speech: “Mais, je répète, la guerre contre le terrorisme est une guerre totale, à l’égard de tout le monde” (May 28, 2002). [But, I repeat, the war against terrorism is a total war concerning the whole world.] At no point would he speak of a war on, or against, “terror.”

Statistically, Chirac would use the word “terrorisme” in 268 documents and would do so in what can be described as the conventional way, i.e. to denote the actions of terrorist groups who target civilians. In 117 of these occurrences, it was part of the phrase “lutte contre le terrorisme,” in 46 documents it featured in the phrase “lutter contre le terrorisme” and in 17 cases it formed part of the phrase “combat contre le terrorisme”.

Significantly, Chirac would, for the most part, avoid the French equivalents of the words “war” and “terror” (i.e. “guerre” and “terreur”) when talking about September 11 and the post-September 11 context. This fact did not escape the attention of American journalists during Chirac’s official visit to the US a week after the attacks. Following his meeting with President Bush, Chirac explained, with an air of frustration, that while he accepted that the September 11 attacks created a new global situation which would undoubtedly require some new forms of action in response, he did not favor the term “war” to describe this situation:

Je ne veux pas faire de querelle sémantique. Je suis parfaitement conscient de ce qui s'est passé, naturellement, et, comme le disait tout à l'heure George Bush, parfaitement conscient qu'il s'agit d'un conflit, d'une guerre,
appelez cela comme vous voulez, mais qu'il y a une action nouvelle, qui implique des moyens nouveaux pour lutter contre un mal nouveau et que nous devrons bien terrasser (Sept.18, 2001[a]).

I do not want to engage in semantic quarrels. I am perfectly aware of what happened, naturally, and as George Bush said earlier, perfectly aware that it concerns a conflict, a war, call it what you will, but that it is a new action that implies new methods to struggle against this new evil, and we must defeat it.

In further clarification of his position with respect to the term “war” Chirac added: “Je ne sais pas s’il faut utiliser le mot ‘guerre.’ Ce qui est sûr, c'est que nous avons un conflit d'une nouvelle nature, qui est un conflit déterminant pour le maintien des Droits de l'Homme, de la liberté, de la dignité humaine, et que tout doit être mis en oeuvre pour protéger ces valeurs essentielles qui sont celles de notre civilisation” (ibid.). [I do not know if the word “war” should be used. What is sure is that we have a conflict of a new nature, which is a decisive conflict for the maintenance of human rights, of liberty, and human dignity, and that everything must be put in place to protect these essential values which are those of our civilization.] Chirac would later suggest that the American president’s use of the term “war” and its subsequent popular usage could be put down to the traumatic effects of the attacks, and the fact that the American population, for the first time in history, had been the target of a major terrorist attack (Nov. 6, 2001). When pushed by an American journalist, Chirac conceded: “Le combat contre le terrorisme est effectivement une forme moderne, encore inconnue, de la guerre. Alors, qu'on l'appelle guerre, conflit, lutte, peu importe. C’est la réalité.” (Sept. 19, 2001) [The fight against terrorism is effectively a modern form, still unknown, of war. So whether one calls it war, conflict, struggle or whatever else, it is reality.]

While Chirac did not explicitly state that his general avoidance of the term war actually meant that he and Bush perceived the post-September 11 situation in different terms, this nevertheless remains implicit in the great lengths that he goes to in order to
avoid the term “guerre” when setting the terms of his own discourse, as the statistics demonstrate.

In his official pronouncements since September 11, Chirac has been equally reluctant to use the word “terreur,” which features in only ten of his official pronouncements related to the post-September 11 context. While it is true that in France, “la Terreur” is commonly associated with a phase of the French Revolution, and represents an historical moment that is highly problematic for contemporary champions of republican values (which could explain why this term might be avoided by a French leader in the current context), Chirac has not completely avoided this word. In the immediate aftermath of September 11, for example, Chirac asserted: “Au fanatisme, à la haine, à la terreur, nous saurons opposer, dans le respect de nos valeurs, le courage, la détermination et la force au service de la justice et du droit” (Sept. 19, 2001[a]). [As befits our values, we will oppose fanaticism, hatred, and terror with courage, determination, and strength in the service of justice and right.] Similarly, on October 11, 2001 Chirac stated: “Les terroristes n'incarnent aucune civilisation, aucune forme de civilisation. Ils ne défendent aucune cause légitime. Ils incarnent simplement la logique de la terreur. D'une terreur aveugle, la loi du meurtre et du sang, l'intolérance la plus absolue” (Oct. 11, 2001). [The terrorists do not embody any civilization or any form of civilization. They do not defend any legitimate cause. They embody simply the logic of terror. A blind terror, the law of murder and blood, of the most absolute intolerance.] The statistics show, however, that half of Chirac’s utterances containing the word “terreur” appeared during the two months immediately following the attacks (at a time when the official discourse of the French government with reference to the attacks had not yet been definitively established), and two others were used in the presence of President Bush, most likely as a means of showing solidarity with him, and in order to avoid any suggestion that he and Bush perceived events differently. Thus, while the word “terreur” was not completely absent from his post-September 11 pronouncements, it cannot be described as constituting part of Chirac’s normal discourse on terrorism, since it was only used by him in isolated statements. Moreover, when we look at the dates on which he employed this term, it is evident that his use of it declined markedly over time.
A final point to note is that on no occasion did Chirac refer to “une guerre,” [a war], “une lutte” [a struggle], or “un combat” [a fight] “contre la terreur” [against terror.]

While this may, at first glance, all appear to be a somewhat trivial point, the statistics suggest that these lexical contrasts are neither a coincidence nor an accident, but a deliberate strategy on the part of the two presidents to frame the post-September 11 context in highly specific ways. There are, I would argue, several possible explanations which may account for these differences in choice of vocabulary. To take the American president first, it is likely that Bush is seeking to achieve a number of important effects through his frequent reinforcement of the “war”-like character of the new anti-terrorist campaign. Initially, it is probable that the term “war” was employed by the Bush administration in a largely metaphorical sense, in the same vein as, for example, the “war on drugs” or the “war on poverty” of the Reagan era. However, it is likely that soon after the attacks, the administration became aware of other advantages of the term “war” in defining the post-September 11 context. As I will suggest in a moment, the “war on terror” has indeed taken on a shape which fundamentally differs from the “war on drugs” or the “war on poverty.” This reflects a political choice on the part of the administration to exploit the concept as a backdrop against which new foreign policy measures could be understood.

Firstly, a declaration of “war,” as opposed to the issuing of an official statement to the effect that his government would do everything possible to prevent future terrorist attacks, conveys the notion that the September 11 attacks truly constitute a new paradigm of terrorist destruction without historical precedent. Secondly, the framing of the American response to the attacks as a “war,” a term normally reserved for conflicts threatening the integrity if not the very existence of the state, conveys the sentiment that the president is justified in going to any lengths to bring those responsible to justice and prevent anything like it from happening again.

Bush’s use of the word “war” seems to present something of a paradox in a number of respects. In the modern world, wars have conventionally been defined as armed conflicts between sovereign states or, in the case of civil wars, as armed conflicts within national boundaries for control over the state apparatus. States have often engaged in armed struggle against terrorist groups such as the FLN in colonial Algeria, the PLO in
Palestine and ETA in Spain. When engaging in such actions, states have not traditionally described them as “wars” for fear of giving credence to a core goal of their adversaries, namely their recognition as independent states. Unlike organizations such as the FLN and the PLO, which used terrorist tactics in support of nationalist struggles, groups such as al Qaeda are not nationally based. Neither do they aspire to recognition as sovereign states. Thus the insistence with which Bush has described the struggle against terror(ism) as a “war” breaks new ground in two ways. Firstly, it stands in stark contrast with the traditional reticence of national leaders to use the term “war” with reference to terrorist groups, and secondly, this is probably the first occasion in modern times in which a national leader has declared “war” on an armed group which neither holds nor aspires to the status of statehood.

In many ways, the “war on terror” as articulated by the American president represents a new paradigm in modern warfare in that the word “war” has been used by him to define a vague, unconventional, and universalistic mission, but the concrete manner in which this war is to be won has never been clearly outlined. The term “war” also entails the blurring of a set of complex national and international elements in that it is clearly intended to appeal to American domestic opinion and address the need to respond to a domestic threat, but at the same time, it has also been used as an umbrella term to designate other international initiatives (such as intervention in Iraq) which are international in scope, but are described by Bush as constituting a front in the “war on terror.” Thus, as reconfigured by Bush, the terms “war” and “terror” have been used vaguely and fluidly with reference to diverse groups or nations identified by the administration as enemies of the United States. In using these concepts, Bush has been able to simplify, and unify, a highly complicated set of international dynamics under one concept - “a war on terror” - designed to simultaneously appeal to both national and international audiences, and provide the necessary scope for the inclusion of “new” antagonists such as Saddam Hussein and other “rogue states.”

One could, of course, argue that the term “terror” is preferred by the American president for purely lexical reasons, owing to the fact that it is simpler and quicker to say than the word “terrorism.” The statistics, however, do not entirely support this hypothesis. While Bush cannot be described as a master of words, he has not avoided the
term “terrorism” in his discourses; he in fact used the word 71 times during the 75 speeches that I examined. It appears, rather, that the word “terror” has been highlighted by Bush for a specific and calculated purpose. The concept of “terror” contains within it both subjective and objective elements. On the one hand, it is an affective term, clearly intended to describe the psychological state of a nation, and the emotional reaction of people to the threat of terrorist violence. However, when we examine the discourses of President Bush, the term “terror” also possesses an important “objective” component in that he has used it to designate the object(s) of his declared “war,” i.e. terrorist groups and so-called “rogue states” which, he argues, threaten the United States.

By using the word “terror” Bush can directly activate the immediate memory of the World Trade Center attacks, and connect this traumatic shared memory to other objects or situations which may not, when one looks more deeply at them, be in any way related. Although the word “terror” is, in many ways, a deliberately vague catch-all term for Bush, the emotional impact of the word and the memories which are connected to it are both concrete and immediate, invoking feelings of sadness, anger and a deep national resolve. As I have indicated above, by using the term “terror” to represent the object of this new “war,” Bush can simultaneously englobe all post-September 11 terrorist organizations, sponsors of terrorism, and enemies of the United States into a unified global phenomenon, i.e. “terror” – a multi-faceted enemy superceding “old” terrorism as it is traditionally understood, and requiring nothing short of “war” to resolve it. If we acknowledge that the term “terrorism” – like the term “war” - is applicable to many situations and contexts, and has its own share of historical weight, the subtle inner dynamics of Bush’s discursive strategy become more apparent. In many ways, it is logical that Bush should seek a new term (i.e. “terror”) to combine with the old concept of “war” to simultaneously convey the exceptionality of the present day terrorist phenomenon, but keep it broadly situated within the conventionally understood parameters of international conflict – with all of the scope for action that this allows along with the urgency that it implies.

By employing the word “terror” to define the actions of non-state actors such as al Qaeda - and even in connection with nation-states such as Iraq, North Korea or Iran - Bush has been able to create a strong line of demarcation between “terrorism” as a
historical concept applicable to earlier contexts, and “terror” as a fundamentally new concept - one of radical uniqueness - applicable only to the September 11 attacks and the post-September 11 enemies of the United States. This construct – one which suggests the danger of limitless violence through the concept of “terror” – underlies and sustains a widespread perception in the US that the slate of international relations and the rules governing international warfare need to be wiped clean to tackle this new, all-pervading threat, permitting exceptional measures which “war” invariably involves, and which differ from strategies used in relation to past terrorist contexts. It also fits with the view that if some members of the international community cannot see this, then the US must, and will, act alone.

As I indicated earlier in this section, President Chirac has employed quite different language compared with Bush when talking about September 11 and the “war on terror.” There are several possible explanations for Chirac’s refusal to frame events in the same manner as Bush, and as I suggested in the introduction to this chapter, a significant part of this is no doubt rooted in an underlying desire to contain American power, and prevent unilateralist actions in the international arena.

The question of terrorism is particularly problematic when connected to France, given the events of the Reign of Terror during the French Revolution, and more recently, the events of the Algerian War of 1954-62. As the leader of a nation with a long experience of terrorism, Chirac almost certainly conceptualizes this concept against a very different set of historical dynamics to those currently guiding President Bush. It is also probable that given the immensity of the terrorist problem which confronted France in Algeria, Chirac feels that he has a clearer understanding than most national leaders into how terrorism should, and should not, be handled.

In stark contrast to American discourses today relating to terrorism, French leaders at the time of the Algerian War went to extraordinary lengths to deny that France was engaged in a war at all. French leaders also, unsuccessfully, argued that anti-terrorism measures were a purely internal matter for France, and as such, they were described as “opérations de maintien de l’ordre.” [operations for maintaining order.] It was thus argued by French leaders that this internal matter did not concern the international community or the UN.
During the Algerian War, one of the main reasons for the avoidance of the word “guerre” when talking about French anti-terrorist measures against the Algerian Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) was precisely that French leaders wanted to reduce the credibility of the terrorists’ cause, and ensure that the size of the problem (which was, of course, larger than it wished) was not blown out of scale. The notion of war was unacceptable to French leaders as it would have been tantamount to recognizing the de facto existence of a separate Algerian nation. At the time, this was inconceivable, as Algeria was not considered to be a colony of France, but an integral and inseparable part of the French state.

The key point to note is that French leaders went to great lengths to skew perceptions away from any notion that a war-like situation existed in Algeria for the reasons outlined above, and it would seem that Chirac is now attempting to skew perceptions away from the war-like character of the present-day terrorist situation. It is conceivable that a not dissimilar line of logic to that relating to Algeria is operating in the background in the current context, most notably in the sense that Chirac does not want to see any degree of credence lent to the September 11 terrorists and other groups which may support them as legitimate representatives of an alternative political order. In addition to this, however, it is also likely that Chirac’s rejection of the terms “war” and “terror” to define the present situation is, on the one hand, based on a desire to contain American power, and on the other, to shift perceptions away from the notion that a “limitless” or “boundless” situation exists in terms both of the dangers posed by terrorist groups, and just as importantly, in terms of the measures which should be employed to confront this danger. Specifically, whereas Bush has consistently sought to underscore the war-like character of the contemporary anti-terrorist struggle in order to justify the employment of new and unusual measures exceeding those used in relation to previous anti-terrorist contexts, Chirac probably avoids the term “war” today, as he does not want the anti-terrorist struggle to be conceptualized in radically new ways which break with past precedents. By insisting on framing the post-September 11 context in terms of a “lutte contre le terrorisme,” this serves to partially erase the demarcation line drawn by Bush between the September 11 events and other historical terrorist actions occurring in different contexts.
It is also probable that Chirac’s avoidance of the term “guerre” contains within it an important legal dimension in that the formal recognition of war could provide the US with certain pretexts to act outside the rules of the UN. As outlined earlier, Chirac has frequently expressed his belief that the UN, and the UN alone, should be the sole decision-making instrument when determining military and other interventions to tackle terrorist network and dictatorial regimes. For this reason, Chirac seems to be intent on shifting attention away from the notion that a “war” exists, as it was the Bush administration, and it alone, which declared this “war” and in doing so, gave itself the unilateral right to define the nature of the situation for the entire international community.

Chirac’s underlying concern, it would seem, is for anti-terrorism measures to remain under the auspices of the United Nations, as this is where France still retains an important and influential voice. If the Bush administration, rather than the UN, is given the right to define and label “anti-terror” initiatives, a situation could emerge in which France would be marginalized from key decision-making processes. Indeed, a major reason for Chirac’s support of military intervention in Afghanistan was because it was validated by the UN Security Council. France was one of the major contributors in military action against the Taliban, as he has often pointed out. Chirac rejected the Iraq invasion because he did not accept the link between Iraq and terrorist networks, (and explicitly said so on numerous occasions), but perhaps just as importantly, because he felt that key decisions (which would have direct repercussions for the West) were being made by the US under the guise of the “war on terror” without France’s involvement.

Other statistics lend weight to the logic just outlined. When we consider the references made to various antagonists which have appeared in the discourses of each president, some major disparities are present.
Table 2 - Terms on key antagonists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms/phrases used by Bush</th>
<th>Frequency of usage*</th>
<th>Terms/phrases used by Chirac</th>
<th>Frequency of usage**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>terrorist(s)</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>terroriste(s)</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bin Laden</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>ben Laden</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al Qaeda</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>al Qaida</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saddam</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>Saddam</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>1034</td>
<td>Irak</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Bush = total number of occurrences in selected documents  
** Chirac = total number of documents in which a term or phrase was used

Both leaders have, not surprisingly, made many references to “terrorist(s)” /”terroriste(s)” in their speeches, particularly during the year following September 11. However, it is noteworthy that, whereas Chirac mentioned “ben Laden” in 25 speeches, Bush only mentioned the al Qaeda leader seven times during the time period under examination. Although al Qaeda has been mentioned more frequently by the American president, his discourses have been far more heavily focused on Saddam Hussein and Iraq. Statistically, Bush mentioned “Saddam” 280 times, and “Iraq” 1034 times during the 75 speeches that I examined. When we compare this with the comparatively few times that he referred to “bin Laden” (seven utterances) and “al Qaeda” (101 utterances), the disparity in proportion is striking. President Chirac, by contrast, has been considerably more balanced in terms of the proportionality between his references to “ben Laden” and “Saddam” (25 utterances in each case), and with regard to his references to “al Qaida” and “Irak” (29 and 145 utterances respectively).

This disparity underscores Bush’s shift in focus from “terror” with al Qaeda – and more specifically Osama bin Laden - as the object, to “terror” with Iraq and Saddam Hussein as the object. While it could be argued that Bush’s shift from bin Laden and al
 Qaeda to Saddam Hussein and Iraq can be attributed to the ongoing difficulties that the Americans have had in finding bin Laden, it is also supports my contention that the phrase “war on terror” has been used by Bush as an umbrella for numerous enemies of the United States, depending on the situation at hand.

The role of religion in the discourses of Bush and Chirac

Another striking difference in the discourses of Bush and Chirac concerns the role of religion. My main argument here is that, while both leaders have often mentioned “religion” in a general sense, and have been careful to distinguish Islamic Fundamentalist groups from mainstream Islam, Bush, unlike Chirac, has tended to frame both his own nation’s mission and that of its antagonists in broadly religious terms. In doing so he has sought to portray the United States as a (divinely) “chosen nation.” This represents a significant contrast with the secular republican discourse of Chirac, in which the challenges facing the international community since September 11 are expressed more in terms of human rights, as I will highlight in the final section of this chapter. Before commencing this part of my analysis, it should first be made clear that the emphasis in this section is not so much upon the frequency with which each leader has talked about religion. The statistics show that both leaders have done this on many occasions. My emphasis is on the use of religious rhetoric as an instrument for conceptualizing September 11 and subsequent related events. For President Bush, such rhetoric has been forcefully present; for President Chirac it has been forcefully absent.

While religious language has featured in the discourses of numerous past US presidents, religion has been a particularly noticeable dimension of President Bush’s

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17 President Bush has stated, for example, “Its [Islam’s] teachings are good and peaceful, and those who commit evil in the name of Allah blaspheme the name of Allah” (Sept. 20, 2001). Similarly, Chirac has stated: “Il est capital de ne faire aucun amalgame entre, d’une part des fondamentalistes terroristes et fanatiques et, d’autre part, le monde arabe ou musulman. Un tel amalgame serait à la fois injuste et inacceptable” (Sept. 18, 2001[a]). [It is essential not to make any amalgamation between, on the one hand, fundamentalist terrorists and fanatics and, on the other hand, the Arab or Muslim worlds. Such an amalgamation would be both unjust and unacceptable.]

18 Statistically, a keyword search reveals that both leaders have frequently discussed “religion” in general terms. Bush has referred to “God” 72 times - Chirac referred to God in 7 documents. Bush referred to Christianity 5 times - Chirac did so in 24 documents. Bush referred to Islam 23 times, and Muslims 21 times - Chirac did so in 35 and 69 documents respectively. Bush referred to “religion” 15 times and “religious” 19 times - Chirac did so in 31 documents.
discourse. Given the centrality of religion in his life this is, in many ways, a natural discourse for him adopt. Chirac’s secular discourse, by contrast, represents a significant contrast to this, in that contemporary French political culture does not invoke God or religion. While he has openly acknowledged that religion has played an important role in the formulation of certain French laws and societal values, President Chirac has described the importance of the concept of “laïcité” (i.e. the formal separation of church and state) in the French public space on numerous occasions. In 2003, for example, he remarked, “La laïcité est inscrite dans nos traditions. Elle est au coeur de notre identité républicaine” (Dec. 17, 2003). [Laïcité is inscribed in our traditions. It is at the heart of our Republican identity.]

Although Bush has also made references to the separation of church and state in the US - stating, for example: “I fully understand it's important to maintain the separation of church and state. We don't want the state to become the church, nor do we want the church to become the state” (June 1, 2004), - he has come under attack from atheist organizations for his frequent use of religious language, and from several organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union over his faith-based initiative program. Such groups have argued that Bush’s faith-based initiatives reflect government entanglement with religion, and favoritism towards religion, in violation of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. In contrast to France, where the state is prohibited from providing direct state funding to religious organizations (although indirect support is provided in various ways), new legislation introduced by the Bush administration has led to some important changes with respect to the allocation of funds for religiously-based organizations. The new legislation changed, for example, the way in which the federal government regulates, taxes and funds charities and non-profit initiatives run by religious organizations. Although prior to the legislation it was possible for these organizations to receive federal assistance, the new legislation removed reporting requirements which required the organizations to separate their charitable functions from their religious functions. With regard to this, Bush stated that, “the key
thing is, is that we do have the capacity to allow faith programs to access enormous sums of social service money, which I think is important.”

The central point to reiterate at this juncture is that while Bush does acknowledge the formal separation of church and state, he has made no secret of the fact that he considers politics and religion to be closely intertwined. He has also openly stated that many of his policies are directly derived from his religions beliefs:

I never want to impose my religion on anybody else. But when I make decisions I stand on principle. And the principles are derived from who I am. I believe we ought to love our neighbor like we love ourself. That's manifested in public policy through the faith-based initiative where we've unleashed the armies of compassion to help heal people who hurt. I believe that God wants everybody to be free. That's what I believe. And that's one part of my foreign policy. In Afghanistan I believe that the freedom there is a gift from the Almighty. And I can't tell you how encouraged I am to see freedom on the march. And so my principles that I make decisions on are a part of me. And religion is a part of me (Oct. 14, 2004).

Not surprisingly, religion has featured prominently in his framing of the September 11 attacks and his nation’s role in ridding the world of this “evil.” As indicated earlier, religion has deeply underscored how Bush perceives America’s broader mission to spread liberty in the world. To offer just a small representative sample of such statements, during his inaugural address on January 20, 2001, Bush stated: “Our democratic faith is more than the creed of our country, it is the inborn hope of our humanity, an ideal we carry but do not own, a trust we bear and pass along. […] I know this is in our reach because we are guided by a power larger than ourselves who creates us equal in His image. And we are confident in principles that unite and lead us onward.”

19 http://www.washingtontimes.com/national/20050111-101004-3771r.htm (Jan. 12, 2005). While Bush’s pronouncement falls outside the date range on which this dissertation focuses (i.e. Sept. 11, 2001 to Nov. 30, 2004), I quote it as it is particularly illustrative of Bush’s position on the funding of religious organizations.
Following the September 11 attacks, Bush declared: “The course of this conflict is not
known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always
been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them” (Sept. 20, 2001). He
would also assert that, “Americans are a free people, who know that freedom is the right
of every person and the future of every nation. The liberty we prize is not America's gift
to the world; it is God's gift to humanity” (Jan. 28, 2003). Bush would make precisely
this point on numerous other occasions, describing liberty, for example, as “both the plan
of Heaven for humanity, and the best hope for progress here on Earth” (Nov. 6, 2003).

Several key points emerge from statements such as these. Firstly, Bush makes
explicit his conviction that freedom and liberty are derived from God and represent God’s
will for humanity. This, as I will show below, is a crucial point given that Chirac sees
“liberté” as a political concept and as a “natural” right, derived from man’s intellectual
evolution: a concept which took time to mature and was ultimately concretized by France
following the French Revolution. This represents a significant contrast to Bush’s
religious formulation of this concept. Secondly, Bush explicitly identifies the United
States as representing the exemplary model of “liberty” in the world; a beacon of hope
for the rest of humanity. Thirdly, Bush articulates America’s historical destiny in terms
of a holy mission to fulfill God’s plan for humanity – a plan that has come under attack
from the evil of global terrorism. In this way, Bush portrays the US as the enforcer of
God’s will, pitted against the “evildoers” who represent the antithesis of God’s will and
the ultimate negation of God’s plan.

Not surprisingly, given his comments with regard to the concept of laïcité in
France, President Chirac has made no comparable statements to those uttered by Bush in
any of the speeches that I have examined. Rather, as I will explain in more detail in the
final section of this chapter, the French president has described the anti-terrorist struggle
as “un conflit déterminant pour le maintien des Droits de l'Homme, de la liberté, de la
dignité humaine” [a decisive conflict for the maintenance of human rights, liberty and
human dignity] from which it follows that “tout doit être mis en oeuvre pour protéger ces
valeurs essentielles qui sont celles de notre civilisation” (Sept. 18, 2001[a]). [everything
must be done to protect these essential values, which are those of our civilization.]
Chirac has not, on any occasion, invoked God in the manner that Bush has done in the quotations cited above.

Another important feature of Bush’s discourse on terrorism has been his frequent use of the word “evil” when describing the post-September 11 enemies of the United States. In his comments following a meeting with his National Security team on September 12, 2001, Bush described his nation’s mission as “a monumental struggle of good versus evil” (Sept. 12, 2001). Statistically, Bush would use the word “evil” 63 times in the corpus that I examined, and this would become a recurring theme in many of his speeches. Bush first emphasized this sentiment in what has become known as his “Axis of Evil” speech in January 2002:

This [the Ba’athist regime in Iraq] is a regime that agreed to international inspections -- then kicked out the inspectors. This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilized world. States like these [Iraq, Iran and North Korea], and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred” (Jan. 29, 2002).

Bush thus connected very disparate post-September 11 enemies of the United States (as he sees them) under the all-encompassing banner of “evil.” Through the strongly religious overtones of this word, he lumped these enemies together and constructed them in relation to a global religious, God-validated mission headed by the US.

Turning to President Chirac, it should first be noted that he has not entirely avoided the French equivalent of the word “evil” (i.e. “mal”) in his discourse, although he has used it far less than President Bush as Table 3 shows. The key difference is that the connotation, when Chirac has employed this word, has not been religious in nature, whereas for Bush, the religious element is always present either explicitly or implicitly.
Table 3 - The use of “evil” vs. “mal” in the discourses of Bush and Chirac

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms/phrases used by Bush</th>
<th>Frequency of use*</th>
<th>Terms/phrases used by Chirac</th>
<th>Frequency of use**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evil</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>mal</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Bush = total number of occurrences in selected documents
** Chirac = total number of documents in which a term or phrase was used

The word “mal” has many diverse usages in the French language, and is not as consistently invested with strongly religious overtones, nor is it primarily associated with God or religion in contrast with the English word “evil.” Statistically, President Chirac used the word “mal” on only seven occasions in relation to September 11 and global terrorism in general. During an interview in the immediate aftermath of the attacks, Chirac was asked: “Le président des Etats-Unis a décrit ce qui se passe comme une attaque, comme une lutte entre le bien et le mal. Il a dit que les Etats-Unis remporteraient cette bataille et que le bien finirait par triompher. Est-ce que vous faites vôtre cette appréciation?” [The American president has described what happened as an attack, as a struggle between good and evil. He said that the United States would win this battle and that good would ultimately triumph. What do you make of this statement?] Chirac responded: “Je ne doute pas un seul instant que le terrorisme, toujours fanatique, aveugle et fou, que le terrorisme représente bien dans le monde d'aujourd'hui le mal. Et, à ce titre, il doit être combattu avec la plus grande énergie” (Sept. 13, 2001). [I do not doubt for a single moment that terrorism, which is always fanatical, blind and insane, represents evil in the world today. And for this reason, it must be combated with the greatest energy.] Chirac would also describe terrorism as a “nouveau type de mal absolu” [a new type of absolute evil] and as “ce mal de notre temps” (Sept. 18, 2001[b]). [this evil of our time.]

While statements such as these may, on the surface, seem to mirror the sentiments expressed by Bush (and on one level they do convey a similar message), the key point to
note is that the religious element has not been present in any of Chirac’s pronouncements. Chirac has basically used the word to convey the sense of something “morally execrable” or “deeply wicked.” If we examine the following statement made by Chirac involving the word “mal” it becomes clear that Chirac intends no religious connotation:

[...] il faut naturellement avoir conscience qu'on doit attaquer le mal, en quelque sorte, à sa racine et qu'il y a un certain nombre de choses qui créent des ambiances favorables au terrorisme ou plus exactement des ambiances favorables au recrutement de terroristes, soit sur le plan général, et ça c'est la pauvreté, l'humiliation, soit dans le cadre de crispations locales, et ça ce sont les crises qui ne font pas l'objet de solutions, qui patinent et qui créent ressentiment, haine, humiliation (Nov. 22, 2002).

[...] it must, naturally, be recognized that in many respects, this evil must be attacked at its root, and that a certain number of factors create an atmosphere favorable to terrorism, or more specifically, an atmosphere favorable to the recruitment of terrorists, either in a general sense, i.e. through poverty and humiliation, or through local tensions, and these are crises which, if not solved, engender and create resentment, hatred and humiliation.

Statements such as this are illustrative of Chirac’s more general position on international terrorism – i.e. that it is a complicated problem with many underlying contributing factors, which cannot be reduced to a simple battle between good and evil. Whereas President Bush has sought to discredit, for example, Saddam Hussein and the Ba’athist regime by denoting it as “evil,” Chirac has never referred to the Iraqi regime in this way; nor does he accept the notion that Iraq, Iran and North Korea constitute an “axis of evil.”

While religion is a natural discourse for Bush to adopt in relation to the post-September 11 context given the fact that religion is a driving force in his life and indeed in many facets of American politics more generally, he has used the term “evil” more
specifically to validate his vision of America’s mission in the post-September 11 world, and to secure American leadership in this task. Bush has, in the vast majority of cases, denoted terrorists and regimes such as Iraq as inherently evil, and this has served to greatly simplify the situation, sweeping aside what others regard as the more complicated underlying reasons for terrorism. While Chirac accepts that terrorist organizations must be eradicated, it is clear from his statements that he does not want the situation to be understood as a religiously-defined struggle of good versus evil. As I will further elaborate in the next section, Chirac does not see terrorism as inherently evil; he openly (and frequently) links the phenomenon to complex issues ranging from globalization and global poverty to misconceptions of the West and so forth, and does not approach the situation in the same Manichean terms as President Bush.

I would add a final observation to my discussion of religious rhetoric and the use of the word evil, which has direct implications for the two presidents’ differing perceptions of the role of the UN. President Bush perceives the United States as a “chosen nation” with a historical role to free the world from oppression and “evil.” He has framed this mission as God-given, and has described freedom as “God’s gift to humanity.” In many ways, this view underlies Bush’s attitude towards the UN as a man-made institution. By constantly emphasizing the exceptional status of the US, and invoking religion as a backdrop to US actions, he gives an air of legitimacy to unilateral interventions not supported by a UN consensus. By framing such actions as part and parcel of a “higher calling,” he can replace UN legitimacy with God-granted legitimacy.

**Empire, terrorism and global poverty**

In the introductory and literature review chapters of this dissertation I outlined the ways in which the question of empire, past and present, interconnects with current debates over the underlying causes of terrorism. The main issues of concern in this debate are, firstly, whether the legacy of European colonialism has created the underlying conditions in which terrorism could flourish, and secondly, whether American “imperialism” has sustained these conditions, and now represents a new form of non-consensual power against which contemporary terrorist groups are fighting. My goal in
this section is to examine the extent to which each president has made these linkages explicit in their post-September 11 discourses, and whether their respective analyses of these questions have shaped the ways in which they discuss the underlying dynamics of the current terrorist question.

A close reading of the speeches of the two presidents reveals some significant disparities in how they have each addressed this debate, most notably in the ways in which they have conceptualized their respective roles in the world and that of the international community. Questions of poverty, globalization, and the North/South divide are closely related to contemporary debates over empire and terrorism. The main argument which will be advanced in this section is that, while both presidents have talked about the role of poverty in creating a climate in which frustrations and anti-Western sentiments can flourish and, potentially, provide a support-base for terrorist networks, the two presidents have emphasized quite different aspects of this debate in their discourses, particularly with regard to the perceptions of the West in poorer parts of the world.

Essentially, President Bush has tended to avoid narratives on empire and colonialism, along with questions on how the West is perceived in the Middle East and the developing world. He has also avoided discussing “globalization” and whether the West might bear a degree of responsibility (however direct or indirect this may be) for the current situation in the Middle East. Chirac, by contrast, has been far more willing to enter into such introspective dialogues, and this has led him to diagnose certain aspects of the situation facing the West very differently to President Bush. Whereas Chirac has explicitly linked terrorism to poverty, and has linked this to globalization (or “mondialisation” as it is known in French), President Bush has not mentioned the term “globalization” in any of the 75 speeches that I have examined. Instead, he has tended to approach questions of global poverty and the links to terrorism in terms of supposed failures by Third World countries to adopt what are ultimately American models.

Before examining the specificities of these disparities, two important areas of consensus, and a third area of semi-consensus should first be acknowledged. Firstly, both presidents have rejected the “clash of civilizations” explanation for the terrorist problem. They concur in affirming that there does not exist a fundamental conflict between the Western world on the one hand and the Islamic world on the other, and they have both
emphasized this point on many occasions. Secondly, both presidents acknowledge that global poverty fuels resentments and frustrations which terrorist groups use to generate support. For this reason, they each place solutions to global poverty - and the spreading Western conceptions of freedom and rights - as high priorities on the West’s agenda, not only for their own sake, but also as a means of tackling terrorism. Chirac, for example, described the connection between poverty and terrorism with the comment: “S'il est faux et dangereux d'établir un lien direct entre le terrorisme et la misère, chacun voit bien qu'il y a un enchaînement entre le terrorisme et le fanatisme, un fanatisme qui prospère sur le terreau de l'ignorance, des humiliations, des frustrations, de la misère” (Oct. 15, 2001). [If it is false and dangerous to establish a direct link between terrorism and poverty, everybody can clearly see that there is a sequence of linkages between terrorism and fanaticism, a fanaticism which prospers on ignorance, humiliation, frustration, and poverty.] President Bush made broadly the same point, and has remarked: “In our struggle against hateful groups that exploit poverty and despair, we must offer an alternative of opportunity and hope [...]” (Nov. 10, 2001). Thus the two presidents have both diagnosed poverty as a major underlying problem with close linkages to modern-day terrorism.

Thirdly, both presidents have rejected any notion that Western attempts to spread their economic and political values, and to actively address the global poverty question, represent a new form of economic imperialism into the Middle East and other regions. However, while their underlying arguments have much in common with respect to this, one can observe some subtle disparities between the angles that Chirac and Bush have adopted. In defense of American objectives in the developing world, for example, Bush has frequently stated that the US mission is motivated, not by a desire to dominate, but a desire to expand freedom. Bush has asserted, for example, that “America is a strong nation and honorable in the use of our strength. We exercise power without conquest, and we sacrifice for the liberty of strangers” (Jan. 28, 2003). Similarly, the American president has stated: “We fight not to impose our will, but to defend ourselves and extend the blessings of freedom” (Sept. 11, 2002). Bush has made this point on numerous occasions. During his State of the Union Address in January 2002, for example, he stated:
America will lead by defending liberty and justice because they are right and true and unchanging for all people everywhere. No nation owns these aspirations, and no nation is exempt from them. We have no intention of imposing our culture. But America will always stand firm for the non-negotiable demands of human dignity: the rule of law; limits on the power of the state; respect for women; private property; free speech; equal justice; and religious tolerance (Jan. 29, 2002).

Two years later, Bush asserted:

America is a nation with a mission, and that mission comes from our most basic beliefs. We have no desire to dominate, no ambitions of empire. Our aim is a democratic peace -- a peace founded upon the dignity and rights of every man and woman. America acts in this cause with friends and allies at our side, yet we understand our special calling: This great republic will lead the cause of freedom (Jan. 20, 2004).

In relation to Iraq, Bush reminded his audience of the fact that:

As a proud, independent people, Iraqis do not support an indefinite occupation, and neither does America. We're not an imperial power, as nations such as Japan and Germany can attest. We're a liberating power, as nations in Europe and Asia can attest as well. America's objective in Iraq is limited, and it is firm. We seek an independent, free and secure Iraq (Apr. 13, 2004).

Thus, while clearly aware that the US is viewed as imperialist in some circles, by adopting a discourse of denial Bush has avoided entering into any direct narratives exploring the reasons why his nation might be perceived as a new form of empire.
Before examining the details of Chirac’s stance on these issues, it should be noted that the French president has not directly refuted any of the above assertions by President Bush. He has not, for example, used the words “empire,” “impérialisme,” or “colonialisme” in conjunction with the United States in any of his pronouncements. He has, moreover, made not dissimilar assertions to Bush with respect to overcoming global poverty. However, Chirac has gone to great lengths to frame the virtues of Western values in precisely “Western” rather than American terms, and has not placed the US at the center of this process. He has, in addition, tended to discuss questions of empire and neo-imperialism in broadly international terms, with the “West” providing the main subject of this part of his pronouncements. For example, Chirac’s position on democratization shares much in common with that articulated by Bush. In Chirac’s view: “Tout d'abord, l'établissement de l'état de droit et le respect des libertés encourage le développement. Tout simplement parce que l'économie a besoin de sécurité juridique et de liberté d'entreprise. Démocratiser, c'est donc bien aider au développement […] il est certain que l'aide contribue, à plus ou moins long terme, à la démocratie” (Mar. 21, 2002). [Firstly, the establishment of the rule of law, and the respect of freedoms, encourages development. Quite simply, because an economy needs juridical security and free trade. To democratize is therefore to help with development (...) it is certain that aid contributes, in the long term, to democracy.] Chirac has also asserted that “globalization” and Western efforts to bring about economic and political change in the developing world should not be construed as a new form of Western imperialism:

Je ne suis pas de ceux qui magnifient le passé et qui voient dans la mondialisation la source de tous nos maux. Il n'y avait pas, hier, un admirable respect des cultures, et il n'y a pas, de nos jours, une affreuse volonté d'hégémonisme. Qu'on se souvienne seulement des conquêtes et des colonisations qui, trop souvent, cherchaient à imposer par la force, force des armes ou pressions de toutes natures, et en parfaite bonne conscience, des croyances et des systèmes de pensée étrangers aux peuples colonisés. […] Aujourd'hui, la mondialisation est souvent présentée comme une nouvelle forme de colonisation, visant à installer partout le
mème rapport, ou la même absence de rapport, à l'histoire, aux hommes et aux Dieux. La réalité est plus complexe (Oct. 15, 2001).

I am not one of those people who glorifies the past and sees globalization as the source of all our problems. There was not, in the past, an admirable respect of cultures; neither is there today some dreadful desire for hegemony. We must remember the conquests and colonizations which, all too often, sought to impose, through force of arms or other forms of repression and with a clear conscience, sets of beliefs and foreign systems of thought onto colonized peoples. [...] Today, globalization is often presented as a new form of colonization, seeking to install everywhere the same relationship, or the same absence of relationship, between history, men, and divine forces. The reality is more complex.

Through statements such as these, Chirac explicitly made reference to, but rejected parallels between, the colonial period and the contemporary process of globalization. The major disparity between the discourses of Chirac and Bush has been Chirac’s willingness to enter into debates over how the West as a whole is perceived in the Middle East and the Islamic world. Here, Chirac implicates the entire western world in his commentary – including the US and France. Such narratives have been largely absent from the discourse of President Bush, who has implicitly (and at times explicitly) suggested that the source of the problem lies with the developing world, as I will explain below.

One striking feature of Chirac’s post-September 11 discourse has been his willingness to enter into introspective dialogues on how the spreading of Western values and the process of globalization could be construed negatively in the developing world. In 2004, Chirac remarked:

Souvent, la mondialisation bouleverse et fragilise des sociétés mal préparées à en saisir les opportunités […] Dans des régions en crise, la nostalgie du passé et l'intégrisme religieux font figure de refuge dans la
tourmente. La misère et le sentiment de l'injustice sont alors un terreau fertile pour les fanatismes et les révoltes. Et l'Occident souvent ressenti comme la source de tous les maux. Dans un monde globalisé, ne pas y prendre garde est ouvrir la voie au choc des civilisations (Nov. 18, 2004).

Often, globalization disrupts and creates fragility in societies which are ill-prepared to take advantage of the opportunities presented by this development [...] In regions in crisis, nostalgia for the past and religious extremism become points of refuge amid this maelstrom. Poverty and feelings of injustice thus provide fertile ground for fanaticism and revolts. And the West is often resented as the source of all of these problems. In a globalized world, failure to be on guard against this is to open the door to a clash of civilizations.

Chirac has also been very open in warning of the dangers of Western actions being wrongly perceived as imperialism. He has stated, for example, “Mais nous devons éviter toute confusion entre démocratisation et occidentalisation. Car si notre mémoire est parfois courte, les peuples jadis soumis à la domination de l'Occident, eux, n'ont pas oublié et sont prompts à voir dans nos actions une résurgence de l'impérialisme et du colonialisme” (ibid). [But we must avoid all confusion between democratization and Westernization because if our memory is sometimes short, the people who were previously subjected to Western domination have not forgotten, and are inclined to see in our actions a resurgence of imperialism and colonialism.] As early as a month after the September 11 terrorist attacks, Chirac was making statements similar to those just quoted. At the UNESCO conference which took place in October 2001, he stated that all nations have been responsible for contributing to fuelling resentment in the Middle East, and added: “Toutes, à un moment ou à un autre de leur histoire, ont laissé parler l'intolérance, le mépris, la haine. Toutes, à un moment de leur histoire, ont cherché à rabaisser voire à nier l'humanité de l'autre” (Oct. 15, 2001). [All nations have, at one moment or another during their history, permitted discourses of intolerance, scorn, and hatred. All nations have, at some point in their history, sought to demean, or even deny the humanity of the
other.] For Chirac, it follows from this that “chaque culture, chaque religion doit mener sur elle-même un travail critique. Le courage de la mémoire, les actes de repentance sont un pas dans cette voie : devoir de toute civilisation, de toute société, de toute religion” (ibid.). [every culture, every religion must conduct a series of critical self-evaluations. The courage of memory and acts of repentance are one step in this direction: this is the task of every civilization, of every society and of every religion.]

While President Bush certainly does not ignore discussing global poverty and the linkages of this with global terrorism in his speeches, he has not, however, approached the issues of how the West is perceived in the developing world, nor how Western initiatives might be construed as imperialist in some circles. This constitutes a key point of disparity between the proclamations made by Chirac as outlined above, and those made by the American president during the time period under review. Instead, Bush has tended to describe developing nations as “failed states,” and has at times subtly shifted the blame for these “failures” to the nations themselves rather than discussing the legacy of European colonialism in helping to create a climate for the failures that he identifies.

In contrast to Chirac’s comment in October 2001, Bush took a different angle to that articulated by the French president, and stated, “pouring money into a failed status quo does little to help the poor, and can actually delay the progress of reform” (Nov. 10, 2001). Following on from this line of logic, Bush has described what he sees as America’s mission in the developing world in the following manner:

Our new approach for development places responsibility on developing nations and on all nations. We must build the institutions of freedom, not subsidize the failures of the past. By taking the side of liberty and good government, we will liberate millions from poverty's prison. We'll help defeat despair and resentment. We'll draw whole nations into an expanding circle of opportunity and enterprise. We'll gain true partners in development and add a hopeful new chapter to the history of our times (Mar. 22, 2002).
Bush’s insistence on the rightness of America’s mission, and the air of infallibility which comes through in this statement and other likes it, represents a notable contrast with Chirac’s more neutral and sometimes self-critical discourse in this domain. Significantly, unlike the French president, Bush does not refer to the “West” or to “globalization” when discussing the path of development which should be pursued by struggling nations – he openly frames his comments in “American” terms, and describes the development process as “America’s” mission. At the same time, President Bush has remarked:

[…]

there's a great challenge today in the Middle East. In the words of a recent report by Arab scholars, the global wave of democracy has -- and I quote -- "barely reached the Arab states." They continue: "This freedom deficit undermines human development and is one of the most painful manifestations of lagging political development." The freedom deficit they describe has terrible consequences for the people of the Middle East and for the world. In many Middle Eastern countries, poverty is deep and it is spreading, women lack rights and are denied schooling. Whole societies remain stagnant while the world moves ahead. These are not the failures of a culture or a religion. These are the failures of political and economic doctrines (Nov. 6, 2003).

By invoking the comments of Arab scholars, Bush is able to add an air of legitimacy to his comments and mitigate against any charges that it is Bush, and he alone, who is dictating this path for development to these developing nations. Still on the theme of “failed states,” Bush has stated more recently: “We're helping governments fight poverty and disease, so they do not become failed states and future havens for terror. We've launched our Broader Middle East Initiative, to encourage reform and democracy throughout the region, a project that will shape the history of our times for the better” (July 12, 2004).

The above quotations are illustrative of Bush’s overall attitude toward developing nations. Bush conceives of the underlying problems facing developing nations as primarily structural in nature, and thus potentially resolvable through the adoption of the
Western (and more specifically, the American) economic and political model. By framing the situation in terms of “failures of political and economic doctrines” Bush is subtly shifting the blame for such failures to the developing nations themselves, and thus he seems to be deliberately omitting a large piece of the more complicated picture. In a rare comment in which he did talk about colonialism, President Bush remarked:

As the colonial era passed away, the Middle East saw the establishment of many military dictatorships. Some rulers adopted the dogmas of socialism, seized total control of political parties and the media and universities. They allied themselves with the Soviet bloc and with international terrorism. Dictators in Iraq and Syria promised the restoration of national honor, a return to ancient glories. They’ve left instead a legacy of torture, oppression, misery, and ruin (Nov. 6, 2003).

On the face of it, this may seem to explain the trajectory that many Middle Eastern countries took when the colonial era came to an end, but again, Bush avoids any dialogue on why these dictatorships flourished, what conditions created the underlying context in which democracy failed to take hold, how colonialism oppressed and destabilized large regions in the Middle East and Africa creating weak economic structures, and the fact that many of these “failed states” had never been structured as cohesive “nations” prior to the colonial period. While Bush does mention the colonial era in passing, he does not, however, explicitly connect this to subsequent developments in the Middle East and other developing parts of the world. In this way, Bush does not address any flaws with Western political and economic doctrines, including the fact that European colonialism took place under a contradictory logic which simultaneously claimed to be spreading Western political and economic doctrines, while denying these same principles to the colonized peoples themselves.

President Chirac, while he has not framed things quite as explicitly as I have just done, has made at least some attempt to address these questions and to apply the lessons which can be learned from Europe’s colonial past to the current context. Although Chirac has never explicitly described the US in imperial terms, he has warned against
organizing the world according to a logic of power, and has consistently condemned any unilateralist actions as dangerous and divisive.

His insistence on speaking of the “West” when discussing the virtues of Western values and condemning imperialism achieves several subtle, yet important effects. Firstly, his willingness to acknowledge Western crimes of the past provides Chirac with a considerable amount of moral legitimacy when discussing the process of globalization, and the need for it to be fair on developing nations. The fact that he is so forthright about this, in apparent contrast to Bush, makes him appear more honest and sincere, particularly given the comparative lack of such seemingly introspective and honest commentary by the American president. Yet, while he does talk generally about colonialism and the West, Chirac never directly discusses the mis-deeds of France in North Africa and other former colonies. This is a particularly noteworthy omission given the ongoing public debate taken place in France with regard to France’s colonial past. Thus, in making numerous unspecific references to European colonialism, Chirac gains a great deal of moral standing without losing face by directly discussing France.

The differences inherent in the framing of the relationship between empire and poverty in the discourses of Chirac and Bush are no doubt, in part, related to the power disparity between the two nations. Given that the US is now the world’s only superpower, and given the manner with which President Bush has framed America’s mission in the world, it is possible that Chirac – through his broad comments concerning the “West” – is subtly reminding his international (and American) audiences that the US is one of many nations involved in the process of globalization, and that all nations have responsibilities to work together to effectively address issues of global poverty and terrorism.

As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, France’s power operates primarily through international institutions such as the UN and the EU; institutions which have been built around concepts developed (and driven) in large part by France. As I will outline in the final section to this chapter, the concept of human rights (les Droits de l’Homme) has come to represent the centerpiece of much of Chirac’s discourse since September 11, whereas the American president has tended to articulate his vision of the world through the concepts of freedom and democracy, largely eschewing direct
references to human rights. This constitutes a subtle yet significant aspect of the contemporary Franco-American relationship, which I will now examine in the final section of this chapter.

**Human Rights and Les Droits de l’Homme: The French and US models**

As I indicated during the introduction to this dissertation, the rise of the human rights agenda in recent years has become an increasingly prominent aspect of international relations. This tendency has in many ways intensified in post-September 11 debates, and has a significant bearing on the contemporary Franco-American relationship. I argued in the introduction to this chapter that Presidents Bush and Chirac have been increasingly disposed to articulating their respective missions in the world by appealing to universalistic moral concepts which they say their nations represent. Since the September 11 attacks, both leaders have, for example, talked at length about the virtues of democracy and freedom, and they have often talked about these concepts in seemingly similar ways.\(^{20}\) However, whereas President Chirac has made many references to human rights (les droits de l’homme), and has sought to connect post-September 11 issues with this concept,\(^{21}\) President Bush’s use of this term has been strikingly infrequent and only employed in certain contexts. While it is true that Bush has adopted a broadly “universalist” rhetoric, which has addressed some key aspects of the present day human rights agenda (notably with regard to democracy, freedom and human dignity), he has referred only very infrequently to “human rights” as a concept in itself.

Statistically, President Bush used the phrase “human rights” on only sixteen occasions over the course of the 75 speeches that I examined. Among these, ten occurrences of the term occurred in speeches addressing domestic audiences. The remaining utterances appeared during UN speeches, or during visits with British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Bush’s use of the phrase “human rights” seems to fall into one of

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\(^{20}\) Statistically Bush mentioned “democracy” 138 times. Chirac did so in 264 documents. Both talk about freedom and liberty a great deal. Bush mentions “freedom” 252 times and “liberty” on 96 occasions. Chirac mentions “liberté” in 196 documents. Both discourses share these themes – and are understood in similar ways.

\(^{21}\) Many of Chirac’s quotations cited throughout this chapter appeal to universalism and refer explicitly to “les droits de l’homme.” Bush never speaks in these precise terms.
two broad categories. Firstly, he has, on occasion, used the concept in ways not
dissimilar to Chirac – i.e. in the positive sense, as something worth spreading
internationally in concert with other nations and as an end in itself. A year after the
September 11 attacks, Bush stated, for example, “As a symbol of our commitment to
human dignity, the United States will return to UNESCO. This organization has been
reformed and America will participate fully in its mission to advance human rights,
tolerance, and learning” (Sept. 12, 2002). However, while it is true that Bush has spoken
of human rights in isolated international contexts, he invoked this concept in only 6
domestic speeches that I could find. In these speeches, moreover, he typically used the
concept to discredit terrorists and hostile regimes such as Iraq and Iran.

In building his case against the Iraqi regime, Bush would frequently invoke
human rights abuses as a backdrop to his more specific charges that the regime was
developing weapons of mass destruction and sponsoring terrorism. He stated, for
example, “America believes that all people are entitled to hope and human rights, to the
non-negotiable demands of human dignity. People everywhere prefer freedom to slavery;
prosperity to squalor; self-government to the rule of terror and torture. America is a
friend to the people of Iraq” (Oct. 7, 2002). With regard to Iraqi disarmament, Bush
asserted at the UN: “This demand [to disarm] goes ignored. Last year, the U.N.
Commission on Human Rights found that Iraq continues to commit "extremely grave
violations" of human rights and that the regime's repression is ‘all pervasive’” (Sept. 12,
2002). Examples such as those just cited underscore the fact that while it is true that
President Bush has mentioned human rights in his speeches (albeit rarely), when he has
referred to this concept, he has typically done so either during non-domestic speeches,
such as at the UN where human rights is an important concept which attracts widespread
consensus, or in domestic speeches during which he used human rights to discredit
hostile regimes. Seldom has he mentioned human rights in conjunction with American
conceptualizations of democracy and freedom.

In searching for occurrences of Bush’s use of the term “human rights” an
important anomaly did arise in the form of the annual “Human Rights Day, Bill of Rights
Day, and Human Rights Week” commemoration for which American presidents have
customarily delivered a speech on December 9 or 10. The origin of this occasion can be
traced back to 1950, during which year all states were invited by the UN General Assembly to observe December 10 as Human Rights Day (resolution 423(V)), the intention being to mark the anniversary of the Assembly’s adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Human Rights Day has, thus, been a part of the UN’s annual calendar since 1950, and it has been commemorated by every US president under the title “Human Rights Day, Bill of Rights Day, and Human Rights Week” since this date. With regard to Bush’s statements marking this day, his comments covered similar themes for each of the three such speeches that I examined. In his December 2001 speech, for example, Bush commented:

The terrible tragedies of September 11 served as a grievous reminder that the enemies of freedom do not respect or value individual human rights. [...] Americans stand united with those who love democracy, justice, and individual liberty. We are committed to upholding these principles, embodied in our Constitution’s Bill of Rights, that have safeguarded us throughout our history and that continue to provide the foundation of our strength and prosperity. [...] This important observance honoring our Bill of Rights and advocating human rights around the world allows all Americans to celebrate the universal principles of liberty and justice that define our dreams and shape our hopes as we face the challenges of a new era [...] (Dec. 9, 2001).

In his 2003 speech, he stated: “Freedom is the right of mankind and the future of every nation. It is not America's gift to the world; it is God's gift to every man and woman who lives in this world (Dec. 10, 2003).

As is typically the case, on each occasion that Bush has delivered this speech he has used the concept of human rights to discredit anti-American opponents, and to draw attention to the virtues of American values. However, it is highly significant that Bush’s

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23 Here I am referring to the speeches he delivered between December 2001 and December 2003. His December 2004 speech falls outside the time period which I chose for my investigation, as explained in the introductory chapter.
pronouncements have made absolutely no mention of the United Nations, or the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at any point. When one compares Bush’s pronouncements to those made by his predecessor, Bill Clinton, in this same context, the contrast in emphasis is striking. Clinton made frequent references to both the UN and to the Universal Declaration when commemorating this day.

Thus, by focusing his attention on the American Bill of Rights as opposed to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Bush can effectively “nationalize” (and indeed Americanize) the event for himself and his national audience. This underscores the fact that human rights have not constituted a typical aspect of Bush’s domestic or international discourse, as he has never initiated such commentary on his own, and has used the concept for his own purposes (i.e. to advance an American vision of rights) on the rare occasions when he has employed it.

In stark contrast to Bush, Chirac has mentioned “les droits de l’homme” in 162 documents, containing both domestic and international speeches.

Table 4 - The use of “human rights” vs. “les droits de l’homme” in the pronouncements of Presidents Bush and Chirac

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms/phrases used by Bush</th>
<th>Frequency of usage*</th>
<th>Terms/phrases used by Chirac</th>
<th>Frequency of usage**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>human rights</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>droits de l’homme</td>
<td>90(^{24})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Bush = total number of occurrences in selected documents

** Chirac = total number of documents in which a term or phrase was used

\(^{24}\) Due to the high number of occurrences of the phrase “les droits de l’homme” in Chirac’s pronouncements - and the varied contexts in which he has employed this phrase - this figure is represents my best estimate as to the number of documents in which he used this concept in explicit relation to the post-September 11 context. As I explained in the methodology section of this chapter, with regard to Chirac’s pronouncements, I was often only able to identify the number of documents in which a given term was used, particularly in instances where the database returned a high number of hits. It is thus probable that the statistic for the exact number of times that he used the phrase “les Droits de l’Homme” within all of these documents is significantly higher than the figure of 90 quoted in the table.
While some of these documents do not relate directly to September 11 and subsequent related questions, in over half of them, Chirac does connect human rights explicitly with the September 11 attacks and with the Western response to terrorism. He has frequently emphasized that the West must respect human rights when combating terrorism, and, in contrast to President Bush, he has not typically invoked the concept to discredit others.

In stark contrast to Bush’s assertion that the “war on terror” constituted a decisive struggle of good over evil, Chirac immediately described anti-terrorist action as a decisive battle for human rights, as illustrated in a quotation cited earlier in this chapter (Sept. 18, 2001[a]). While it is true that Chirac has used the concept of “les Droits de l’Homme” to discredit the Taliban on numerous occasions, he has, more typically, used the concept as a backdrop for discussing the Western response to terrorism, and as a means of unifying this international initiative (as he sees it) around the human rights agenda. Chirac argued from the very beginning that anti-terrorist initiatives were not “le combat d'un seul pays, c'est le combat de l'ensemble de la communauté internationale attachée aux Droits de l'Homme, à la dignité humaine, et qui doit se défendre contre des assassins qui, au-delà du crime, font n'importe quoi pour remettre en cause la liberté et les Droits de l'Homme” (Sept. 19, 2001). [the fight of one single country, it is the fight of the whole international community which is attached to human rights, to human dignity, and which must defend itself against these assassins which, over and above the crime, will do anything to challenge freedom and human rights.] In contrast with Bush, not once did Chirac use the concept of human rights to discredit the Iraqi regime.

Several important facts emerge from Bush and Chirac’s discourses on human rights. Whereas “les Droits de l’Homme” represent the centerpiece of many of Chirac’s post-September 11 speeches, the concept of human rights has been extremely scarce in the rhetoric of Bush. Why is it that Bush uses so much moral rhetoric but generally avoids mentioning the concept of human rights? Why does Chirac use this concept so frequently? As indicated above, Bush has typically only used the concept of human rights when convenient for him to do so, and only in certain contexts (for example, to discredit Iraq or at international forums such as at the UN). Chirac, by contrast, uses human rights as a goal to aspire to rather than as a tool for discrediting hostile regimes. Not uncommonly, Chirac has used the concept to remind international actors - and
particularly other Western powers - of their obligations to act in ways which conform to human rights imperatives. Bush, however, has used American conceptualizations of freedom and liberty in place of human rights, and more specifically, as a way of validating US-led anti-terrorist measures.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the two leaders have recently been increasingly disposed to define their respective roles in the world in terms of moral concepts, but the two leaders seem to understand these concepts – with human rights representing perhaps the most indicative instance of this – in very different terms. Whereas the French president wants to be seen as representing, defending and promoting a global human rights agenda, President Bush articulates a distinctly American democratic and rights model. This has important implications for Franco-American relations, as it underscores the different ways in which the two leaders understand their respective roles in the world and the fact that they do not want to be constrained by principles that they have not themselves defined.

**Conclusion**

We have seen over the course of this chapter that Presidents Chirac and Bush have constructed their respective discourses around certain key concepts in the post-September 11 context. While the pronouncements of the two leaders have often shared similar universalist features (underscoring the similar set of political/moral values upon which the French and American nations have historically been structured), the analysis which I have presented here has sought to highlight the various ways in which they have each constructed a distinct discursive world as a backdrop for their respective approaches towards international terrorism and other global questions. I have sought to demonstrate that the language and concepts employed by them, while often apparently universalist in spirit, have in practice been employed with a specific national agenda in mind. The relative importance of national and universal perspectives takes on a different shape in the discourses of French and American intellectuals, to which I turn my attention in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 3

INTELLECTUAL DISCOURSES

Introduction

The September 11 terrorist attacks and subsequent international developments (most notably the Iraq invasion of 2003) initiated a phase of sustained commentary and debate among prominent intellectuals in both France and the United States. My aim in this chapter is to examine a representative sample of intellectuals from each country and elucidate the ways in which they have articulated key issues that have arisen during this period. To my knowledge there has yet to appear a systematic investigation of this kind, i.e. one which simultaneously analyzes and compares the positions adopted by French and American intellectuals with regard to September 11 and its aftermath. In addressing these issues, the present chapter seeks to redress the relative lack of scholarly investigation into these domains.

My comparative methodology represents something of a break from typical investigations into intellectual discourses. While numerous studies examine intellectual engagements in different national contexts, rarely do such studies investigate the ways in which intellectuals from different countries have intervened in relation to common issues. David Schalk, for example, in his 1991 study War and the Ivory Tower: Algeria and Vietnam provides a highly illuminating investigation into French intellectual engagement during the Algerian War and American intellectual engagement during the Vietnam War. While this study offers excellent insights into the key debates of each context and compares the cycles of engagement that one can observe, he does not set out to examine French intellectual attitudes towards the Vietnam War, nor American intellectual opinion on the Algerian War. Winock and Julliard’s Dictionnaire des intellectuels français (1996) examines numerous issues – both national and international – on which French
intellectuals have engaged since the late 19th century, but they limit their investigation to French intellectuals and do not set out to compare the ways in which foreign intellectuals engaged on the same questions. In a case-study examining intellectual engagement in the First Gulf War entitled Les intellectuels et la guerre du Golfe: Etude comparée (1997) the contributors outline the ways in which intellectuals from different countries discussed this international conflict, yet little attempt is made to rigorously compare these discourses.

In order to tackle the series of questions which have often structured intellectual commentary since the September 11 attacks, I have organized this chapter as follows: Firstly I consider the ways in which academics in France and America have sought to define “intellectuals.” In this section, I also highlight several broad areas of contention with respect to the definition, role and impact of these social actors. Secondly I describe the methodological approach that I have adopted for this case study, and here I outline the parameters guiding my choices of which French and American intellectuals to include as my primary corpus of material. Thirdly, I examine the various forms of collective and individual intellectual engagement which have been observable during the post-September 11 period, and finally I consider how the media (specifically major national newspapers) in each country typically present and treat intellectual discourses. The section which follows this contextualization represents the bulk of the chapter, and here I analyze in detail the ways in which French and American intellectuals have discussed the September 11 attacks and post-September 11 international developments. Specifically, my goal in this section is to examine the range of attitudes that emerge in the discourses of these individuals and to evaluate whether significant divergences in opinion are discernable between French intellectuals on the one hand, and their American counterparts on the other.

My investigation focuses broadly on two overarching themes. Firstly, I elucidate the varying ways in which French and American intellectuals have conceptualized the causes of the September 11 terrorist attacks, and how they have theorized the meaning behind this event. Here, I contrast intellectual commentary which framed these actions as attributable to US hegemony, imperialism or “empire” across the globe with counter-arguments which sought to absolve the US of any culpability for the attacks. Secondly, I
compare the arguments which were raised in opposition to the US-led invasion of Iraq with counter-arguments that sought to justify and legitimize this intervention. Throughout my discussion, I am concerned not only with the arguments themselves, but also the terms in which intellectuals formulate their arguments. For example, I ask how far intellectuals accept the validity of key terms and expressions (such as “war” / “guerre,” “terror” / “terreur,” “evil” / “mal” and so forth) which have gained currency in the media and among political actors.

As I develop my analysis, two other significant strands of debate also emerge to which I refer throughout my discussion, notably the question of anti-Americanism among intellectuals, and secondly the current and future structure of the United Nations and international law more generally. How do French and American intellectuals treat all of these issues, and to what extent do they intervene from positions which could be defined as national, professional or universal?

**Corpus and Methodology**

**Defining the object of analysis**

The first challenge when analysing intellectual engagement in a given context is to define the object of analysis. When we use the English term “intellectual,” or its French equivalent “intellectuel,” which groups of individuals are we talking about? Indeed, does the term itself possess the same connotations in France and the United States, and what impact does this have when attempting a comparative analysis?

In France, the term “intellectuel” has come to be widely used by both the media and by academics to refer to certain kinds of individuals who comment publicly (usually in newspapers, through books and on television) on matters of broad public concern. In the United States, commentators often, but not always, prefer the term “public intellectual,” but the individuals generally intended for inclusion in this category are described in similar ways to their French counterparts. Indeed, when the term “intellectuel” / “intellectual” is used in each country, it seems to denote similar kinds of
individuals who are engaged in similar types of activities, but as I will explain later, the term does not carry exactly the same connotations in each country.

In essence, the term “intellectual” / “intellectuel” can be viewed as a common denominator term to denote individuals from a variety backgrounds who have a capacity for social commentary and engagement which is activated in certain circumstances (Gagnon 11). While it is generally agreed that writers, professors, artists, publicists and other individuals can all be defined as intellectuals under certain conditions (Leymarie 9), there are also significant disagreements over who to include or exclude from the category of “intellectual.” Goldfarb, for example, openly states that the intellectual’s identity remains uncertain (20). David Schalk also admits that “few of us are absolutely certain that we know precisely what an intellectual is” beyond a vaguely delimited social grouping (Schalk in Jennings and Kemp-Welch 271). Although politicians and officials are usually regarded as separate from intellectuals for reasons which I will elaborate upon later, not all commentators draw this distinction.25

An important part of the difficulty in providing a useful description of intellectuals is that they do not constitute a neatly homogeneous group in either France or the US. In addition, significant differences exist between the two countries. It has often been said that the phenomenon of the French intellectual does not have an exact foreign equivalent, and Granjon is correct when she states that “les intellectuels ne sont pas pris en considération de la même façon par toutes les nations ni par toutes les communautés de culture” (Granjon in Trebitsch et al 21) [intellectuals are not taken into consideration in the same way by all nations, nor by all communities of culture.] Moreover, as Leymarie points out, the term “intellectual” when used in certain national contexts is often used pejoratively, particularly in Germany or in Anglo-Saxon countries (4). Within particular national contexts, Jennings and Kemp-Welch (223) highlight the fact that American intellectuals have never constituted a unitary class with a fixed sense of mission and goal while Leymarie observes that in France the term “intellectuel” is frequently employed to refer to certain kinds of social actors, but it is not recognized for

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25 See, for example, the broad definition put forward by Richard Posner in which he states: “Public intellectuals may or may not be affiliated with universities. They may be full or part-time academics; they may be journalists or publishers; they may be writers or artists; they may be politicians or officials; they may work for think tanks; they may hold down ‘ordinary’ jobs” (35).
data-gathering purposes by INSEE, France’s census agency. As a result, there is no obvious way in which to determine with precision how many intellectuals there are (10).

The vast majority of French and American commentators on intellectuals concur that the term “intellectuel” used as a noun to describe a particular kind of person first came into common usage in 1898 at the time of the Dreyfus Affair in France (Jennings and Kemp-Welch: 7). While this is not the place for a detailed description of the Dreyfus Affair, its legacy is highly relevant to any study of intellectual engagement in that the writer Emile Zola and other “intellectuels” were willing to mobilize publicly against the army and government to defend the innocent Captain Dreyfus who, in their judgment, was being unjustly targeted (and, of course, scapegoated) because he was a Jew rather than because he had actually committed any wrong doing.26 For Jennings (70), the underlying importance of the affair lies in the fact that it reflected a humanitarian and universal cause. Indeed, it was as a direct consequence of the intellectual intervention which took place during the Dreyfus Affair, and the coalescing of the humanitarian and universal ideas, that the world’s first human rights league (known as the “Ligue des droits de l’homme”) was formed in France in 1898. While it is true that the concept of “human rights” is customarily viewed as a post-World War Two concept, as it was first put into operation and codified into a body of law during the Nuremburg Trials of 1945-9, it is important to recognize that French intellectuals were very much ahead of the wave as they were acting in the name of these same principles 50 years prior to this. Thus, it can truly be said that what became the dominant French conception of human rights, and the first forefronting in the public space of this new concept, came as a direct consequence of intellectual engagement during the Dreyfus Affair. Not only is this incident generally considered to represent a “benchmark” case against which subsequent cycles of intellectual engagement are viewed, but it also marked a key moment in the evolution of the concept of human rights. While there is no comparable “landmark” incident which marked the emergence of intellectuals in the United States, there have been numerous events which have mobilized American intellectuals, the Vietnam War representing perhaps the most obvious recent instance of this. That said, commentators on American

26 Dreyfus had been convicted of treason for allegedly leaking military secrets to the German Embassy in Paris. No concrete evidence ever emerged to support this charge, and it was later revealed that the evidence which was used against him was, in fact, forged.
intellectuals, like their French counterparts, also tend to identify the Dreyfus Affair as representing the defining moment in which the category of the “intellectual” first took shape. Since then, definitions of intellectuals have been reformulated by different commentators, and accordingly, there are now many areas of ambiguity over how we should best define them.

A number of key characteristics are often cited by commentators when defining intellectuals, and in order to situate the discussion which follows, I now offer a brief overview of some of the recurring definitions that are observable in the academic literature that I have consulted in France and the US.

In recent scholarship, the intellectual is often defined as an autonomous social actor who possesses independent judgment, and adopts a posture of detachment from centers of political power (Melzer 4). Through the comments that they make, intellectuals transmit philosophic knowledge on matters of broad public concern (Melzer 7; Posner 35), and in doing so, they act outside of their profession (Leymarie: 11; Julliard and Winock: 12). The notion of applying a set of “universal” norms to a given context is also generally seen to represent an important aspect of an intellectual’s engagement (Keren 7), and some commentators such as Edward Said take this point further and argue that the intellectual must have a necessarily adversarial relationship with centers of political authority (Goldfarb 66). Because of this adversarial stance, the intellectual’s commentary is sometimes considered to represent a counter-discourse to political authority (Goldfarb 1-5). It is sometimes argued, for example, that an important aspect of the intellectual’s role is to defend the weak or adopt the position of the most disfavored. Edward Said expresses this task as that of empowering the powerless and acting as the spokesmen of social movements of the subaltern (ibid).

A common tendency observable in recent scholarship on intellectuals is an emphasis on the “universalist” dimension of intellectual engagement. However, not all commentators have historically theorized intellectuals according to this central criteria. The French critical theorist Michel Foucault, and the Italian Marxist intellectual Antonio Gramsci, for example, advanced differing definitions of the intellectual, but they both had in common the idea of two types of intellectual: a “traditional” or “ideal” type on the one
hand, and a “modern” type on the other, who was more specialized and operated less on the basis of universalist ideals, but in more narrow, specific fields.

Writing before the Second World War, Gramsci theorized “organic” intellectuals, who he described as emerging “organically” from any social class, and who articulated the values necessary for that class to realize its potential. In his view, this type of intellectual was not a mere commentator on events, but rather, could be seen as a leader or organizer who was centrally involved in the construction of “hegemony” for a given class. The organic intellectual thus possessed a pivotal social function, and existed in direct opposition to the “traditional intellectual” which Gramsci described as existing apart from society, and who sustained an older hegemonic project.

Writing in the mid-1970s, Michel Foucault outlined what he saw as a transition through which intellectuals had abandoned the pursuit of truth and justice in favor of specific, non-universal issues and problems. In his view, the “universal” intellectual (an Enlightenment figure in the caste of Sartre who wrote about matters from a universalist perspective) was dead, and had been replaced by the “specific” intellectual who was not a bearer of universal values, but rather, was someone who occupied a specific position in society linked to the general functioning of truth. This type of intellectual, he argued, was more skill-centered and through his actions in a specialized field could produce important global effects.

Thus, while recent scholarship often concurs on the most important characteristics that an individual should possess to qualify as an intellectual, there has been a long-standing debate which describes two distinct types of intellectual, who exist in opposition to each other. Along with this ongoing debate over universal vs. specific/organic intellectuals my research has led me to observe three more recurring (and often interconnecting) areas of disagreement over the definition, role and status of intellectuals in France and America.

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27 He identifies atomic scientists such as Oppenheimer as an important point of transition between the old “universal” kind of intellectual and the “specific” type. As will become apparent over the course of the analysis which follows, (and contrary to Foucault’s contention that the universal intellectual is a thing of the past) my research shows, in fact, that both French and American intellectuals have approached the moral and ethical questions which have surfaced since the September 11 attacks from a broadly universalist angle. Moreover, aside from Edward Said and, perhaps, Bernard-Henri Lévy, none of the intellectuals under investigation in this chapter can be accurately described as “experts” on the Middle East.
The first important area of debate relates to the question of whether an intellectual should act in the name of a specific partisan cause. The key issue here is whether an intellectual can simultaneously claim to act in the name of universal values, and at the same time place himself at the service of a cause. Julien Benda’s classic 1927 text *La Trahison des clercs* raised precisely this point, and in it he vehemently condemned partisanship among intellectuals. His main contention was that intellectuals should remain disinterested and completely independent from race, class, nation and so forth, and as such they could not attach themselves to a cause (Leymarie 42). Any intellectual that did this, in his view, was committing “treason” and derogating his sacred mission.

How valid is this argument today, given that Benda wrote his text in 1927? If an intellectual rallies, for example, behind a national or class cause, does this detract from his status as an intellectual, or even disqualify him from being included in this category? Keren rejects this argument, and states that an intellectual can still be a critical humanist, even if he or she does act in the name of a partisan cause (4). To justify this claim, Keren points to the case of Israeli intellectuals who defended the existence of the Israeli State. Keren argues that because this cause was, at its root, based on the defense of universal principles, those intellectuals who mobilized behind it – whether or not they were themselves Jewish – must be classed as intellectuals. In effect, Keren is arguing that complete detachment does not necessarily need to be a precondition for legitimate intellectual intervention in a given context. Edward Said’s perception of the intellectual’s role ties in closely with this argument. When Said states that the task of the intellectual is to empower the powerless and act as the spokesmen of social movements of the subaltern, is he not suggesting that the intellectual should adopt a partisan cause? Of course, one could point to many cases in which intellectuals have explicitly defended a partisan cause from a universalist standpoint. The Dreyfusards’ support of Captain Dreyfus could be seen as broadly “partisan” in nature, but at the same time it was based on an appeal to universal values. Jean-Paul Sartre adopted the cause of Algerian independence precisely because he felt that a universal principle was at stake - in this case the liberation of the Algerian population from colonial oppression. Moreover, both Gramsci and Foucault’s formulations of the intellectual explicitly describe what they see as a shift from the “universal” intellectual to the “specific” or “organic” type who acted
on behalf of a group or class. I would thus argue that in many cases, where an individual engages in favor of a partisan cause, to the extent that this is done in the name of universal values, this may arguably be said to be consistent with his or her status as an intellectual.

The second point of contention with regard to intellectual engagement relates to the notion that intellectuals must always adopt a necessarily adversarial position to centers of political power. Not all commentators subscribe to this point of view. Posner’s definition of the intellectual footnoted at the beginning of this chapter, for example, does not exclude politicians and officials from the category of intellectual. In her discussion of the Dreyfus Affair, Granjon suggests that antidreyfusards could still be classed as intellectuals even though they adopted a stance of opposition with respect to the innocent Captain Dreyfus. Clearly, antidreyfusards could hardly be described as opponents of political authority, or as defenders of a defenseless or dispossessed individual (as Said’s description of the intellectual specified). But in Granjon’s view, while Dreyfusards and antidreyfusards disagreed over the culpability of Dreyfus, they shared a common attitude with regard to their role in public life, namely that of engagement - outside of their immediate profession - in the service of a cause that was dividing politicians, elites and citizens (Granjon in Trebitsch et al 21-22). Thus according to Granjon, it was this attitude towards public engagement as much as the cause itself which qualified antidreyfusards as intellectuals.

Similarly, Alain Gagnon argues that intellectuals can be both servants and critics of power (3), and as part of his definition he identifies two types of intellectual: one that legitimates prevailing values, and one that rejects these core values, or at least calls them into question (4). The first act as spokesmen for the primary assumptions of their society, while the second are alienated from these assumptions (Gagnon quoting R. Hofstader, 1963). Gagnon thus draws a clear line of demarcation between legitimators and servants of the prevailing order in a society on the one hand, and critical intellectuals as forces for changing the status quo on the other (5). In Gagnon’s view, the intellectual does not need to be fully autonomous, but can be integrated or alienated from power structures.

Moving on to the third point of contention, some commentators argue that there has been a decline in the quality of intellectual engagement in recent years precisely
because they cannot act autonomously of centers of power in modern society. Some have claimed, for example, that because of their assimilation into power structures such as universities and mass media networks, intellectuals have become more submissive towards political power, and have increasingly tended to legitimate the prevailing values of society rather than call them into question (Gagnon 4; Jennings and Kemp-Welch 13). They have also become less active and autonomous in the public sphere – a point which has been exacerbated by the power of the modern media in determining which voices are heard (Jennings and Kemp-Welch 14). In addition, Posner argues that intellectuals are now more interested in prestige and personal financial reward than in the pursuit of truth and justice – a trend which Ross argues has also taken hold in the French context (Ross in Gagnon: 55-57).

A final point relates to the question of quality with respect to intellectual discourses. Posner argues that intellectuals generally fail to predict the outcome of a given situation, and frequently come across as opinionated, judgmental, condescending, and waspish (35). For Posner, intellectuals are able to avoid excessive criticism on this count because they operate more in an entertainment market than in an information market. Posner concludes that in many contexts, the public intellectual seems to reflect no deeper knowledge than an average person (117), and he contends that the decline in the quality of intellectual discourses has been further underscored by the tendency of celebrities and academics to sign joint declarations, causing the depth of academic scholarship to be lost through the mixing of the entertainment and academic worlds (118).

Research Process on French intellectuals

When I embarked on my research in Paris at the Institut d’Histoire du Temps Présent, I was initially guided by Jacques Julliard and Michel Winock’s comprehensive Dictionnaire des intellectuels français: Les personnes, les lieux, les moments (1996). In this dense text, Julliard and Winock provide a detailed list of every individual (living and deceased) who they consider to be a French “intellectuel” since the Dreyfus Affair. As the title of the volume suggests, they also provide information on the various publications
(newspapers, journals and so forth) which have contained intellectual commentary, as well as the most notable contexts in which French intellectuals have engaged.

From this text, I was able to identify a list of around 60 individuals who were defined as intellectuals by Julliard and Winock, and were still alive in 1996 when the volume was published. I hypothesized that out of this pool of intellectuals, some of them had probably commented publicly (in the media and/or through books) on the September 11 terrorist attacks and subsequent international developments. My next step was thus to establish specifically which of these individuals had done so. To do this, I visited the Institut d’Etudes Politiques in Paris and looked for press clippings relating to intellectual engagement during the time period under examination. In addition, I consulted the IEP’s Lexis-Nexis on-line database, which is identical to its American equivalent in that it contains extensive archives of material drawn from many major printed news sources in France and other countries. As this turned out to be a far more efficient research method than working through the original press-clippings themselves, I primarily used the Lexis-Nexis database to compile my corpus of material for French intellectuals. One notable feature of the IEP database is that it enables the user to access French news sources that do not feature on the American equivalent of Lexis-Nexis which can be accessed through Florida State University’s online database. This was immensely advantageous, as it permitted me to conduct a thorough and comprehensive search which would not have been possible (without significant omissions) had I attempted it in the US.

During this phase of my investigation, I was seeking to narrow my search to intellectuals who had commented extensively on the issues that I was investigating, and who had received sustained attention in the French media (most notably in major national newspapers). I was most interested in intellectuals who had taken a clear position in relation to the September 11 attacks and subsequent events (most notably the Iraq War), and had articulated their views at regular intervals throughout the time period under examination.

In order to identify articles of potential interest, I conducted a series of keyword searches which combined, in turn, the names of the 60 intellectuals that I had previously identified with certain terms that I believed would yield relevant articles pertaining to the period spanning September 11, 2001 to November 30, 2004. In each case, I required the
search engine to include all French news sources falling into the category of “general news” when searching for hits. Specifically, for each of the 60 individuals that I had drawn from Julliard and Winock’s Dictionnaire, I conducted six separate searches. Each search contained the individual’s name combined with, consecutively, the words terreur, terrorisme, empire, Irak, impérialisme, and finally torture. I felt that these six terms were specific enough to limit the search results to articles of relevance to my investigation, yet broad enough to ensure that no significant articles were omitted. Once the search results were displayed, I could then look through them and select those which 1) were clearly related to post-September 11 debates, 2) were authored by the intellectual in question, or 3) were authored by other individuals who discussed at length that intellectual’s comments. This process permitted me to develop a preliminary picture of which intellectuals appeared most frequently in connection with post-September 11 debates, and more to the point, what these debates actually were in the French context.

On reading through the search results for each individual, I was able to eliminate any intellectuals who had not commented substantively or in an unequivocal manner on post-September 11 events, and I was also able to eliminate those individuals who had not commented “extensively” on these same questions. I considered any individual appearing in fewer than fifteen articles to have not engaged “extensively” in the debates of interest to me, as those appearing in fewer than fifteen articles had typically authored only very few of them themselves. Having conducted this sequence of searches with reference to the intellectuals named in Julliard and Winock’s dictionary, I carried out a final search which was far more general in scope in order to identify any other intellectuals who may have become active in France since the 1996 publication of the Julliard and Winock text, and would thus not have been mentioned in it. To do this, I entered, consecutively, the terms “intellectuel” and “intellectuels” in combination with each of the 6 other search terms listed above into the search engine and examined the large volume of articles which was returned for the time period under analysis. On reading through these articles, I was able to conclude that no “new” intellectuals had engaged either substantively or extensively in post-September 11 debates.

There were two important by-products of the above series of searches. Firstly, I was able to identify cases where intellectuals had engaged collectively through joint
petitions or “manifestes” (I will discuss this later), and secondly, as many of the articles were book reviews I was able to compile a partial bibliography for the intellectuals who had been most vocal in the post-September 11 period. I would later compile a full bibliography for the intellectuals on my shortlist through the use of two online booksellers: Amazon.fr and Chapitre.com.

Once I had carried out the search process described above, it became evident that twelve intellectuals in particular had engaged substantively and extensively during the period under examination according to the criteria that I had set. These individuals are, alphabetically:

Jean Baudrillard, Pascal Bruckner, Régis Debray, Jacques Derrida, Alain Finkielkraut, André Glucksmann, Jean-François Kahn, Bernard-Henri Lévy, Jean-François Revel, Emmanuel Todd, Tzvetan Todorov, and Pierre Vidal-Naquet.

The articles that featured these individuals were drawn from the following ten major French news sources, each of which were classified as “general news” on the Lexis-Nexis database:


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28 In addition to these twelve individuals, I also include some discussion of Alain Minc during my case-studies. Although Minc appeared in only six articles with regard to post-September 11 debates, his comments directly countered the position of Jean Baudrillard, and were therefore of sufficient relevance to justify his inclusion at certain points of my investigation.

29 Tzvetan Todorov was born and raised in Bulgaria, but he has lived and worked in France for over forty years, and possesses French citizenship. He also writes all of his work in French. Thus, I saw no legitimate reason not to include him in the French intellectual category.

30 I include an appendix at the end of this dissertation which provides a short biography of each of the French and American intellectuals that I investigate in this chapter.

31 For the purpose of my investigation, I have tried to focus on outlets which, by their nature, would touch wide audiences, and are not run by intellectuals themselves. Thus, while it is true that French intellectuals comment in a variety of publications including periodicals and journals such as Débat and Commentaire edited by fellow intellectuals, I took the decision to focus my attention on books produced by French intellectuals and articles written by or featuring them in major French newspapers as these two outlets arguably have the widest impact in the shaping of public perceptions of key September 11 questions.
I do not claim that my list of twelve intellectuals is in any way exhaustive. Many other French intellectuals were vocal on post-September 11 issues during this time period. However, in order to keep my corpus of material manageable, I needed to narrow my parameters. Based on all the sources that I consulted during my research, I believe that the twelve intellectuals listed above represent the most vocal and active group of French intellectuals to engage in the post-September 11 issues of interest to me in this case-study.

Research Process on American intellectuals

The task of identifying a comparable corpus of material for American intellectuals was considerably more challenging than it was for the French case. As explained in the previous section, my selection process for French intellectuals was initially guided by Julliard and Winock’s *Dictionnaire des intellectuels français*, and it was this text that I used to draw up a preliminary list of individuals to investigate in more depth through the IEP Lexis-Nexis database. I am not, however, aware of the existence of a comparable dictionary for American intellectuals, and I was not able to locate any other reliable source that I could use to narrow my parameters down to a manageable number (i.e. under a hundred individuals). I knew that Noam Chomsky and Edward Said were widely considered to be “intellectuals” as I had read numerous academic sources about them which specifically referred to them as such. I also knew that both had commented on post-September 11 questions - Chomsky in several recent books, and Said in a new preface to his classic text *Orientalism* (2003). I therefore knew in advance that Chomsky and Said would feature in my corpus of American intellectuals, but there were no other individuals that I felt confident enough to include at this early stage. As I had no other predetermined names which could be used as the basis of a Lexis-Nexis search, I was obligated to begin my wider selection process with a far larger (and less clearly identifiable) pool of potential individuals to consider.

In order to establish my list of American intellectuals, I conducted a rigorous Lexis-Nexis search which was identical in spirit to that which I had conducted in France. Given that the Lexis-Nexis online database contains archives of full articles drawn from
over 5,600 news, business, legal, medical, and reference publications (both of American and non-American origin), my first task was to limit the number of newspapers that I would use for my searches. For reasons of practicality, I was seeking no more than fifteen major American newspapers, as this would in principle enable me to conduct a series of manageable searches, and it would also give me a comparable number of papers to the ten which ultimately contained the French intellectual discourses that I went on to analyze. A promising approach presented itself through the “general news sources” search option, which was equivalent to that which I had used on the French Lexis-Nexis database. This option provides the user with a list of 56 major newspapers that can be used as the basis of a keyword search. 26 of these newspapers are of American origin. This list of 26 papers contains within it the top fifteen US newspapers in terms of circulation figures.  

Five of these fifteen papers were defined by Lexis-Nexis as other than “general news,” so I retained only the top ten US papers defined as “general news” on the database. These newspapers are:


With this list of ten newspapers thus determined, I could then begin a detailed search into the engagement of American intellectuals in the US written press. To do this, I inputted the term “intellectual” into the “full text” field in conjunction with equivalent terms that I had used previously on the French IEP Lexis-Nexis database, notably the terms terror, terrorism, Iraq, imperialism, empire, and torture. From the approximately 500 articles that emerged from this search, I was able to identify eight American

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32 I attained circulation figures from the Burrelles Luce report entitled “Top 100 Daily Newspapers in U.S. by Circulation, 2004.” This document specifies that the list was compiled from circulation figures for the 6 months ending on March 31, 2004, filed with the Audit Bureau of Circulations. As with French intellectuals, American intellectuals also comment in numerous other outlets such as the New York Review of Books, Atlantic Monthly, and The Nation. For the same reasons as described previously, I chose to limit my research to books and major newspapers, as I wanted to focus on outlets which touch the widest possible audiences.
individuals who had commented on post-September 11 debates, and were referred to as “intellectuals” in a relatively consistent manner. These individuals are:

Paul Berman, Noam Chomsky, Francis Fukuyama, Stanley Hoffmann,\(^{33}\) Norman Mailer, Edward Said, Susan Sontag, and Gore Vidal.\(^{34}\)

Several of these individuals had also been frequently mentioned in the French news sources that I had previously identified (most notably Paul Berman, Francis Fukuyama and Stanley Hoffmann), which added further confirmation to my choices of which individuals to include on the American side.

I must, however, point out that in stark contrast to their French counterparts, none of these individuals had anything close to what we might define as a significant media presence. I provide some statistical data underlining this point later, but I should point out now that it was impossible for me to apply exactly the same criteria to American intellectuals that I had used to establish my corpus of French intellectuals. To reiterate a point made earlier, the criteria that I used to define an “extensive” intellectual engagement in the French case excluded any individuals who appeared in fewer than fifteen news articles relating to post-September 11 debates. It is notable that none of the eight American intellectuals that I identified through my media search, in fact, appeared in more than nine articles featuring in the ten American papers which I investigated. Indeed, when I included non-US papers in my keyword searches for each intellectual, I discovered that American intellectuals receive considerably more coverage in foreign newspapers than they do in their own country.\(^{35}\)

The point here is that if I had rigidly adhered to the same criteria that I had used for my group of French intellectuals, i.e. in terms of the degree to which they each

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\(^{33}\) Stanley Hoffmann is, in fact, still a French citizen, although he has lived and worked in the United States since 1955. I include him in my corpus of American intellectuals (despite some reservations) as the majority of his post-September 11 commentary appeared in US newspapers and books published in the US.

\(^{34}\) Although Samuel Huntington was mentioned on numerous occasions in both American and French press articles, most notably with reference to his famous “clash of civilizations” thesis and the degree to which this may or may not provide a more accurate picture of the post-Cold War world than Fukuyama’s “End of History” thesis, he made only isolated comments on post-September 11 debates. For this reason, I did not include him in my corpus of American intellectuals.

\(^{35}\) This tendency was particularly observable for Francis Fukuyama, Noam Chomsky and Edward Said who each authored articles and received significant coverage in non-US newspapers.
commented in an “extensive” manner in the US press, I would not have been able to compile a list of American intellectuals at all. I will discuss this important contrast further in the next section, but at this stage in my investigation, three key points became sharply apparent; 1) American intellectuals constitute a far less easily identifiable and cohesive group when compared to French intellectuals, 2) the term “intellectual” does not possess the same accretions (nor the same degree of consensus) in the American press as it does in France, and 3) that due to the relative absence of American intellectuals in the ten major papers that I consulted, one could advance the argument that there is a bias in the US press towards excluding the discourses of intellectuals.

Collective forms of intellectual engagement after September 11, 2001

As I indicated earlier, the intellectual discourses under examination in this chapter have been drawn from two main sources: 1) the French and American press, and 2) books published by the twenty most prominent intellectuals during the post-September 11 period. In these written sources, I have sought to identify both individual and collective responses to post-September 11 international developments. In this section I will examine the different forms of intellectual engagement that have been observable in each country. I begin with a brief overview of collective intellectual responses.

In past contexts, intellectual engagement has often manifested itself in a collective form. As Leymarie (18) points out, in France, the Dreyfus Affair established the tradition of petitions and collective manifestoes, and this pattern has continued in most subsequent contexts in which intellectuals have engaged, one of the most best known being “Le Manifeste des 121” (Sept.-Oct. 1960) during the Algerian War. In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, French and American intellectuals were involved in three notable collective interventions.

The first of these originated in the United States on February 12, 2002 and came in the form of an open letter entitled “What We’re Fighting For,” signed by Samuel Huntington, Francis Fukuyama, and 60 other American scholars. Although this letter was not widely reported in the US media (I have found only two press articles making
any reference to it)\textsuperscript{36} it was notable in that the signatories came out in strong support of
the Bush administration’s “war on terror” strategy. The reason why this is significant is
that most collective intellectual engagements in past contexts have tended to oppose the
government of the day, not support it. Moreover, when we return to the definitions of
intellectuals summarized earlier, this pro-Bush open letter seems to contradict the
commonly (though not universally) cited requirement that intellectuals must adopt an
adversarial position with respect to political power, and speak on behalf of the weak and
unrepresented. By the same token, however, one could argue that the intellectuals who
signed the open letter did so on the grounds that the US has been shown to be weak and
vulnerable in the light of the September 11 attacks. Thus a great deal depends on one’s
interpretation of the September 11 event. While the letter led to a heated exchange with a
group of 103 German intellectuals, French intellectuals did not offer any comparable
response at this time.

Four months later, on June 12, 2002, anti-war protesters organized their own
collective statement. This second collective protest also originated in the US under the
title “Not in Our Name,” and it received considerably more coverage in the American and
French media than the “What We’re Fighting For” open letter. In contrast to the open
letter in which the intellectuals concerned openly supported the Bush administration’s
“war on terror” strategy, the “Not in Our Name” protest was organized, not by
intellectuals, but by American celebrities and artists in reaction to the supposed intentions
of the Bush administration to invade Iraq. In brief, the “Not in Our Name” statement
called on Americans to resist the policies and overall political direction adopted by the
Bush administration following the September 11 attacks which they argued posed grave
dangers to the people of the world. With respect to the Bush administration’s stance on
Iraq, the statement warned: “We are confronting a new openly imperial policy towards
the world and a domestic policy that manufactures and manipulates fear to curtail rights”
(The Guardian, [London], June 14, 2002[a]). In contrast to the open letter just described,
the “Not in Our Name” protest conformed far more closely to what one might describe as
traditional collective intellectual protests. Firstly, the protest did directly oppose the US
administration, and secondly, it did seek to defend the weak and unrepresented (in this

\textsuperscript{36} Washington Post, (Feb. 12, 2002); Washington Post, (Oct. 24, 2002).
case, the Iraqi people). However, although around 55 American intellectuals later attached their support to this petition (among them Noam Chomsky and Gore Vidal), and would support the numerous protests organized by the “Not in Our Name” group that took place across the US throughout 2002 and into 2003, it should be reiterated that the petition itself was not an “intellectual” initiative, and for this reason it cannot be perceived in the same way as the “Manifeste des 121” for example, which was written by, and widely supported by, a large number of prominent French intellectuals during the Algerian War. Several hundred French intellectuals did attach their names to the “Not in Our Name” protest in November 2002 (including Jacques Derrida and Pierre Vidal-Naquet) but the “Pas en notre nom” anti-war petition (as it became known in France) did not attract significant support from the “intellectuels médiatiques” in France. Indeed, numerous French intellectuals would not attach their support to this document as they felt that it was more important to show solidarity with the US in opposing Saddam Hussein’s dictatorial regime and the abuses inflicted on the Iraqi population.

Despite this reluctance on the part of many French intellectuals to support the “Not in Our Name” protest, and the apparent disinterest on the part of others (only two of the intellectuals that I investigated did attach their names to the document), a third notable collective intervention did originate in France which echoed many of the points and the general sentiment of the “Not in Our Name” statement. This third collective protest brought together a group of French and German writers and intellectuals who released a collective statement in January 2003 entitled “Empêchons une guerre contraire au droit des peuples.”

The signatories argued that the principles of international law had been abandoned, and that “Rien ne justifie une attaque préventive contre un pays qui endure une dictature méprisant les êtres humains et souffre encore des conséquences de la dernière guerre du

37 In an article appearing in Libération (Jan. 18, 2003), Jacques Derrida stated with regard to French intellectuals and the “Pas en notre nom” protest that “Si on se réfère aux intellectuels médiatiques, c'est vrai qu'ils sont absents.” [If one is referring to media intellectuals, it is true that they are absent.]

38 André Glucksmann encapsulated this position when he stated: “Je suis d'accord avec Salman Rushdie : ‘Jamais je ne descendrai dans la rue pour sauver Saddam Hussein.’ Pourquoi les gens manifestent contre une guerre virtuelle et pas contre une guerre réelle, qui depuis deux ans massacre les Tchétchènes ?”(ibid.). [I agree with Salman Rushdie: ‘I will never take to the streets to save Saddam Hussein.’ Why do people protest against a virtual war, and not against a real war, which for two years, has seen the massacre of Chechens?]

Golfe" (ibid). [Nothing justifies a preventive attack against a country which is enduring a dictatorship which scorns human beings, and is still suffering the consequences of the last Gulf War.]

All three of these protests revolved around the underlying question of whether or not the United States should act militarily (and unilaterally as some commentators perceived it) to combat terrorism as well as other threats from so-called “rogue states” which had not yet fully materialized. Those opposing such actions did so on the grounds interventions of the type being pursued by the Bush administration would enflame an already volatile situation, and would serve to further alienate the US from the rest of the world. Those in favor of military responses, such as the signatories of the February 2002 open letter and the group of French intellectuals who refused to sign the “Not in Our Name” statement argued that the threats posed by terrorist groups and “rogue states” such as Iraq were very real and needed to be tackled head-on. In many ways, the three collective statements underscored these major areas of contention dividing intellectuals and society as a whole in each country.

It should, however, be pointed out that many intellectuals in both countries did not directly involve themselves in any of these collective protests/statements. Out of the twenty intellectuals in my corpus, only Francis Fukuyama signed the “What We’re Fighting For” open letter. Only Noam Chomsky, Edward Said and Gore Vidal in the US, and Jacques Derrida and Pierre Vidal-Naquet in France signed the “Not in Our Name” protest, and with regard to the third collective statement to which I referred, “Empêchons une guerre contraire au droit des peuples,” the only French intellectual to sign out of the twelve that I examined for this case-study was Jacques Derrida. It is thus fair to state that in both France and the US, intellectuals did not collectively engage in an effective or concerted manner when we compare the present period to other contexts such as the Algerian or Vietnam Wars. The collective protests which did take place in the post-September 11 period were notable in that 1) they often received very little press attention, which was the case for the “What We’re Fighting For” open letter and the “Empêchons une guerre contraire au droit des peuples” statement, 2) they were sometimes not instigated (or widely supported) by intellectuals themselves, which was the case with the “Not in Our Name” statement, and 3) they did not attract widespread support from
broader intellectual communities, which was arguably the case with all three collective interventions. Instead, French and American intellectual engagement has been far more individual in nature during the post-September 11 period.

**Individual intellectual engagement**

As I indicated in an earlier section, French intellectuals appeared in a large volume of press articles during the post-September 11 period. In such articles, the individual in question was either 1) the author of the piece, or was one of two or more intellectuals who were debating a given question, 2) was prominently mentioned in the article by the author, but did not write the article or directly debate a given question in it, or 3) the article was in the form of a book review. In the table below I provide data to demonstrate the extent to which French intellectuals received media coverage.

Table 5 - Press articles featuring or authored by French intellectuals about September 11 and its aftermath

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Total articles featuring</th>
<th>Authored by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jean Baudrillard</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pascal Bruckner</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Régis Debray</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacques Derrida</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alain Finkielkraut</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>André Glucksmann</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean-François Kahn</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernard-Henri Lévy</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean-François Revel</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emmanuel Todd</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Total articles featuring</th>
<th>Authored by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tzvetan Todorov</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierre Vidal-Naquet</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>609</strong></td>
<td><strong>37</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My search also yielded around 50 more general articles on intellectuals (including American intellectuals) which I used as background information. This high volume of articles reflects the continuing importance of French intellectual discourses in the French media. When we compare these statistics to the frequency with which American intellectuals received press coverage in the US media, the disparity is striking. Below I detail the number of articles in the ten US papers that I examined which prominently featured the intellectual in question in relation to post-September 11 debates.

Table 6 - Press articles featuring or authored by American intellectuals about September 11 and its aftermath

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Total articles featuring</th>
<th>Authored by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul Berman</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noam Chomsky</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis Fukuyama</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanley Hoffmann</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman Mailer</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Said</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Sontag</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gore Vidal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Given that I employed the same search technique for both groups of intellectuals, including the same number of newspapers, these statistics provide a stark illustration of how infrequently American intellectual discourses appear in major US newspapers. To reiterate a point that I briefly introduced earlier, this notable disparity in coverage suggests that there is a strong tendency among American newspapers to exclude intellectual discourses.

Books published by French and American intellectuals since September 11, 2001

In addition to press articles, intellectual engagement often came in the form of books. Out of the twelve French intellectuals that I reviewed, ten of them released one or more books outlining their position on some aspect of the post-September 11 world. On the American side, seven out of the eight intellectuals investigated did likewise. The table below indicates the broad subject of these texts across the top; the left column provides the name of the intellectual in question, and the number of books he published in parentheses. Within the table itself, I provide the date of publication for each of the texts which fall under each category.40

Table 7 - Books produced by French intellectuals between September 11, 2001 and November 30, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author name and quantity of books</th>
<th>Related to Sept. 11</th>
<th>Partly related to Sept. 11</th>
<th>Related to Iraq War</th>
<th>Partly related to Iraq War</th>
<th>Related to both</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J. Baudrillard (2)</td>
<td>2002, 2003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Débray (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Derrida (2)</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

40 See bibliography for full bibliographical details of these books.
Table 7 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author name and quantity of books</th>
<th>Related to Sept. 11</th>
<th>Partly related to Sept. 11</th>
<th>Related to Iraq War</th>
<th>Partly related to Iraq War</th>
<th>Related to both</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Finkielkraut (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Glucksmann (3)</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.-F. Kahn (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.-H. Lévy (2)</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.-F. Revel (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2000, 2003^41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Todd (1)</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Todorov (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total books published by French intellectuals = 15

Table 8 - Books produced by American intellectuals between September 11, 2001 and November 30, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author name and quantity of books</th>
<th>Related to Sept. 11</th>
<th>Partly related to Sept. 11</th>
<th>Related to Iraq War</th>
<th>Partly related to Iraq War</th>
<th>Related to both</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P. Berman (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Chomsky (4)</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>2003a</td>
<td>2003b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Fukuyama (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Hoffmann (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2004a, 2004b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^41 Revel originally published *L’Obsession anti-américaine: son fonctionnement, ses causes, ses inconstances* in 2000. I have, however, primarily used the English translation of this text, *Anti-Americanism* (2003) as Revel includes comments on the September 11 attacks which were obviously absent from the original text. Although I have cited both editions in the above table, I have counted it only once in my overall tally.
Table 8 continued

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N. Mailer (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Said (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Vidal (3)</td>
<td>2002a, 2002b</td>
<td></td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total books published by American intellectuals = 13

What emerges from the data tabulated above is that in terms of book production, American intellectuals have been as active as their French counterparts with respect to post-September 11 commentary. Indeed, a number of these works were, in fact, best sellers\(^{43}\) in the US which demonstrates that people are interested in what these intellectuals have to say. This fact further underscores the stark contrast in attention devoted to intellectual discourses in the French and American media.

The treatment of intellectuals by the French and American media

In addition to the frequency with which the respective national papers cover intellectual discourses, my research has also led me to observe a significant contrast with respect to the manner in which these papers typically treat these discourses. Specifically, I observed that French newspapers - irrespective of their position on the political spectrum - typically treat the intellectuals which they feature in a non-hostile manner. This was true even if the intellectual in question did not share the same political leaning as that particular newspaper. The conclusion that one could draw from this is that intellectuals are still regarded as an important national institution in the French media. Conversely, over the course of my research, it became apparent to me that this pattern was not replicated in the US press articles that I encountered. In the US media, numerous

\(^{42}\) In 2003, Edward Said published a new edition of *Orientalism* (originally published in 1978) containing a new preface in which he directly compared the actions and discourses of the Bush administration with the European colonialist discourses of the 19\(^{th}\) and 20\(^{th}\) centuries.

\(^{43}\) For example, Chomsky’s *9-11* and *Hegemony or Survival*, and Vidal’s *Perpetual War... and Dreaming War* were each on the New York Times best sellers list.
articles appeared which treated intellectuals with open contempt during the post-September 11 period. This hostility was particularly noticeable towards intellectuals on the left expressing opposition to American policy. Numerous articles, for example, appeared which expressed open hostility to the “Not in Our Name” protest. Individual intellectuals such as Noam Chomsky and Susan Sontag also came under frequent attack for their “anti-American” remarks. A USA Today book review of Chomsky’s book 9-11 referred to the author as a “left-wing crank” and asked the question “why is anyone reading this tripe?” In much the same vein, a Washington Post article described Susan Sontag as “belligerent, self-righteous and anti-American” and concluded that “regular people can be dim at times but it takes a real intellectual to be this stupefyingly dumb.”

I have uncovered no comparable examples of this level of contempt for intellectual discourses in any of the French press articles that I examined for this case study. This suggests that the American media not only marginalize intellectual discourses, but also tend to discredit such commentaries.

Findings

The task of presenting the discourses of twenty French and American intellectuals in a coherent manner required me to go through a series of additional methodological steps to identify within my source materials significant patterns of commonality or contrast. While I was, of course, interested in determining whether a given intellectual’s national background had any discernable effect on the positions that they ultimately adopted, I avoided approaching my material with an a priori assumption that national divisions would be a salient aspect of their respective discourses. Instead, I favored a thematic approach which would allow me to check for the possibility of nationality being

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44 See, for example, the San Francisco Chronicle (June 18, 2002), in which Debra Saunders argued with respect to intellectuals that “To ask what were the root causes of the Sept. 11 attacks is analogous to asking what the Jews did to invite the Holocaust [...] Witness the conceit that theirs is a battle of big brains - ooooh, they’re ‘intellectuals’ - versus boneheads” or an op-ed in the Washington Post, (Sept. 21, 2001) in which Charles Krauthammer described the “Not in Our Name” protesters in terms of “moral obtuseness.”


salient as well as for the possibility of that not being the case and other features being more salient.

Once I had summarized the comments made by each of the intellectuals in my corpus, it became evident that the national factor was not, in fact, a significant point of division between French and American intellectuals, and I did not detect the presence of overtly nationalistic attitudes from either group. In many ways this is not surprising given that intellectuals are, by most definitions, supposed to possess independent judgement and tackle issues from a universal perspective. In the books produced by French and American intellectuals during the post-September 11 period – particularly those which comment on the Iraq war – there are numerous examples of books written by French intellectuals containing a preface by an American intellectual (for example, Todorov’s *Nouveau désordre mondial* (2003) prefaced by Stanley Hoffmann) and vice-versa (for example, Pascal Bruckner prefaced Berman’s translation of “Terror and Liberalism” which was released in France under the title *Les Habits neufs de la terreur*. This underscores the fact that debates typically took place within intellectual camps rather than between national camps. Those intellectuals who argued that the US had provoked the September 11 attacks, for example, typically presented similar lines of reasoning irrespective of their national background. Contrary to the widespread perception that anti-Americanism is virtually endemic among French formers of opinion, I found that the vast majority of French intellectuals did not adopt an overtly anti-American position during the immediate post-September 11 period. American intellectuals, by contrast, were far more condemnatory of their own country and government than their French counterparts at this time. Similarly, during the run-up to the Iraq war, the small number of French and American intellectuals who supported this initiative did so on virtually identical grounds, and had far more in common with each other than they did with anti-war intellectuals of the same national background. Indeed, in many ways the degree to which American intellectuals expressed hostility towards their own national leaders and towards American power in general throughout the entire period under examination represents, in itself, the most significant national contrast.

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47 The French researcher Philippe Roger has conducted extensive research into the phenomenon of anti-Americanism in France, and provides a detailed genealogy of this pattern in numerous texts including, most recently, *L’Ennemi américain: Généalogie de l’antiaméricanisme français* (2002).
which emerged between French and American intellectuals. Specifically, over the course of my investigation, I observed that American intellectuals tended to be far more “anti-American” than their French counterparts. I will expand upon this important point throughout the analysis which follows.

For the reasons that I have just outlined, it became evident that if I was to analyze the discourses of my group of French and American intellectuals rigidly on the basis of nationality rather than by theme, this would constitute a highly artificial, and inappropriate, method of comparison. Instead, by focusing on the major themes raised with respect to the post-September 11 issues of interest to me, I was able to compare more effectively the main opposing viewpoints that emerged, and highlight where relevant, any salient national contrasts.

To this end, I divided my analysis into two main sections. In the first section, I attempted to isolate intellectual commentary which discussed issues relating to the September 11 attacks only. Here, I identified within my material the comments made by intellectuals who expressed support for the United States after the attacks along with the comments of intellectuals who adopted a more critical view of US power. Once I had isolated these viewpoints, I drew out the common themes and arguments developed by both groups, and examined the main areas of disagreement that arose between them.

In the second section, I examined the comments made by intellectuals with regard to the Iraq war. Here I was interested in comparing the arguments developed by those who opposed the war with the counter-arguments raised by those who defended it. Again, I broke down the recurring points which arose on each side into sub-themes, and then proceeded to systematically compare these arguments and counter-arguments. I also identified any areas of continuity or contrast between comments relating to September 11 and those made with regard to the Iraq war.
Key findings

My investigation led to 5 key findings, which can be summarized as follows:

1) It has become a virtual truism that anti-Americanism is endemic among French formers of opinion, and certain segments of the US media have fuelled this perception in recent years. However, I found that anti-Americanism was, in fact, far stronger among American intellectuals than it was among their French counterparts during the time period under analysis. Specifically:

2) In the immediate aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks, French intellectuals, including those typically associated with the left, were noticeably more pro-American than American intellectuals.

3) Similarly, while the vast majority of intellectuals in both France and the US opposed the Iraq War, a perceptibly larger proportion of French intellectuals supported this intervention than American intellectuals. Moreover, contrary to what one might expect, this support often came from left-leaning intellectuals.

4) This suggests that new questions (and, indeed, new priorities) surrounding American power, international terrorism, so-called “rogue states,” and the interconnection of these issues, may require us to rethink preconceived notions of how left and right-leaning intellectuals might be expected to react to recent events.

5) With regard to the current structure of international law in general, and the United Nations in particular, I found that the intellectuals who opposed the Iraq War typically argued for UN reform as a means of containing US power/imperialism. Pro-war intellectuals, by contrast, tended to advocate UN reform from what they
considered to be a more valid universalist/human rights angle, and argued that UN reform was needed to liberate populations living under dictatorial systems.

September 11: themes and counter themes

_The September 11 attacks represent a strike on American imperialism_ - In the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks, an important strand of intellectual debate situated the events that had taken place against the broader backdrop of “empire.” This perception of the United States as a de facto empire was certainly not new and has not been unique to intellectuals - indeed, many academics and other commentators had been discussing US power through this lens prior to September 11. However, in the light of the terrorist attacks, numerous intellectuals began to argue that the events of September 11 lent a certain degree of credence to the “US as empire” model, and this came to be a recurring theme among some intellectual commentators, most notably those typically associated with the left.

This interpretation broadly contended that the US has become an empire in the military, economic, political and cultural domains, and that successive American leaders have structured their foreign policy initiatives with direct reference to this hidden global agenda. Those who adopted this view often employed vocabulary such as “imperialism” or “hegemony” when describing US actions across the globe and argued that US imperialism has been highly detrimental to the regions of the world in which it has been exercised. In its most extreme manifestation, some proponents of this view described the US as a totalitarian or even a terrorist state. Such views tended to reject any suggestion that the US was attempting to bring about positive change in the parts of the world in which it has intervened (such as democratization or economic modernization), and it was widely argued that any altruistic or moral-sounding discourses have merely served to camouflage the true intentions of American leaders, the focus of whom remains total world dominance.

With this perception of the United States thus established, proponents of this view tended to perceive the September 11 attacks as a retaliation against American global hegemony. Others saw the attacks as a reaction to globalization or as a symbolic strike at
the heart of a “system” which has subjugated much of the world into a Western economic and cultural model against its will. In this respect, the evil of terrorism was sometimes framed as broadly equivalent to the evils inherent in the global system headed by the US. The underlying thematic thread shared by supporters of this viewpoint maintained that the United States had created, or at least strongly contributed to many of the underlying conditions (including global poverty and an increasing gap between rich and poor nations) which lay at the source of the resentment and humiliation felt by certain segments of the world population. This resentment was thus the motivating factor for the September 11 terrorists, and they had acted to avenge the wrongs committed against these humiliated populations. While none of the intellectuals that I examined openly condoned the terrorist attacks (they all, without exception, acknowledged that terrorism directed against civilian populations is immoral and wrong), the group under analysis here all shared the view that the attacks must be understood as resulting from abuses of American power and the global economic system which it controls.

This broad position became predominant among numerous American intellectuals during the immediate aftermath of September 11, particularly among those on the left such as Noam Chomsky, Norman Mailer, Gore Vidal and Susan Sontag. The comments of these four intellectuals contained numerous points of commonality, and in many cases built upon their pre-existing (and well-documented) negative conceptualizations of American power. Sontag argued, for example, that the events of September 11 represented “an attack on the world's self-proclaimed superpower, undertaken as a consequence of specific American alliances and actions” (New Yorker, Sept. 24, 2001). Chomsky consistently maintained that the attacks were intricately connected to American conduct in the international sphere, and that the United States had routinely inflicted comparable atrocities to September 11 on other populations throughout its recent history.⁴⁸ In his book 9-11 (2001), he argued that “Terrorists draw from a reservoir of anger, desperation, fear and frustration among rich and poor, from secular to radical

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⁴⁸ The most commonly cited abuses recurring in much of Chomsky’s work range from the “abuses” committed by successive US administrations in Central and South America (most notably in Nicaragua), the US/UN sanctions against Iraq following the First Gulf War, which he argues has led to hundreds of thousands of civilian deaths, the continuing US support of Israeli attacks upon Palestinians, and the bombing of a major Sudanese pharmaceutical plant in 1998 which, he argues, led to the deaths of several hundred thousand people.
Islamists. In no small measure, this is all rooted in US policies” (83-84). The negative outcome of these policies, in Chomsky’s judgment, leads us to the conclusion that the US is, in fact, a leading terrorist state if we apply the official US definition of terrorism to US conduct.49 Novelist and long-time critic of American foreign policy, Gore Vidal, expressed a similar viewpoint to this in his 2002 text Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace: How We Got to Be So Hated. In this text, Vidal argued that those who died on September 11 were victims not only of the terrorists who perpetrated the attack, but also of American foreign policy. Vidal described this global policy as one of “unremitting violence” resembling totalitarian regimes of the past such as Hitler’s Germany, and he framed the September 11 attacks as representing a retaliatory strike conducted in the name of a billion Muslims (2002). Norman Mailer also attributed the September 11 attacks to anti-US resentment, and stated in his 2003 book Why Are We at War? that the attacks can be best understood as a reaction to “the tendency of corporate capitalism to take over large parts of the economies of other countries” (24). He also cited America’s cultural invasion of Islamic countries as a major source of anti-US resentment.

Among the American intellectuals that I investigated who commented on the September 11 attacks, the overarching attitude was thus most often one of condemnation of American power. With respect to French intellectuals, one might have expected to see a comparable - if not an even stronger - critical response to American power in the light of the attacks, given that anti-Americanism is often seen to be deeply entrenched in French intellectual discourse.50 However, based on the sources that I consulted for this case study, I found that French intellectuals did not typically adopt an anti-American line of argument at this time. Instead, the vast majority of them generally expressed sympathy and support for the United States and saw the September 11 attacks as an unprecedented and illegitimate act of terrorism. Unlike their American counterparts, most did not focus overly upon any specific US actions which might be perceived as having provoked the attacks.

One notable exception to this was Jean Baudrillard (already well-known for his

49 I quote the official US code’s definition of terrorism in my Literature Review.
hostility to many aspects of globalization and Western consumerism) who, like the four American intellectuals just cited above, argued that the September 11 attacks represented a symbolic retaliatory strike on American power perpetrated by those elements who had been excluded from the benefits of globalization. He articulated this position most clearly in an essay entitled *L’Esprit du terrorisme* (2002), which had originally been printed in *Le Monde* (Nov. 3, 2001). He commented, for example, that “nul ne peut ne pas rêver de la destruction de n’importe quelle puissance devenue à ce point hégémonique” (11) [no one can avoid dreaming of the destruction of any power that has become hegemonic to this degree], and he maintained that the Twin Towers were representative of a definitive order, of a system, and that “c’est le système lui-même qui a créé les conditions objectives de cette rétorsion brutale” (15) [it is the system itself which created the objective conditions for this brutal retaliation.] Baudrillard went on to describe the terrorist attacks in terms of a “transfert terroriste de situation” (15) [a terroristic situational transfer] through which the US had received an equivalent punishment on September 11 to that which it has inflicted upon the victims of globalization. He described this transfer in terms of moral equivalence. In his words, “Le terrorisme est immoral. L’événement du World Trade Centre, ce défi symbolique, est immoral, et il répond à une mondialisation qui est elle-même immorale” (20). [Terrorism is immoral. The World Trade Center event, that symbolic challenge, is immoral, and it is a response to globalization which is itself immoral.] Baudrillard later described the attacks as representing an inversion of the master-slave relationship created by globalization, and stated elsewhere that the terrorists “sont de vrais héros, car ils sont courageux. Ils détiennent la connaissance vraie du système, puisqu'ils font l'hypothèse que le système se suicide. Enfin, leur sentiment d'obligation sacrificielle est indéfectible et incorruptible” (*Le Monde*, Nov. 10, 2001). [(the terrorists) are true heroes, as they are courageous. They possess a true understanding of the system, because they hypothesize that the system is committing suicide. In the end, their feeling of sacrificial obligation is undefeatable and incorruptible.]

When we compare the comments made by Baudrillard with those expressed by

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51 For the remainder of this chapter, all English translations of passages from *L’Esprit du terrorisme* have been taken from the English translation of this text, *The Spirit of Terrorism* translated by Chris Turner.
Chomsky, Mailer, Sontag and Vidal, it is clear that numerous points of commonality are present. The first point to note is that they are all left wing intellectuals, and for this reason it is not entirely out of character for them to express anti-capitalist and/or anti-American views.\footnote{Indeed, they have each been expressing such views in their work for many years.}

Table 9 - Intellectuals expressing negative attitudes towards the US in the aftermath of September 11

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<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Left and left-leaning</th>
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<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>Baudrillard</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Todd\footnote{As outlined in a moment, Todd’s comments came in 2002, but I include him in this table as his views were consistently condemnatory towards the US during the overall period under analysis.}</td>
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<tr>
<td>American</td>
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<td>Mailer</td>
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<td>Sontag</td>
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<td>Vidal</td>
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In discussing the post-September 11 context, each of them argued, either directly or indirectly, that the September 11 attacks were roughly equivalent in magnitude to the “crimes” committed by the US throughout its recent history. With regard to the definitions of intellectuals outlined earlier in this chapter, one could argue that in adopting this position, they were seeking to apply a set of universal norms or standards to US conduct across the globe.\footnote{As I briefly mentioned earlier, this observation sheds doubt on the validity of Foucault’s contention that intellectuals have increasingly tended to focus on specific as opposed to universal questions.} Chomsky articulated this view most clearly when he criticized the tendency of US crimes against the weak to be perceived as “normal” (2001: 46). In formulating the September 11 attacks in terms of a reaction from the weak and
unrepresented, they were also conforming to the criteria for intellectual engagement set out by Edward Said as described earlier. Moreover, they were clearly articulating an openly adversarial counter-discourse to political power in the sense that political leaders in both France and the US tended to avoid any direct discussion over exactly why – in concrete terms – the attacks had taken place. This counter-discourse manifested itself in the tendency of this group of intellectuals to focus most of their attention, not on the crime of the terrorist attack itself, but on what they saw as the abuses committed by the US which provoked this attack.

If this group was engaging in ways that one would typically expect from intellectuals given the definitions outlined earlier in this chapter, this leads us to the question of why more French intellectuals did not adopt a similar stance to that adopted by Baudrillard, Chomsky, Sontag, Vidal and Mailer in the immediate aftermath of September 11, particularly those typically considered to be on the left or left-leaning. How do we account for this apparent “discrepancy”? While I cannot offer a definitive answer to this question, there are, I feel, at least two possible reasons why more French intellectuals did not adopt what could be described as an anti-American position at this time. Firstly, while it is true that intellectuals comment on a range of issues with both national and international dimensions, and they typically bring a more universal perspective to the situation in question, it could be argued that they do still operate in national spaces and are inclined, first and foremost, to comment upon events and/or controversies which concern the country of which they are citizens. If this is, indeed, the case, then it is logical that American intellectuals would adopt an adversarial position towards their own government more readily than their French counterparts. Perhaps the reason why the phenomenon of anti-Americanism is so frequently criticized when it is expressed by French intellectuals is because it is considered to be inappropriate somehow, or not their place. Secondly, the relative lack of criticism from French intellectuals towards the US immediately following September 11 tells us something of the profundity of shock felt by so many people after this event. Perhaps the degree of shock felt by French intellectuals in the face of this event counteracted any “anti-American” tendency which might otherwise have been more observable.
The September 11 attacks were not “rational,” and the nihilistic dangers posed by terrorism must not be underestimated - The counter-viewpoint to that outlined above came in two closely related variations, each of which broadly maintained that the United States had not provoked the September 11 attacks through imperialistic or hegemonic actions, but rather, that we should shift our attention back onto those who actually committed the attacks in order to accurately interpret them. As noted in the previous section, out of the intellectuals that I examined for this case study, this more pro-American position was more prevalent among French intellectuals than among their American counterparts during the immediate aftermath of September 11. In addition, contrary to what one might expect, this view was almost as observable among left-leaning intellectuals in both France and the US as it was among those typically associated with the right.

The first strand of this counter-argument was expressed on the French side by André Glucksmann, Pascal Bruckner, and (to a degree) Jean-François Revel, and on the US side by Paul Berman. This strongly pro-American interpretation framed the September 11 attacks in highly apocalyptic/nihilistic terms, and rejected the notion that the US had provoked them in some way through imperialistic actions across the globe. A notable sub-theme emerging in the comments of Berman, Fukuyama and Revel acknowledged that the terrorist attacks were indeed a “reaction” to the Western democratic and liberal model, but argued that the attacks were illegitimate because the Western model is superior to any other yet conceived. This position thus partially accepted the “cause and effect” formulation adopted by some critics of US power, but did not articulate this power in negative or exploitative terms.

The second strand of counter-argument was more moderately pro-American. This group expressed sympathy with the US and condemnation of the September 11 terrorists, but did not articulate this in terms of the kind of “nihilistic” scenario advanced notably by Glucksmann. The French intellectuals Alain Finkielkraut, Bernard-Henri Lévy, Alain Minc, and, to a degree, Jacques Derrida were the most visible proponents of this viewpoint. I will now summarize the key components of these two counter-strands of argument.
Table 10 - Intellectuals expressing strongly pro-American attitudes in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks

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<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Left and left-leaning</th>
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<td>French</td>
<td>Bruckner</td>
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**Strongly pro-American intellectuals** - The first branch within the strongly pro-American interpretation of September 11 maintained that the attacks were the outcome of the existence of totalitarian and nihilistic forces in the world ranging from religious extremists to rogue states who are intent upon the destruction of the entire Western world and the values upon which it is based. Those who supported this view tended to express strong solidarity with the US in the light of this multi-faceted threat. André Glucksmann was the most vocal proponent of this view, and he vehemently criticized approaches which sought to attribute rational causes to the attacks. The crux of Glucksmann’s argument was that the September 11 attacks were of such a magnitude that they signaled a global transition towards an era of generalized nihilism – a tendency that he denounced in numerous press articles and three books: *Dostoïevski à Manhattan* (2001), *Ouest contre ouest* (2003), and *Le Discours de la haine* (2004). In his view, the West is at war with Islamic totalitarianism and other forms of nihilism encompassing a wide range of potential enemies including terrorists and rogue states. In his words: “[…] nous sommes dans l'ère du nihilisme généralisé. Les auteurs du massacre n'ont formulé aucune revendication. Leur objectif a été de détruire pour détruire. ‘Je tue donc je suis’” *(Le

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55 In *Dostoïevski à Manhattan* Glucksmann pointed out that over the last century, warfare has increasingly resulted in civilian casualties and argued that this reflected an underlying shift towards nihilism. This tendency, he argued, could be read in the works of the Russian novelist Dostoïevski, hence the title of his book. Glucksmann described nihilism as the pleasure of destroying, the joy at seeing the death of others, and destruction for the sake of destruction. He would interpret the September 11 attacks and the dangers posed by rogue states through this lens throughout the time period under analysis.
Figaro, Jan. 24, 2002). [\(\ldots\) we are in the era of generalized nihilism. The authors of the massacre did not formulate any demands. Their objective was to destroy in order to destroy. “I kill therefore I am.”] He also rejected any suggestion that the US “empire” had been punished for its sins when it was attacked on September 11. Glucksmann persistently argued that such views were anti-American,\(^{56}\) and he concluded that “Ce discours omniprésent est ignoble et impardonnable” (Le Figaro, Sept. 19, 2002). [This omnipresent discourse is ignoble and inexcusable.] Much of Glucksmann’s commentary hinged on the degree of extreme danger that the September 11 attacks represented to the world. In his view, this new nihilistic threat combines both a determination to kill and destroy without limit, and the practical means to do so through suicide attacks and, potentially, weapons of mass destruction. Jean-François Revel agreed that “The stated objective of terrorists is the destruction of Western civilization in all its impiety and impurity” (2003: 70). Like Glucksmann and Revel, Pascal Bruckner also criticized attitudes which identified the US rather than Islamic terrorism as the major threat to global peace: “À ce compte-là, il aurait mieux valu se coucher devant Hitler, abdiquer devant Staline et applaudir aux crimes de Mao Zedong” (Le Figaro, Mar. 15, 2004). [On that line of argument, it would have been better to lay down in front of Hitler, abdicate in the face of Stalin, and applaud the crimes of Mao Tse Tung.] Bruckner consistently argued that terrorists and rogue states are genuine dangers that must be confronted. He speculated on what might have happened had the terrorists been in possession of a nuclear weapon: [...] “imaginez qu'al-Qaida ait attendu dix ans, mais ait disposé de centre de pouvoir, d'armes atomiques bricolées. La phrase d'Holderlin reste vraie : ‘Là où croît le danger, croît aussi la force de ce qui sauve.’ Mais peut-être l'Europe n'a-t-elle pas encore bien intégré la leçon du XXe siècle” (Sud Ouest, Sept. 9, 2002). [Imagine that al Qaeda had waited for ten years, but possessed a center of power and atomic weapons. The phrase of Holderlin remains true: “The place where danger grows is also where grows the force which saves.” But perhaps Europe has not yet fully integrated the lesson of the 20\(^{\text{th}}\) century.]

\(^{56}\) See, for example, Le Monde, (Apr. 5, 2003), Le Point, (Oct. 28, 2004), and Ouest contre ouest (2003: 24).
Of the American intellectuals that I selected, only Paul Berman shared the apocalyptic vision of Islamic terrorism articulated by the French intellectuals just summarized. Berman agreed that the West is facing a nihilistic ideology which defies rational explanation, and in his 2003 text _Terror and Liberalism_, Berman’s central point is that Western liberalism is under attack from radical and destructive Islamist movements, and that this violent reaction to the Western model must be taken very seriously. Like Glucksmann, Berman attacked Chomsky’s approach of identifying a rational explanation behind September 11 (145), and contended that “radical Islamists [are] slaughtering people in one country after another for the purpose of slaughtering them” and “bin Laden had ordered random killings of Americans strictly for the purpose of killing Americans” (149). In response to Chomsky, Berman added: “Chomsky does not acknowledge that there are pathological or irrational movements that yearn to commit slaughters and yearn for death” (151). As such, Berman maintained that “We have all the evidence in the world […] to conclude that Islamism in its radical version of the present poses every imaginable danger (158).

With this apocalyptic formulation of the September 11 attacks thus established, this pro-American group of intellectuals tended to absolve the US of any responsibility for the attacks as this, they contended, ran the risk of legitimating them and wrongly targeting the US as the true enemy. In their view, the “anti-American” group of intellectuals had committed precisely this error.

On the role of poverty as a motivating factor for September 11, intellectuals such as Glucksmann who were sympathetic to the American position argued that “la haine n’est pas l’effet mécanique d'une cause extérieure de la faim, la misère, l'oppression ou l'humiliation. Tous les opprimés, tous les offensés et les affamés de la terre ne se font pas exploser dans les transports en commun, devant les églises ou les mosquées. La haine est une décision personnelle, on se met en haine comme on se met en colère” (Le Figaro, Oct. 25, 2004). [hatred is not the mechanical effect of an exterior cause such as hunger, desperation, oppression or humiliation. All of the oppressed, all of the offended and starving people of the world do not explode themselves on means of public transport, or in front of churches or mosques. Hatred is a personal decision – one puts oneself into a state of hatred in the same way that one puts oneself into a state of anger.] Pascal
Bruckner concurred with this view and criticized attitudes claiming that “Quand quelque chose va mal sur la planète, ce serait toujours à cause du crime de notre domination” (Le Figaro, Mar. 15, 2004). [When something goes wrong on the planet, it is always because of the crime of our domination.] On the poverty question, Bruckner agreed that it was dangerous to conceptualize the September 11 attacks through the rich/poor prism, as this ignored the lessons of 20th century totalitarian movements. In Bruckner’s view, “Pour lire dans l'islamisme une réaction, certes excessive, mais compréhensible, des ‘exclus,’ il faut vraiment n'avoir rien saisi du phénomène totalitaire. Le nazisme et le communisme ont été, eux aussi, tout au moins au début, des semblants de réactions désespérées de masses déboussolées attendant un sauveur providentiel” (ibid.). [To read in Islamism a certainly excessive, but understandable reaction from the “excluded,” this is truly to have understood nothing of the totalitarian phenomenon. Nazism and communism were also, at least at the start, seemingly desperate reactions of disoriented masses waiting for a providential savior.] Bruckner argued that the rich/poor argument overlooked the fact that the perpetrators of the attacks were not, themselves, drawn from the poorer sections of Middle Eastern society (Sud Ouest, Sept. 9, 2002).57 For Bruckner, the rich/poor defense of terrorism (which he compared to Sartre and Fanon’s analysis of terrorism in the Algerian war context) did not capture the true meaning behind the attacks (Le Figaro, Mar. 15, 2004). Similarly, Paul Berman argued that September 11 should not be seen as the “reply of oppressed people from the third world to centuries of American depredations,” or as “a predictable and logical event” (151). Berman argued that it was ridiculous to suggest that Al Qaeda was avenging the oppressed Third World, and rejected the notion that “If 9/11 was bad, the US itself was ultimately responsible” (ibid).

With the blame for the attacks thus shifted firmly back onto the terrorists themselves, proponents of the strongly pro-American branch of interpretation often argued that the true problem lay within Islam itself, which, they suggested, has been unsuccessful at adapting itself to modernity. The result has thus been the emergence of terrorist groups who support an irrational, nihilistic, totalitarian ideology which must be confronted by a united West. Bruckner argued precisely this point, and maintained that

57 Revel made a similar argument to this in Le Temps, (Oct. 23, 2001).
the September 11 attacks can be best understood as a reaction against Western modernity, leading to the present situation which he described as “une guerre contre la civilisation” (Sud Ouest, Sept. 9, 2002). [a war against civilization.] In Bruckner’s view: “La religion musulmane, cette fois sûre de sa vérité, qui n'a connu ni sa Renaissance, ni sa Réforme, ni son Voltaire, réagit au choc de la modernité par un surcroît de violence” (ibid). [The Muslim religion, this time sure of its truth, which has known neither a Renaissance nor a Reformation, nor a Voltaire, is reacting to the shock of modernity by a rise in violence.] Jean-François Revel shared this view, and argued that it is the unwillingness of Islamic extremists to adapt to modernity that lies at the source of the terrorist problem. He argued that reforms are needed in developing countries for economic aid to be effective, but that Islamists are locked in an irresolvable contradiction in that they refuse modernization (2003: 124). In his words: “Je vois très peu de pays de l'ancien tiers monde qui aient alors adopté le modèle occidental. Le fond du problème est qu'un grand nombre des sociétés qui ont raté le virage de la modernité ne peuvent pas accepter que leur échec vienne d'elles-mêmes” (Le Temps, Oct. 23, 2001). [I see very few countries in what we used to call the Third World, that have adopted the Western model. The basis of the problem is that a great number of societies which have missed the boat of modernity, cannot accept that their failure comes from themselves.] For this reason, Revel argued that “we cannot rationalize the new terrorism by concrete factors such as inequalities between nations” (2003: 65). Revel expressed a particularly critical view of Islam, and attributed the terrorist problem not to US domination of the world, but to the religion of Islam itself. He remarked, for example, “the Coran contains many passages putting believers under an obligation to exterminate infidels.” In Revel’s view, Islam does not espouse tolerance as it contains numerous passages authorizing violence against non-Muslims (2003: 66). He stated: “The dominant idea in the Muslims’ worldview is that all of humanity must obey the rules of their religion, whereas they owe no respect to the religions of others [...] Tolerance is a one way street for Muslims” (2003: 67). He added, “The fundamentalists blame our civilization not for what it does, but for what it is; not for having failed but for having succeeded” (2003: 70). For Revel, the argument that Islamists are fundamentally opposed to globalization is flawed as “Islamists seek globalization as long as it’s the Islamic kind” (2003: 72).
An interrelated variation evident within the strongly pro-American interpretation of September 11 acknowledged that the attacks can be accurately understood as representing a form of retaliation directed against the Western democratic and liberal model, but held that the attacks were completely illegitimate as the Western model is neither imperialistic nor constitutive of a global “empire” out to humiliate large segments of the world population – it is a just system which is superior to any other yet conceived. As highlighted earlier, this was the central thesis to Paul Berman’s *Terror and Liberalism* (2003). Likewise, Francis Fukuyama also defended the US/Western model, and situated the September 11 attacks in his famous “End of History” schematic.58 Like Revel, Fukuyama contended that there was something inherent in Islam - or at least in fundamentalist Islam - that makes Muslim societies particularly resistant to modernity. In his view, Islam is “the only cultural system that regularly seems to produce people, like Osama bin Laden or the Taliban, who reject modernity lock, stock and barrel” (*The Independent*, Oct. 11, 2001). Jean-François Revel broadly agreed with this assessment, and argued that Fukuyama was correct to point out that “The conflict is not one of clashing civilizations in the sense of equally important cultural zones; it is symptomatic, rather, of a rearguard action fought by people who feel themselves threatened by modernization and by its moral component: respect for human rights” (2003: 123).

Thus, in summary, the strongly pro-American intellectuals just cited shared important points of commonality with each other, and in many ways they came to resemble a “camp” united around a core set of arguments which, at root, sought to shift attention away from the US and back onto the terrorists themselves. The perception of a “camp” was further reinforced through the numerous references that they made to each other when articulating their arguments. Glucksmann made several references in support of Berman in press articles, stating at one point “Paul Berman est mon ami [...] Il est très

58 Fukuyama’s “End of History” thesis which he set out in 1992 contended that after the collapse of communism, liberal democracy and the free market system represented the only form of civilization in which people would genuinely want to live. Fukuyama argued that although the September 11 attacks seemed to validate Samuel Huntington’s counter-assessment of the post-Cold War world, i.e. as a “clash of civilizations” in which several large cultural groups would coexist without converging in a basically conflictual state, Fukuyama contended that “modernity will not be derailed by recent events” and that “democracy and free markets will continue to expand over time as the dominant organising principles for much of the world” (*The Independent*, Oct. 11, 2001.)
Pascal Bruckner wrote the preface for the translation of Berman’s *Terror and Liberalism*, which was released in France under the title *Les Habits neufs de la terreur* (2004), and Glucksmann dedicated his book *Ouest contre ouest* (2003) to Bruckner and the film maker Romain Goupil. Revel strongly endorsed Fukuyama’s “End of History” thesis, and felt that this was the most accurate lens through which the September 11 attacks should be perceived. Lastly, they each, at various points in their analysis, expressed strong criticism towards Noam Chomsky and other “anti-American” intellectuals, and shared the view that the global system headed by the US was not the cause of the September 11 attacks.

It should be reiterated that this “camp,” as I have described it, was not uniquely composed of right-leaning intellectuals. While Glucksmann, Revel, and Fukuyama are typically associated with the right by most commentators, (and it is therefore, in many ways, logical that they would adopt a broadly pro-American / pro-liberal position), Bruckner and Berman are self-described left-wing intellectuals. As will become increasingly evident throughout the remainder of this chapter, it would seem that their overarching concern – one which was not shared by the majority of left-leaning intellectuals in either country – honed in on the urgent danger posed by the perceived nihilistic phenomenon of modern-day terrorism rather than the imperialistic danger posed by the United States. It was their interpretation of this danger, and the human rights implications tied up in it, that separated them from other left-wing intellectuals.

*Moderately pro-American intellectuals* - While it is true that not all intellectuals who expressed support for the US following the September 11 attacks framed the contemporary context in such apocalyptic terms as the strongly pro-American camp of intellectuals just described, it was commonly argued that the US did not deserve to be attacked and should not be perceived as an imperial power. This second tendency was more moderately pro-American in nature, and comprised numerous French intellectuals who, unlike Glucksmann, Berman, Bruckner and Revel would later oppose the US during the run-up to the Iraq war. The French intellectuals Alain Finkielkraut, Bernard-Henri Lévy, Alain Minc, and, to a degree, Jacques Derrida were the most visible proponents of
this second strand of argument. Unlike the strongly pro-American strand of argument, the intellectuals supporting a more moderately pro-American interpretation of September 11 were all on the left, and were all of French background.

Table 11 - Intellectuals expressing moderately pro-American attitudes in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks

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<td>Finkielkraut</td>
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With respect to the notion that the US was a victim of its hyperpower status and should take responsibility for the attacks, Alain Finkielkraut stated, for example: “Il y a des salles de rédaction où l'on dit que Ben Laden pose les bonnes questions, mais qu'il apporte les mauvaises réponses ! [...] C'est une pente extrêmement dangereuse” […] (Le Figaro Oct. 20, 2001). [There are news rooms where it is said that bin Laden poses the right questions, but brings the wrong responses! (...) This is an extremely dangerous view.]

Similarly, Bernard-Henri Lévy rejected the notion that the terrorists should be seen as martyrs avenging the wrongs done to Muslims, or that the West was engaged in a war of civilizations with Islam (2001: 7). Lévy argued this position with particular insistence in an article published a month after the attacks. In it, he stated: “Ce qui n'est pas supportable, c'est d'entendre partout répéter que l'Amérique, avec le carnage du World Trade Center, n'a eu que ce qu'elle méritait et qu'elle paie son arrogance”59 (Le

59 In ways not unlike the strongly pro-American group of intellectuals discussed earlier, Lévy also singled out Chomsky for criticism, and argued that he defended the viewpoints outlined in this quotation.
[What is not acceptable is to hear it repeated, everywhere, that with the carnage of the World Trade Center, America has only received what it deserved and is paying for its arrogance.] Lévy would also reject Baudrillard’s claim that the terrorists had attacked “the system” (*Le Point* Nov. 22, 2002). This rejection was also expressed forcefully by Alain Minc in an article appearing in *Le Monde* entitled *Le Terrorisme de l’esprit*. [The Terrorism of the Spirit.] In this article, Minc argued against the equivalence with which opponents of the US often frame their arguments, according to which terrorism represents the inverse of globalization (described by some as a process which has been dictated by the US). In Minc’s view “Cette démonstration porte jusqu’à l’incandescence les pulsions anti-américaines, les réflexes tiers-mondistes, les réactions gauchisantes qui parcourent l’opinion française” (*Le Monde*, Nov. 7, 2001). [This argument glows, to the point of incandescence, with the anti-American impulses, Third-Worldist reflexes, and leftist reactions which run through French public opinion.]

Although this strand of opinion often tended to view US power in ways not dissimilar to the strongly pro-American camp (i.e. without excessive criticism), the moderately pro-American group of intellectuals differed in that they tended to also take a more moderate stance on the question of Islam. Thus, while Finkielkraut and Lévy agreed that the terrorist problem was at least partly attributable to contradictory tensions within Islam, they both stressed that moderate Islam and radicalist Islam should not be amalgamated together. Lévy argued that Islam is not incompatible with modernity, or with democracy and rights, as numerous Islamic countries have successfully made this transition. Lévy cited Attaturk and Nasser as examples (2001: 8). For Lévy, the true war of civilizations is not between the West and Islam, but within Islam itself. Lévy concluded that “C’est même, à mes yeux, la vraie, la seule bataille de civilisation du XXIe siècle” (*Le Figaro* Apr. 24, 2003[a]). [This is even, in my eyes, the true, the only civilization battle of the 21st century.]

Jacques Derrida agreed that the terrorist problem lay at the junction of Islam, globalization and modernity, but argued that the religion of Islam was not to blame for the rise in violence. As noted by Giovanna Borradori (*Le Monde Diplomatique*, Feb. 2004), Derrida’s view was that while globalization has been positive in some areas such as Eastern Europe, it has in other areas had a highly detrimental effect. This has been the
case for Islamic cultures which have not always benefited from globalization. In Derrida’s view, the Islamic world is unique in two respects: 1) It has not known the modern experience of democracy which both he and Jürgen Habermas consider to be necessary for modernization to operate in a positive fashion, and 2) Many Islamic cultures are found in parts of the world rich in natural resources such as oil. This renders the Islamic bloc more vulnerable to the “modernisation sauvage que véhiculent les marchés globalisés aux mains d’un petit nombre d’Etats et de sociétés multinationales” (ibid). [haphazard forms of modernization of which globalized markets headed by a small number of states and multinational societies are the vehicle.]

Some members of the more moderately pro-American camp also rejected the notion that poverty and humiliation were key motivating factors for the September 11 terrorists. Echoing a point raised by both Glucksmann and Bruckner, Alain Finkielkraut stated, for example: “Jamais le désespoir n’a conduit personne à se faire exploser pour tuer le plus grand nombre possible d’innocents” (Le Figaro Mar. 16, 2002). [Hopelessness has never led to anyone to blow themselves up in order to kill the largest possible number of innocent people.] In his view, the rich/poor argument as it was often articulated by the left distorted reality and transformed the victim – the United States – into the guilty party (Le Monde, July 20, 2002).

Thus in summary, the moderately pro-American group of intellectuals shared a number of important parallels with the strongly pro-American group, but did not focus on the theme of “nihilism” when structuring their arguments. The underlying tendency, however, was to avoid lending any degree of credence to the motivations or the methods of the September 11 terrorists. Within this branch of opinion, the strong presence of French intellectuals, and the total absence of their American counterparts is particularly notable. Contrary to the anti-American image which is commonly attached to them, the overwhelming majority of opinion among French intellectuals during the immediate aftermath of September 11 was predominantly pro-American - sometimes vehemently so. Within both the strongly and moderately pro-American branches of opinion, the underlying attitude was that the US should not be identified as the source of the terrorist problem.
If we reflect back on the ways in which commentators have sought to define the role of intellectuals, one could argue that in situating themselves on the side of the US, the intellectuals highlighted above considered themselves to be on the side of the “weak and vulnerable” (to borrow Edward Said’s term). For this group of intellectuals, this reformulation of the notion of the “weak” in the light of the September 11 attacks seems to represent an important backdrop to their pro-American position. Whereas critics of American power have often framed any nation or group challenging US hegemony to be in a position of fundamental weakness (hence their frequent sympathy towards these groups), the pro-American intellectuals just reviewed appear to have turned this equation on its head, the underlying reason being the universal crime (and threat) of modern-day terrorism. Given the number of left wing intellectuals who defended the US in the aftermath of September 11, one could hypothesize that the issue of terrorism has disrupted the traditional “anti-American” impulses often associated with these individuals.

The response of the US to the September 11 attacks reflects the existence of an underlying imperial agenda - In the light of the reaction of the Bush administration to September 11 - most notably with regard to the attack on the Taliban in Afghanistan in late 2001 to mid 2002, and the logic behind the “war on terror” policy more generally - intellectual opinion in France began to shift. While it is important not to overstate the extent of this shift, it was notable in that it introduced more voices of dissent into the main debates surrounding the September 11 attacks and the exercise of US power. At the same time, as I will show in this section, the predominant attitude among American intellectuals towards the Bush administration remained one of deep hostility.

Using virtually the same formulation as that put forward by the critics of US power who commented immediately after September 11, a major theme underpinning intellectual criticism of the US reaction to the terrorist attacks revolved around the formulation of America as “empire.” This view was particularly widespread among (but certainly not unique to) American intellectuals, and specifically, it was often argued that the Bush administration had dramatically exaggerated - and indeed manipulated - the importance of September 11 in order to use this event as a pretext for undertaking
unilateral and at times illegal actions under a veil of legitimacy. From this perspective, the September 11 attacks were actually useful to the Bush administration, as they provided the perfect cover for them to further ram through their imperial agenda. An interconnected variation of this view, which was more observable in the discourses of French intellectuals, maintained that the US is, in fact, far weaker than it appears and needs to engage in micro-conflicts against weak enemies in order to project an image of strength and importance. Some critics of the US reaction to September 11 argued that the Bush administration had deployed a number of linguistic devices to achieve this “manipulation,” central to which was the desire to construct a world view conducive to imperial American policies. Vague, absolutist concepts such as “war,” “terrorism,” and “evil” were commonly identified as particularly problematic when applied to the post-September 11 context.\(^\text{60}\)

On the US side, the notion that the Bush administration had deliberately manipulated the significance of the September 11 attacks in order to pursue ulterior motives came to be particularly prevalent, and the perception of America as “empire” was an integral component of this viewpoint. In 9-11 (2001), for example, Chomsky argued: “The US government is now exploiting the situation to ram through an agenda of militarization, undermining of concerns over the harsh effects of corporate globalization and instituting measures that will intensify the transfer of wealth to the very few” (33-34). Chomsky claimed that nothing positive had resulted from the US-led intervention in Afghanistan, and he maintained that food drops were a “propagandist ploy” (2001:101) used to distract attention away from the thousands of civilians who had died during the invasion. Chomsky argued that no alternatives to bombings were sought because the US wanted to demonstrate its power (2002: 149). Gore Vidal contended that the invasion of Afghanistan was motivated by a desire to control Central Asia and its fuel resources (2002). In his 2003 text Dreaming War: Blood for Oil and the Cheney-Bush Junta Vidal would go as far as to claim that President Bush not only knew that the September 11 attacks were coming, but that he allowed them to happen in the interest of generating a

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\(^{60}\) While it is true that some intellectuals, particularly Jacques Derrida, devoted a great deal of attention to the language structuring the Bush administration’s foreign policy, nowhere did they rigorously compare Bush’s use of language with that of President Chirac.
curtain of patriotism behind which to push through his true agenda (*Buffalo News [New York]*, Jan. 12, 2003).

Among French intellectuals, views such as those just described were not widespread in 2002. No French intellectuals went as far as to claim that Bush actually knew about the terrorist attacks in advance, and allowed them to take place. Indeed, while some French intellectuals accepted, to a degree, that the US reaction was intended as a display of power, some argued that the US was in fact far weaker than it appears, and that the US reaction was symptomatic of this weakness. According to this view, the US depends on periodic interventions fitting the model of the Afghanistan invasion in order to mask its inability to cope with asymmetric terrorist threats. Jean Baudrillard, for example, argued that the Bush administration had instituted a state of war in order to distract attention away from America’s helplessness in the face of the symbolic power of terrorism. In his view, because order is effectively grappling against antagonistic forces scattered everywhere, this amounts to an “affrontement tellement insaisissable qu’il faut de temps en temps sauver l’idée de la guerre par des mises en scène spectaculaires, telles que celles du Golfe ou celle d’Afghanistan” (19). [a confrontation so impossible to pin down that the idea of war has to be resuscitated from time to time by spectacular set-pieces, such as the Gulf War or the war in Afghanistan.] Emmanuel Todd was perhaps the most outspoken proponent of this interpretation of US power in his 2002 book *Après l’empire*. In Todd’s analysis, US power has been grossly exaggerated by commentators such as Chomsky and Fukuyama, and in his view the US puts on a show of theatrical micro-militarism by choosing military and diplomatic actions against puny powers, dubbed for dramatic effect “l’axe du mal” (9). [the axis of evil.] For Todd, America’s reaction to September 11 provided an emblematic example of this logic, according to which al Qaeda is portrayed as an omnipresent and universal terrorist threat, institutionalizing a permanent state of war across the globe (11). In his judgment, the US is trying to maintain a situation of limited but permanent war in order to project an image of strength and importance (10-12). In this way, “Le gros de l’activité militaire américaine se concentre désormais sur le monde musulman, au nom de la ‘lutte contre le

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61 All English translations of passages taken from *Après l’empire* have been taken from the English translation of this book entitled *After the Empire* (2003), translated by C. Jon Delogu.
Another important theme raised by some intellectuals was that the linguistic and conceptual tools being deployed by the Bush administration to describe the post-September 11 context were central to the manipulation which had taken place. The terms “terrorism,” “war,” and “evil” came under particular scrutiny. On the US side, Chomsky, as highlighted earlier, openly referred to the US as a leading terrorist state when one applied the official definition of terrorism, as outlined in the US Code, to US conduct around the world. While Chomsky did not dispute the official US definition of terrorism, he argued that the Bush administration has exploited the term “terrorism” for its propaganda usage, i.e. as a way of selectively designating the enemies of the US and of her allies (2001: 90). He also rejected the application of the term “evil” to terrorists as, he argued, this causes us to overlook the many US crimes that have occurred in the Middle East and elsewhere (2001: 37). With regard to the term “war” Chomsky argued that the absence of a precise definition of this word also made it susceptible to exploitation in that it is conveniently vague enough to be applied in a propagandist manner (2001: 16). Chomsky pointed out “What is taking place now is not a conflict among states, but could become one” (2001: 78). Similarly, in an article appearing in the *New York Times* a year after the attacks entitled “Real Battles and Empty Metaphors” Susan Sontag strongly criticized the application of the term “war” to describe the post-September 11 context, and argued that it amounted to a mandate for expanding the use of American power without limit. In her view, the declaration of war should actually be understood as a declaration of the extension of state power (Sept. 10, 2002).

Of the French intellectuals that I examined for this case study, Jacques Derrida conducted the most detailed analytical investigation into the language and concepts used to talk about the September 11 context. While his criticism of the US was more moderate than that of Chomsky and Sontag, he did highlight what he saw as major problems with many of the terms structuring discussions over the September 11 attacks. In *Le* 62

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62 In the English translation of this book, it is interesting that the translator translates the term “lutte contre le terrorisme” as it appears in Todd’s original French into “war on terrorism” as opposed to “struggle against terrorism,” which is how the French expression should literally be translated.
‘Concept’ du 11 septembre (2004), a text consisting of a series of interviews between Giovanna Borradori, Jacques Derrida and the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, Derrida argued that the conceptual apparatus being used to talk about the September 11 attacks and their aftermath was inappropriate and had the potential of distorting the reality of the post-September 11 world. In an interview conducted less than a month after the attacks, and reprinted in Le ‘concept,’ Derrida argued that the discourses surrounding September 11, including the date itself, had limited our capacity to interpret the event and its meaning (137). In ways not dissimilar to Chomsky, he pointed out that the application of a date to describe the September 11 terrorist attacks served to inflate their significance beyond that of other equally significant events taking place outside the US or European spaces, such as the genocides in Rwanda and Cambodia (142). Derrida described this perceptual gap in terms of hegemony. Specifically, it suggests that the US has become hegemonic not only in the political, economic, and military spheres, but also in system of interpretation, logic, rhetoric, concepts and evaluations which allow us to understand and explain something like ‘September 11’ (143). With regard to the words “war” and “terror,” Derrida argued that the conceptual presuppositions of these terms must be reexamined. In his view, “l’expression ‘guerre contre le terrorisme’ est des plus confuses, et il faut analyser la confusion et les intérêts que cet abus rhétorique prétend servir [...] Bush parle de ‘guerre’, mais il est bien incapable de déterminer l’ennemi auquel il déclare qu’il a déclaré la guerre” (157). [the expression ‘war against terrorism’ is one of the most confused, and we must analyse the confusion and the interests that this rhetorical abuse claims to serve (...) Bush speaks of ‘war’ but is quite incapable of defining the enemy against which he is declaring war.] Derrida argued that the post-September 11 situation could not be accurately classified as a “war” as it does not constitute a conflict between states, a civilian war, or a partisan war.\(^{63}\) He also argued that the term “international terrorism” had become highly problematic as the dominant global powers used it to suit their interests (ibid.): “[...] plus un concept est confus, plus il est docile à son appropriation opportuniste.” [the more that a concept is confused, the more it is susceptible to opportunistic appropriation.] Derrida would

\(^{63}\) Derrida would reiterate this view that the terms “war” and “terrorism” were moribund concepts in his 2003 text *Voyous* (106).
continue to criticize the discourses and concepts surrounding the September 11 attacks into 2004, and argued throughout that our conceptual apparatus for “war” and “terrorism” required urgent revision (L'Humanité, Jan. 27, 2004).

The viewpoints just summarized gained currency once the immediate shock of the September 11 attacks had passed. The dominant attitude emanating most noticeably from US intellectuals interpreted the American response to the attacks through the lens of empire, and argued in many cases that they served as a convenient pretext for expanding an essentially imperialist mission. While most French intellectuals did not express such views at this time, this period did witness a subtle shift in attitudes. In advancing the “America as empire” interpretation, the American group of intellectuals sought to debunk the Bush grand narrative. In a not dissimilar manner, Baudrillard, Todd and Derrida were also seeking to highlight alternative interpretations of US motivations and actions. In all cases, however, it is fair to say that the intellectuals just reviewed were offering a counter-discourse to American power.

The US response to September 11 has been appropriate and necessary -

Defenders of the US reaction to the September 11 attacks typically framed their arguments around the same themes as described earlier, i.e. that given the extreme danger of the various nihilistic forces confronting the US and the Western world in general, the US response has been appropriate and necessary rather than imperialistic. According to this viewpoint, critics of the US were deliberately playing down the importance of the September 11 attacks in order to frame (wrongly) the US as the true danger to global peace and stability. It was also argued by some intellectuals that the language used by the Bush administration to describe the post-September 11 context has not been manipulative or over simplistic, but entirely appropriate given the circumstances. With regard to the term “war,” defenders of the US generally argued that the September 11 attacks could be accurately described as an act of war, and thus, that it was not the US who was defining the nature of the situation, but the terrorists themselves.
Of the intellectuals that I examined for this case study, the French intellectuals Glucksmann and Revel were the most outspoken advocates of this viewpoint. André Glucksmann argued that due to the nature of the diverse nihilistic threats facing the West, the term “war” was appropriate: “Elle n’est pas une ou plusieurs guerres. Elle se dévoile planétairement comme un “état de guerre” (2003: 192). [It is not one or several wars. It is being unveiled a “state of war” on a planetary scale.] Moreover, in his view, the fact that the enemy was not a nation-state did not necessarily mean that the term “war” could not apply to terrorism. Glucksmann argued that if we define a terrorist as “l’homme armé qui agresse délibérément des êtres désarmés” (2003: 77), an armed man who deliberately attacks unarmed people] then the word “guerre” is immediately justified to describe the anti-terrorist struggle. Glucksmann pointed out that Clausewitz described war as “un acte de violence porté à son paroxysme.” [an act of violence carried to its extreme limits.] Glucksmann places terrorism into this category (2003: 79). He traces the history of 20th century conflicts and shows that civilian deaths have increased for each major conflict. He argues that terrorism is effectively the apogee of this trend (2003: 80).

Jean-François Revel also defended the US response to the September 11 attacks, and described the situation as a “full Islamo-terrorist war against democracy in general and the US in particular” (65). He argued that the US reaction to September 11 was neither an imperialistic reflex nor unilateral – it was an appropriate response to the attacks and was at root designed to protect democracy from its totalitarian enemies (55) – a fact which he argued is often overlooked or played down by detractors of US policy (57). Revel defended Bush throughout the post-September 11 period and argued that September 11 attacks have set a new precedent. In his view, given the number of victims that resulted, it resembled a military strike and had the same efficiency as a state power (128). He also defended the appropriateness of the Bush administration’s use of the notion of an “axis of evil.” In Revel’s view, Bush was not reducing all foreign policy concerns to the war on terrorism, but correctly warning the nations of the world that they

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64 Other more moderately pro-American French intellectuals were likewise willing to accept the application of the concept of “war” to the September 11 attacks and the US response. Alain Finkielkraut argued, for example, that “Nous n'avons pas choisi cet ennemi et c'est lui qui mène une guerre à mort contre la civilisation occidentale, capitaliste, mais aussi judéo-chrétienne” (La Croix, Sept. 24, 2001). [We have not chosen this enemy; they and they alone are waging a war to the death against Western capitalist, but also Judeo-Christian, civilization.]
should not shirk facing up to this new and critical challenge (122). In his view, the “pacifists” were deliberately ignoring the essential point: the purpose of the US reaction was not revenge, but defense – the squelching of future terrorism (59). He described the basis of “anti-Americanism” as “a hatred for liberty and for democracy, a hatred only intensified when democracy goes under the name of the United States” (138).

Conclusion - A number of important points emerge from the analysis presented up to here. During the period which preceded the run-up to the Iraq war, intellectual commentary was presented, largely, from two conflicting angles. Those who expressed criticism and/or opposition towards the US (and this was particularly visible from American intellectuals) often did so through the lens of “empire.” According to this interpretation, the US had provoked the attacks through imperialistic actions throughout the world, and was responding to them in an imperialistic manner. In the view of some intellectual commentators, the September 11 attacks were actually beneficial to the Bush administration, and manipulated for their propaganda value, in that they could serve as a pretext for furthering long-standing imperial goals.

Supporters of the US, by contrast, rejected the above interpretation and saw it as fundamentally anti-American in basis. In their view, the attacks could not be put down to rational underlying causes such as humiliation or anti-American resentment, and given the new threat posed by international terrorism, it was argued that the Bush administration was fully justified in adopting new measures to tackle it. Contrary to what one might have expected to find, the most consistent proponents of the pro-American position were French intellectuals.

Iraq war themes and counter themes

By mid-2002, the ongoing debates over the meaning of September 11 and the exercise of American power in response to international terrorism had intersected with discussions over the Bush administration’s intentions to invade Iraq. The Iraq war led to a sustained phase of intellectual engagement in both France and the US, and as Tzvetan Todorov (2003) has observed, the positions which emerged were ultimately
ireconcilable even though they were often based on an appeal to the same ideals, notably
the democratic order and human rights (1).

Two conflicting attitudes came to dominate intellectual commentary surrounding
Iraq. The first condemned the war and saw it as a stark illustration of American
imperialism. Those who adopted this view frequently argued that the case for war as
constructed by the Bush administration was not only flawed, but was, in fact, based on a
series of lies. Bernard-Henri Lévy, who had strongly supported the US after September
11, including Bush’s intervention in Afghanistan, encapsulated this position when he
described the war as “le plus absurde des mensonges d'Etat de ces dernières années […]
ce Watergate à l'échelle de la planète” (*Le Point*, July 25, 2003). [the most absurd state
lie in recent years (...) this Watergate on a planetary scale.] This attitude came to
dominate intellectual opinion in both countries from mid-2002 onwards, and it
represented a notable shift for numerous intellectuals in France who had initially
expressed strong support for the US in the aftermath of September 11.

The second attitude was strongly pro-American, and it closely mirrored the
official rationale for war put forward by the Bush administration in that it condemned the
dictatorship of Saddam Hussein and argued that his removal was necessary for three main
reasons; 1) because there were strong grounds to suspect that he possessed WMD, 2)
because it was not only conceivable, but likely that he would be willing to use these
weapons against the US or grant access to them to terrorist organizations, and 3) because
he had already committed a catalogue of atrocities against his own population, and could
do so again. This final point was argued with particular insistence by pro-war
intellectuals, and it was presented primarily through the lens of what is known in
international law as “the right of interference” (“droit d’ingérence” in French). From this
point of view, it was argued that the humanitarian rationale in itself provided ample
justification for the removal of Saddam Hussein (including the breach of state
sovereignty that this would involve) given the crimes that he had committed against his
civilian population. Under this logic, Saddam’s removal from power would, in their
view, resemble the NATO-led intervention in Kosovo.

However, as I have noted, this second attitude was not at all widespread among
intellectuals in either France or the US. As illustrated in the two tables below, of the
twenty intellectuals that I examined for this case study, only four supported the war: Paul Berman on the US side, and Pascal Bruckner, André Glucksmann, and Jean-François Revel on the French side. The remaining sixteen opposed the war and (with the exception of Francis Fukuyama) were all on the left.

Table 12 - Intellectuals supporting the Iraq War

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Table 13 - Intellectuals opposing the Iraq War

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While I do not include him in my corpus of French intellectuals, as he is not commonly referred to as an “intellectual” in the French media, the film-maker Romain Goupil was also a vocal supporter of the Iraq war and was featured in several joint press articles with Glucksmann and Bruckner during the time period under analysis.
Table 13 continued

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Of the four pro-war intellectuals noted above, Pascal Bruckner would subsequently reverse his position in 2004 in the light of the Abu Ghraib torture scandal. Having said this, while there was unquestionably far more consensus between French and American intellectuals over Iraq than there was over the meaning of September 11, it is noteworthy that the most insistent voices of support for the war came from French intellectuals.

My analysis for this section proceeds in the following manner. Firstly I examine the ways in which intellectuals responded to the official rationale behind the war, along with their expectations of how the war would turn out. Secondly I contrast how opponents of the war described what they saw as the true, hidden logic behind it (and what they felt this tells us about the nature of US power) with the counter-viewpoint which often criticized European (and French) passivity in the face of Saddam Hussein. Finally I analyze the ways in which pro- and anti-war intellectuals discussed the current structure of international law and its intersection with American power.

_Iraq does not pose a threat_ - A key theme raised by opponents of the war maintained that Saddam Hussein did not pose an imminent threat to the US or to anyone
else. Those who adopted this position argued that there was no concrete evidence to suggest that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction, and that even if evidence was found, then Iraq’s case should be handled through the United Nations rather than by a “unilateral” US attack. There was a strong consensus on this point between French and American intellectuals.

Stanley Hoffmann, for example, argued that “Iraq is effectively defanged and incapable of constituting a real threat to us or its neighbors as long as we operate freely in two no-fly zones.” In his view, containment was the best way of handling Iraq, and he concluded that “War is not necessary to render Iraq harmless to others” (*The Boston Globe*, Mar. 13, 2003). Tzvetan Todorov shared this assessment, and argued that all of the contentions that Saddam Hussein represented an imminent danger had been greatly exaggerated (2003). Régis Debray went even further, and stated that Iraq posed no threat at all. He vehemently rejected any comparisons with the appeasement of Hitler at Munich, and described the underlying conditions in Iraq as “Une dictature isolée, une population affamée, une armée écoutée, quadrillée et contrôlée, qui ne peut même pas empêcher le bombardement régulier de son territoire, un PNB ridicule - cela ne fait pas l'Allemagne de 1939” (*Le Point*, Feb. 28, 2003). [An isolated dictatorship, a starving population, a weakened, marginalized and controlled army which cannot even prevent the regular bombing of its territory, a derisory GNP – this is not the same as the Germany of 1939.] Noam Chomsky (2003a: 41) and Jean-François Kahn (78) highlighted that Iraq was one of weakest states in the region following the first Gulf war, and ten years of economic sanctions.

While some commentators did not go as far as to suggest that Iraq posed no threat at all (indeed, Hoffmann acknowledged that at least some steps were necessary to ensure that Saddam Hussein was contained), the overwhelming majority of intellectuals in France and the US argued that there were alternatives to war which needed to be fully exhausted before resorting to armed conflict. After the removal of Saddam Hussein, numerous intellectuals pointed out that subsequent events had validated the anti-war position, given that no weapons of mass destruction were ever found.

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66 Numerous commentators drew precisely this comparison during the run-up to the Iraq invasion.
The apparent absence of any imminent danger from Iraq led Emmanuel Todd to conclude that the true rationale behind the US invasion was to put on a show of strength in order to mask America’s underlying vulnerability and weakness. Todd described the US logic for invading Iraq as “une fiction – je l'appelle le ‘micro-militarisme théâtral,’” [a fiction – I call it “theatrical micro-militarism”] designed to perpetuate the illusion that the US remained central to global affairs. The weak adversary selected by the US was proof of this in Todd’s view (Le Temps, Jan. 17, 2003). Chomsky made a similar observation, and remarked that Bush’s desire to declare war on Iraq illustrated America’s tendency to only attack weaker powers.

Thus the group of intellectuals arguing this point positioned themselves directly in opposition to the Bush administration, and sought to expose what they saw as the lies underpinning this aspect of Bush’s rationale for war. The central underlying argument was that the Bush administration had deliberately exaggerated the dangers posed by Saddam Hussein, and was arrogantly dismissing any alternatives to military intervention, in order to pursue an imperialistic set of goals.

_Iraq does pose a threat to the West and to his own population_ - In response to claims that Saddam Hussein did not represent a danger to the international community, the small group of pro-American intellectuals identified earlier strongly disagreed with this assessment and pointed out that Saddam Hussein’s track record gave the US every reason to suspect that he possessed weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and biological weapons. It was also pointed out that his history of aggression, including the Iran/Iraq war of the 1980s and the 1990-1991 invasion of Kuwait illustrated the dangerous and aggressive nature of the Ba’athist regime.

Jean-François Revel was the most outspoken proponent of this viewpoint. In September 2002 he argued that an attack on Iraq would not be preventive in nature, as it would represent a continuation of the war started by Saddam in 1990. Moreover, Revel maintained that the war would be legitimate from a legal perspective as it would be based upon his non-compliance with UN resolutions on disarmament. For Revel, Saddam Hussein’s evasive behavior in itself suggested that he had something to hide, as it was well known that he had committed the worst of his atrocities not with nuclear weapons,
but with chemical and biological weapons. For this reason, Revel pointed out that Iraq could hardly be considered as belonging to the “axe du bien,” [the axis of good] and that it was Saddam who was destabilizing the region, not the US (Le Point, Sept. 20, 2002). Pascal Bruckner echoed this sentiment, and stated a month prior to the outbreak of war: “Cet homme qui règne par la terreur avec des méthodes dignes des plus grands psychopaties du XXe siècle, ce dictateur laïc responsable de deux conflits meurtriers contre l'Iran et le Koweït et qui profite aujourd'hui de l'embargo pour affamer sa population, reste un danger pour la nation irakienne et la région (Le Monde, Feb. 4, 2003). [This man who reigns through terror, through methods worthy of the greatest psychopaths of the 20th century, this secular dictator responsible for two murderous conflicts against Iraq and Kuwait, who is using the current embargo to starve his population, remains a danger for the Iraqi nation and for the region.] Revel continued to voice his support for the war into September 2003, describing Saddam as “l'un des dictateurs les plus cruels du XXe siècle” (Le Figaro, Sept. 8, 2003). [one of the most cruel dictators of the 20th century.] He also argued that the fact that weapons of mass destruction had not been found did not invalidate the preventive US intervention since it was well known that Saddam had possessed chemical weapons. As such, an invasion would represent “l'application du principe de précaution [...] Si nous autres Européens vénérons le principe de précaution quand il s'agit de la vache pourquoi ne pas l'appliquer lorsqu'il s'agit d'un dictateur ?” (ibid.) [The application of the principle of precaution (...) If we Europeans venerate the principle of precaution when it comes to cattle, why not apply it when it comes to a dictator?]

André Glucksmann agreed that the WMD argument was an important reason to remove Saddam Hussein, and argued that no manipulation had occurred in reference to this. In his 2003 book Ouest contre ouest, Glucksmann argued that Bush had not lied about the existence of weapons of mass destruction as he genuinely believed that they did actually exist. For Glucksmann, the fact that no WMD were found should be seen as an error rather than deception, and he pointed out that everyone at the UN was acting as
though it was a given that Saddam was transgressing international agreements on disarmament (50). 67

Thus for these pro-war intellectuals, the primary focus of concern lay not in US imperialism (they vehemently rejected this interpretation of the Iraq invasion) but in the dangers posed by Saddam Hussein. They supported the notion of preventive action on the basis that the potential dangers posed by the regime necessitated international intervention. In highlighting these dangers, their pronouncements represented in many ways a counter-discourse to what they saw as the anti-American attitudes put forward by anti-war protesters, which had incorrectly diagnosed the situation and failed to appreciate that a genuine danger existed for the west, for the Iraqi people and for the region. As with their interpretation of the September 11 terrorists, these intellectuals sought to shift attention back onto the true enemy as they saw it, i.e. the evil of Saddam Hussein’s regime.

_The link between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda does not exist_ - A second argument raised by many anti-war intellectuals concerning the official US rationale for war was that, because no concrete evidence existed to show that Saddam Hussein represented a threat to the international community, the Bush administration had invented a link between al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein in order to provide a legitimate pretext for war, and to generate domestic and international support for this line of action. Again, there was a strong consensus between French and American intellectuals on this point.

Jean Baudrillard, for example, argued that a process of substitution had taken place according to which the Bush administration was seeking to avenge September 11 by attacking Iraq (L’Humanité, Feb. 22, 2003). Norman Mailer adopted a similar position, and argued that America’s failure to destroy al Qaeda and locate bin Laden led the administration to target Iraq (36). In Mailer’s view, the Iraq invasion served to “gratify our need to avenge September 11 [...] It does not matter that Iraq is not the culprit [...] September 11 was evil, Saddam is evil, all evil is connected. Ergo, Iraq” (55).

67 Although he would oppose the war in Iraq due to his belief that the US nation-building exercise would fail, Francis Fukuyama conceded that the “non proliferation” rationale did constitute an important reason for removing Saddam Hussein. In comments appearing in the Daily Yomiuri [Tokyo], (Mar. 18, 2002) he described Saddam Hussein as “evil” and “dangerous,” responsible for launching two unprovoked wars against his neighbors, and guilty of massacring his own population.
Jean-François Kahn went further, and contended that war had been prepared before September 11, which served as nothing more than a catalyst. In Kahn’s view, war was presented as a means of counteracting the terrorist threat, but in reality the link between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda was constructed (79). Similarly, Chomsky argued that Iraq had been depicted as representing an imminent threat to the US, and that the Bush administration’s invention of a link between Saddam Hussein and September 11 had served to shift attitudes and create a context in which the new preventive war doctrine could be tried out (3). For Chomsky, September 11 provided the opportunity for Bush to achieve long-standing imperialist goals (109). Hoffmann also situated the Iraq war against what he saw as a pre-existing imperialist agenda, and argued that this agenda dated back to Reagan (42). In his words, the “Bush administration exploited the shock and awe of September 11, explained that Saddam’s WMD posed a serious threat to the nation, and exploited the idea that there existed a link between Saddam and al Qaeda” (67). Hoffmann maintained that the assimilation of Iraq to terrorism had become a central component of the American government’s position, and in effect, that Bush had invented the formula “Iraq equals terrorism” to create an obligation of loyalty from her allies (9). Hoffmann argued that the Bush administration had exaggerated the significance of September 11 to give it a global, undifferentiated meaning (34) leading, potentially, to the indefinite extension of the “war against terrorism” due to its vagueness.

The common thread underpinning these interpretations of the Iraq war was that a non-existent threat had been constructed by the Bush administration to simultaneously address the need to avenge the September 11 attacks, and to fulfill a pre-existing imperialist agenda. In highlighting this hidden sub-text to the war, these intellectuals were directly counter-acting and (in their view) debunking the Bush administration’s false claims.

A link between Saddam Hussein and terrorism exists - The counter-argument to this position emerged most visibly through the discourses of André Glucksmann and Paul Berman. While neither of them claimed that a direct link between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda existed, Berman and Glucksmann took the view that al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein reflected the same nihilistic tendency, and should thus be approached in the same
manner. Glucksmann argued, for example, that Saddam Hussein and bin Laden were linked, not as allies, but as tyrants who were striving for the same goal, who used the same methods, and presented the same danger to the world (*Le Figaro*, Sept. 19, 2002). Similarly, Paul Berman described the Islamic extremist movement as popular and institutionally solid, with the potential of striking up an alliance with Saddam Hussein’s Ba’ath movement (*New York Times*, Mar. 23, 2003[a]).

Much of Glucksmann’s defense of the Iraq invasion rested on his interpretation of the September 11 attacks, and the new nihilistic global climate which he felt that this had initiated. Glucksmann consistently argued that in ignoring the underlying dynamics of the present context, opponents of the war were “les nostalgiques” or “les attardés du 10 septembre 2001,” (*Le Monde*, Apr.5, 2003; 2003: 28) [nostalgic of / still stuck in a September 10, 2001 mindset] whereas he described supporters of the war as “les réveillés du 11” (ibid). [Those who have awoken to the realities of September 11.] In his 2003 book *Ouest contre ouest*, Glucksmann summarized the stakes of September 11 and the Iraq War as follows: “Thèse de la pensée du 10 septembre: les guerres sont antédiluviennes, le temps travaille pour les patients et les prudents; la paix, la loi et l’ordre d’abord, la liberté suivra. Thèse de la pensée du 11 septembre: le temps est sorti de ses gonds, il faut oser penser: la liberté d’abord, la paix, difficilement suivra” (101). [Thesis of the September 10 school of thought: wars are antediluvian, time works for those who are patient and prudent; peace, law and order first, liberty will follow. Thesis of the September 11 school of thought: time has become unhinged, we must dare to think: liberty first, peace will follow with difficulty.] Thus for Glucksmann, the existence of the September 11 terrorists and dictators such as Saddam Hussein both raised the same fundamental questions over liberty. In recognizing this fact, the US was correctly tackling terrorism and dictators under one unified strategy:

Le 11 septembre, l'évidence imposa un gigantesque tournant dans la politique américaine. Auparavant, le respect des tyrannies établies passait pour garantir la sécurité mondiale. En découvrant combien de despotismes nourrissent les terroristes, les Américains ont compris [...] que leur sécurité passait par la liberté des peuples” (*Le Monde*, Sept. 5, 2003[a]).
With September 11, the evidence imposed a major shift in American policy. Previously, the respect for established tyrannies was deemed acceptable to guarantee world security. Through discovering how much despots nourish terrorists, the Americans have understood [...] that their security can only be ensured through the liberation of peoples.

As previously noted, Paul Berman’s position on Iraq shared numerous parallels with that expressed by Glucksmann in that he also considered the fight against al Qaeda and dictators such as Saddam Hussein to be part of the same struggle against totalitarianism. As neatly summarized by Danny Postel in an April 2003 article appearing in the Washington Post, Berman argued that despite their points of divergence, the fundamentalist rage of bin Laden and the secular ethnic ambitions of the Ba'ath party represent “two branches of a single impulse.” Berman identified this impulse as a shared and extreme antipathy toward liberalism. In Berman’s view, both of these branches are antidemocratic, intolerant and authoritarian to the core. And in their nihilistic celebration of death, Berman argues, they are ideologies of terror (Washington Post, Apr. 6, 2003). In a 2004 article, Berman continued to maintain that “this war has always been central to the broader war on terror. That is because terror has never been a matter of a few hundred crazies who could be rounded up by the police and special forces. Terror grows out of something larger - an enormous wave of political extremism” (New York Times, Apr. 15, 2004).

Although Berman considers himself to be a left wing intellectual, whereas Glucksmann is customarily situated on the right by most commentators, they both interpreted the importance of September 11 and the existence of extremist regimes in a broadly absolutist manner, which accounts for the interconnection that they both draw between these “totalitarian” movements. It was this underlying concern that structured their common stance during the time period under analysis.

*The humanitarian rationale is flawed* - A third point frequently raised by intellectuals opposing the war concerned the ostensibly “humanitarian” aspect of this
intervention. While it is true that none of the intellectuals reviewed in this case study expressed support for Saddam Hussein, or indeed rejected the notion that he was a tyrant responsible for human rights abuses and aggression against his neighboring countries, it was frequently argued that the humanitarian rationale as it was being used by the Bush administration represented a distraction designed to draw attention away from the fact that an attack on Iraq would be illegitimate from the perspective of existing international law. The progressive deployment of this distraction was, in effect, inversely proportional to the gradual discrediting of the WMD/nuclear proliferation rationale, and more specifically, was necessary to compensate for the lack of any real evidence to suggest that Saddam Hussein posed an imminent threat to the international community. There was a high degree of consensus between French and American intellectuals on this point.

Jean-François Kahn provided a detailed analysis of this process of manipulation, as he saw it, in his 2004 text *Le Camp de la guerre*. Here, he argued that because no WMD was found, and because Saddam never supported al Qaeda, the Iraq invasion had to be framed as a war of liberation (126-7). He also maintained that the humanitarian argument was invalid as the Iraqi people could have removed Saddam Hussein by themselves. Kahn went as far as to claim that the US systematically prevented the Iraqi people from liberating themselves after the First Gulf War as they could not guarantee a pro-US government (166). Todorov (2003) offered a similar assessment of the humanitarian aspect of the Iraq invasion, and pointed out that “en Amérique latine, le gouvernement américain s’est accommodé, pendant de longues années, des dictatures militaires – quand il n’a pas contribué à les mettre en place (23). [In Latin American, the American government has accommodated military dictatorships for many years, when it did not contribute to setting them up in the first place.] He also highlighted the fact that the US has close relations with many non-democratic regimes such as Pakistan and Saudi Arabia (ibid). Other intellectuals observed that the US has done nothing to stop the

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68 Kahn argued that all totalitarian regimes fall eventually due to internal factors, and in his book he made references to around 30 countries that have successfully democratized themselves over the course of the last 50 years without foreign intervention (129-132).

69 All English translations of Todorov’s 2003 book *Le Nouveau désordre mondial* have been taken from the English translation of this text entitled *The New World Disorder* (2005) translated by Andrew Brown.
ongoing de facto genocide being perpetrated by Russia in Chechnya which again sheds doubt on the true sincerity of Bush’s commitment to humanitarian causes per se.

Numerous anti-war intellectuals in both France and the US pointed out the inconsistency with which American leaders have traditionally approached humanitarian questions. It was often pointed out, for example, that Saddam Hussein committed his worst atrocities during the 1980s at a time when the US was an ally of Iraq. This point was raised insistently by Jean-François Kahn (2004: 29; 147; 158), Pierre Vidal-Naquet (L'Humanité, Nov. 14, 2002), Régis Debray (Le Point, Feb. 28, 2003), and Stanley Hoffmann (The Boston Globe, Mar. 13, 2003). These intellectuals argued that the fact that Saddam Hussein had not committed any comparable atrocities in recent years meant, firstly, that any humanitarian intervention would not be in response to an ongoing (or imminent) massacre, and secondly that the US was not genuinely concerned with liberating the Iraqi population from dictatorship as this could have been undertaken legitimately while the atrocities were taking place, or following the 1991 Gulf War. For Todorov, the reason for these inconsistencies in US policy with regard to humanitarian interventions lies in the fact that the key overriding concern for American leaders has always primarily been national security, rather than bringing liberty to others. In his words: “il n’est nullement certain que cette liberté-là accroisse la sécurité intérieure des États-Unis, et serve donc leur intérêt national (23-24). [It is by no means certain that this liberty will increase the internal security of the United States and serve their national interest.]”

In Chomsky’s view, the framing of the Iraq war as a humanitarian intervention served to camouflage the US’s true imperialist intention. He pointed out that there have been many examples over the course of the 20th century of so-called “humanitarian interventions” such as Hitler’s attack on Czechoslovakia, Mussolini’s invasion of Ethiopia, Japan’s actions in Manchuria and North China, and those of the US in Vietnam (2003a: 46).

For Stanley Hoffmann, the humanitarian aspect of the Iraq invasion did not, in fact, change the fact that preventive war and forcible regime change violate international law and the respect of state sovereignty. Hoffmann argued that international law should

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70 See for example, Vidal-Naquet, L’Humanité, (Nov. 14, 2002).
have been respected as this type of action could give any nation a legitimate pretext for eliminating, without any mandate, an undesirable regime (49). Sontag agreed that the humanitarian logic was highly problematic as there was no way of knowing how far this logic could be extended, nor by whom.

Thus in much the same way as they sought to expose what they considered to be the hidden imperialist logic underpinning the other aspects of Bush’s rationale for war, these anti-war intellectuals also sought to debunk the humanitarian element of this intervention as it was being advanced by the Bush administration.

The humanitarian argument is valid - Despite the battery of objections raised by anti-war intellectuals concerning the humanitarian basis of the Iraq intervention as outlined above, intellectuals who supported the war tended to place a great deal of emphasis on this aspect of the officiale rationale. Indeed, it was often argued that the “droit d’ingérence” [the right of interference] constituted the single most important reason for removing Saddam Hussein from power. The French intellectuals André Glucksmann and Pascal Bruckner were particularly insistent on this point.

In Glucksmann’s view, the number one reason for war was “la défense des droits de l'homme et l'assistance à un peuple en grand danger. Ceux-là mêmes qui, depuis son [i.e. Saddam Hussein’s] arrestation, demandent que l'ancien maître de Bagdad soit jugé pour crime contre l'humanité rejoignent avec quel retard ! cet argument. Ils reconnaissent implicitement qu'il fallait intervenir en Irak” (Le Figaro Dec. 22, 2003). [the defense of human rights and assistance to a population in great danger. Those who, since Saddam Hussein’s arrest demand that the former master of Baghdad be tried for crimes against humanity are validating (and how late they are!) this argument. They recognize implicitly that it was necessary to intervene in Iraq.] In response to those who had pointed out inconsistencies with regard to US humanitarian interventions, Glucksmann replied that it would be inconsistent not to intervene, as all of the elements which had justified, for example, the humanitarian intervention in Kosovo were also present in the case of Iraq. In Ouest contre ouest, Glucksmann criticized the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas for having supported the non-UN sanctioned intervention in Serbia but for opposing the Iraq war. Glucksmann highlighted that Habermas had supported action
in Kosovo on 3 grounds: 1) due to the urgent need to stop ethnic cleansing, 2) to assist a population in distress, and 3) to support the democratic opponents of Milosevic. Glucksmann argued that not only did Iraq qualify on all three of these counts, but that Saddam Hussein was a far worse dictator than Milosevic (59). Pascal Bruckner agreed that only military action could end Saddam’s tyranny: “Vient un moment où une population est tellement imprégnée et brisée par une dictature qu'elle ne peut plus se révolter. Elle doit tout attendre d'un secours extérieur” (*Le Figaro*, Mar. 25, 2003). [A time comes where a population is so impregnated and broken by a dictatorship that it can no longer revolt, making it utterly reliant on outside help.]

Much of Glucksmann’s opposition to the anti-war position rested on his contention that it was inherently pacifistic in nature, and, in his view, based on an underlying desire to avoid war under any circumstances. He argued, for example, that “pacifists” will always find a reason to oppose any armed intervention. According to this line of argument, when a “cynical dictator” like Saddam Hussein or Kim Jong Il says he has nuclear weapons, the pacifists cave in and say it is too late for intervention. When a dictator does not yet have the bomb, they say that it is too early for intervention. On this logic, we are always wrongly positioned in relation to an emergency situation (2003: 61). Glucksmann argued that it is strategically prudent to attack a criminal at his moment of weakness rather than to wait until a situation explodes. The primary obstacle to this type of action, he argued, is that international law prioritizes state sovereignty over the rights of populations to live in freedom. Glucksmann pointed out that all too often, the right of people to independence falls beneath the right of a dictator to kill with impunity (91). In his words:

Deux génocides récents - Cambodge et Rwanda - fondent la nécessité du droit d'ingérence qui justement fixe des limites: nul ne saurait impunément massacrer à l'intérieur de ses frontières ni prendre le pouvoir par le terrorisme et l'exercer par la terreur. Guerre humanitaire et guerre contre le terrorisme sont une seule et même chose; liberté des peuples, droits des hommes et sécurité de tous vont de pair. La paix est à ce prix (*Le Monde*, Sept. 5, 2003[a]).
Two recent genocides - Cambodia and Rwanda – demonstrate the necessity of the right of interference which, correctly, fixes certain limits: no one should be allowed to massacre, inside his borders, with impunity nor to take power through terrorism and the exercise of terror. Humanitarian war and war against terrorism are one and the same thing; the liberty of peoples, human rights and security go together. Peace is at this price.

This quotation starkly illustrates Glucksmann’s “universalist” posture with respect to both terrorism and humanitarian crises, and specifically his belief that the stipulations of international law should not supercede the fundamental rights of populations in distress. It also demonstrates his belief that the “war on terrorism” is, at root, a humanitarian policy aimed at defending the human rights of vulnerable populations. He would argue at numerous points in his post-September 11 commentary that the Bush administration should, in fact, have advanced the humanitarian justification for war more forcefully than they did, but was obligated, due to a passive international community, to base its official rationale on other less central points (such as the danger that Saddam posed to the world) as this was the only way in which international support could be effectively galvanized. The humanitarian rationale alone, Glucksmann argued, would have been insufficient in generating this international consensus (2003). With reference to this apparently widespread disinterest in the humanitarian basis for war, Glucksmann went so far as to argue that those who opposed the war in Iraq were, in fact, supporting dictatorship and prolonging a “status-quo mortel” (2003: 42) [a deadly status quo.] In response to anti-war protesters who often highlighted inconsistencies in US policy on humanitarian matters, Glucksmann retorted that numerous members of the anti-war alliance had also been guilty of humanitarian abuses and a disregard of international law. He identified China’s actions in Tibet and Syria’s occupation of Lebanon as examples of this hypocrisy (Le Monde, Apr. 5, 2003). He also argued that in narrowly focusing all attention on Iraq, anti-war protesters were in fact ignoring numerous other global contexts raising comparable humanitarian issues. Unlike anti-war intellectuals who pointed to Bush’s
unwillingness to intervene in Chechnya as evidence that US policy-makers were not concerned with defending populations in distress, Glucksmann argued that the ongoing events in Chechnya actually demonstrated inconsistency on the part of opponents of the Iraq war. Glucksmann stated:


Democratic governments, much like the millions of protesters “against the war” who take to the streets against Bush, but never against Putin, are guilty of non-assistance towards a population that is in the process of being exterminated. Indifferent, but not ignorant, since they know what is going on […] We know about the executioners, we see the victims: four years of massacres, of savagery, of terror and horror do not take place unnoticed. In the final analysis, we do not care.

Pascal Bruckner made exactly the same point with regard to the ongoing war in Chechnya, and stated:

71 While Bernard-Henri Lévy vehemently opposed the war in Iraq, he did acknowledge that anti-war protesters were inconsistent when they ignored Chechnya: “[…] des millions de gens descendant dans la rue pour stigmatiser une guerre qui a fait quelques centaines de morts - pas un, dans aucune manifestation au monde, pour avoir un mot de protestation contre cette autre guerre qui dure, elle, depuis dix ans et a fait des centaines de milliers de victimes” (Le Point, Apr. 4, 2003). [Millions of people take to the streets to stigmatize a war which has resulted in a few hundred deaths, but not one single protest across the globe raises one word of protest against this other war which has been ongoing for ten years, and has resulted in hundreds of thousands of victims.]

Conversely, how unlucky it is for a population to be massacred by a power other than America: their extermination unfolds in a climate of general indifference (the Chechens and the Tibetans know something about this). The eternal paradox of pacifism is that, seemingly with the best of intentions, it prefers to maintain a tyranny in power rather than risk the disorder arising from its possible removal. In the present case, that means criminalizing George W. Bush and by the same token disculpating the Iraqi head of State.

Similarly, Jean-François Revel remarked that the position defended by the “camp de la paix” (peace camp) was highly inconsistent, and illustrated an underlying anti-American tendency:

L'expression ‘camp de la paix’ m’a toujours fait sourire. Avez-vous vu les manifestants qui en font partie se mobiliser contre le génocide qui se déroule au Soudan depuis près de vingt ans et qui a fait plus d'un million de morts ? Ou contre les massacres en série qui se sont déroulés en Sierra Leone ou au Liberia? Ce ne sont pas des manifestants pour la paix mais des manifestants anti-américains (Le Figaro, Sept. 8, 2003).

The expression “peace camp” has always made me smile. Have you ever seen the these protesters mobilize against the genocide which has been ongoing in Sudan for almost twenty years, resulting in more than a million
deaths? Or against the successive massacres that have taken place in Sierra Leone or in Liberia? These are not protesters for peace, but anti-American protesters.

The key point which emerges from this strand of pro-war argument as it was articulated by Revel, Glucksmann and Bruckner is that they each went to great lengths to re-situate discussions over Iraq back onto the overriding issue as they saw it, i.e. the humanitarian imperative connected to this line of action. By drawing attention to the underlying centrality of the human rights component of the war, they each sought to highlight the inherently contradictory basis of the anti-war position. For these intellectuals, the fact that anti-war protesters (and more specifically anti-war intellectuals) were apparently deliberately ignoring other global contexts raising comparable humanitarian issues, the conclusion that one had to draw was that those defending the anti-war position were actually using the Iraq War as a platform for expressing anti-American sentiments. Thus from this point of view, it was not the US that was acting in a contradictory manner through intervening in Iraq, but those who opposed this legitimate line of action.

*The outcome of an invasion of Iraq will be catastrophic, and the risk is not worth taking* - While opponents of the war generally acknowledged that the removal of dictatorships and the spreading of democracy are desirable goals in principle, it was often argued that the outcome of the Iraq War would almost certainly be catastrophic, and would result in a wave of terrorism, a surge in anti-Western resentment, and civil war among the Iraqi population. This view was particularly prevalent among French intellectuals.

Alain Finkielkraut (*Le Temps*, Jan. 17, 2003) and Bernard-Henri Lévy (*Le Point*, Feb. 14, 2003) both argued that the Iraq war raised a major dilemma in that it was in their view morally justified but remained a politically disastrous exercise. Jean Baudrillard argued that even a victory would result in humiliation, hatred, and a desire for revenge in many parts of the world. Moreover, it could serve to radicalize moderate regimes in the Middle East (*L'Humanité*, Feb. 22, 2003). Pierre Vidal-Naquet feared that the war could
turn Saddam Hussein into a “vrai martyr de l'impérialisme” (*L'Humanité*, Nov. 14, 2002). [a true martyr of imperialism.]

The post-war situation confirmed these fears in the minds of many intellectuals. Jean-François Kahn argued that the invasion had unleashed more terrorism instead of reducing it (80). Régis Debray described the outcome of the war in terms of a “lose-lose situation” in that the very presence of the US in Iraq was a source of instability, but its departure would undoubtedly result in a civil war and the fragmentation of the Iraqi population (*Le Figaro*, Sept. 5, 2003). Tzvetan Todorov (2003) acknowledged that international terrorism had been weakened by the Afghanistan invasion, but argued that the Iraq invasion had not had the same effect. In his view, the war had led to a situation of anarchy which, when combined with the presence of a foreign military, could ultimately end up being worse than tyranny. He also felt that the emerging political system and government – whether Islamic or secular – may still be hostile to US and European interests (*Le Monde*, Sept. 5, 2003[b]). With respect to the “droit d’ingérence” as advocated by Glucksmann, Todorov argued that interventions of this kind actually created more problems than they resolved, and that if this rationale was applied globally to all dictators, it would result in a permanent state of global war (28). Thus the underlying concern reflected in this line of argument was over the negative repercussions that this would almost certainly have for the United States, and the West more generally.

It was also widely felt that the introduction of democracy would be so problematic that the entire enterprise was not worth the risk. While even the most staunch opponents of the war agreed that democracy in Iraq would be a desirable goal in principle, numerous intellectuals maintained that it was arrogant to believe that democracy could be introduced from the outside into such an ethnically divided country with no experience of democracy, and in a region replete with anti-American resentment.

In the preface to the new edition of his landmark text *Orientalism* (2003) Edward Said drew direct parallels between the orientalist attitudes of 19th and 20th century colonialists and those of the current leaders of the United States. In his words:

> What American leaders and their intellectual lackeys seem incapable of understanding is that history cannot be swept clean like a blackboard, so
that “we” might inscribe our own future there and impose our own forms of life for these lesser people to follow. It is quite common to hear high officials in Washington and elsewhere speak of changing the map of the Middle East, as if ancient societies and myriad peoples can be shaken up like so many peanuts in a jar.

Tzvetan Todorov agreed that it was naïve to think that democracy could be introduced like a “commercial product” in Iraq (28).

Norman Mailer described the US attempt to introduce democracy - by force - into a country which has never been a nation as “monstrous arrogance” (70). Jean-François Kahn argued that modern democracies have not flourished after intervention from foreign powers but on the refusal of foreign occupation. Rather, he contended, democracies emerge from within after a long maturation process (215). Further, in Iraq, the people do not support the liberal democratic model, but the Islamic Republic model (ibid).

Stanley Hoffmann echoed this view and pointed out that Iraq is not an ideal space for democracy due to the ethnic cleavages present there (102). In his view, the notion that Saddam Hussein’s overthrow could bring democracy to Iraq and then spread to the rest of the Arab world was a fantasy (The Boston Globe, Mar. 13, 2003). In addition to this, Hoffmann argued that a democratic Iraq was not the true goal of the Bush administration as there could be no guarantee that a democratically elected government would adopt a pro-American line. In Hoffmann’s view, the US did not actually desire a democratic Iraq, but a “friendly” Iraq conducive to US policy in the region (103).

Fukuyama’s opposition to the war in Iraq was based, not on his rejection of the nation-building exercise per se, but his belief that Iraq would not be capable of sustaining a liberal democracy in the long run, and his view that the US has not historically been effective at nation-building (The Australian, June 29, 2004).

Thus in summary, the above arguments contained two main objections to the ostensible “nation-building” element of the Iraq intervention. Firstly, it was argued that the outcome would work to the detriment of the US and of the West, and secondly, it was argued that the exercise of introducing democracy would have catastrophic effects on the
domestic population which already harbored great resentment against the US, and was so ethnically divided that the situation would quickly descend into civil war.

*The risks inherent in the Iraq invasion are worth taking – democracy can be successfully introduced in Iraq* - Intellectuals who supported the war generally argued that given the nature of the Iraqi regime and the crimes committed by Saddam Hussein, the risks involved in removing him were worth taking. It was also often argued that democracy – while difficult to introduce in the Islamic world - could flourish in the region, and that this scenario should not be automatically discounted in the manner that it had been by anti-war intellectuals.  

Paul Berman, for example, echoed the position articulated frequently by the Bush administration in that he felt that democracy could spread throughout the region if it was introduced in Iraq. In his words:

> The whole point in overthrowing Saddam Hussein, from my perspective, was to achieve those large possibilities [i.e. liberal democracy] right in the center of the Muslim world, where the ripples might lead in every direction. Iraq was a logical place to begin because, for a dozen years, the Ba’athists had been shooting at American and British planes, and inciting paranoia and hatred against the United States, and encouraging the idea that attacks can successfully be launched against American targets [...] *(New York Times, Apr. 15, 2004).*

He also argued that the outcome of World War II proves that democracy can be successfully installed from the outside in nations that had been living under dictatorship. Berman pointed to the progress made in Afghanistan subsequent to the US-led invasion as evidence that anti-totalitarian revolutions can take place in the region (ibid).

Pascal Bruckner was less optimistic about the prospects for democracy in Iraq, but felt that the removal of Saddam would be a crucial event in itself: “La chute de

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72 Although, as noted earlier, Bernard-Henri Lévy vehemently opposed the Iraq War, he did point out that Islam was not incompatible with democracy, secularism or rights. He cited Attaturk and Nasser as examples of what could be achieved in the Islamic world (2001: 8).
The fall of Saddam Hussein is not a negligible event: a dictatorship which falls is in itself good news. Bruckner summed up his position on Iraq with the comment “Je ne suis pas ‘pro-guerre’ mais ‘anti-Saddam Hussein’ (Le Figaro, Mar. 25, 2003). [I am not “pro-war” but “anti-Saddam Hussein.”]

In a joint declaration in favor of the Iraq War, Bruckner, Glucksmann and the French film maker Romain Goupil stated: “Après Milosevic, les Balkans ne sont pas le paradis, mais il y règne davantage de paix et moins de dictature. L'après-Saddam ne sera pas rose, mais moins noir que trente années de tyrannie, d'exécutions sommaires et de guerre” (Le Monde, Mar. 4, 2003). [After Milosevic, the Balkans are not paradise, but there does exist more peace and less dictatorship. The post-Saddam era will not be perfect, but it will be less dark than thirty years of tyranny, of summary executions and of war.] Revel concurred that whatever the future held for Iraq following the invasion, it could not possibly be worse than life under Saddam Hussein (Le Figaro, Sept. 8, 2003). Revel summed up his view of the war as follows:

La question importante est de savoir si, oui ou non, le régime de Saddam Hussein est dangereux et si le peuple irakien, la région, le reste du monde gagneraient ou non au remplacement de cette dictature aventurière et sanguinaire par un gouvernement sinon démocratique, du moins plus pacifique et plus respectueux de la vie de ses propres ressortissants [...] Pour moi, l'essentiel était de débarrasser les Irakiens de la dictature de Saddam et du danger qu'il représentait pour la région. Et c'est fait (ibid).

The important question is to know if, yes or no, the regime of Saddam Hussein is dangerous and if the Iraqi people, the region, and the rest of the world will gain or not from the replacement of this adventurous and bloody dictatorship by a government which, if not democratic, will be at least more peaceful and more respectful of the lives of its own people [...] For me, the essential question was to free the Iraqi people from the
dictatorship of Saddam and the danger that he represented for the region. And this has been achieved.

Thus the intellectuals who advanced this line of argument again did so from a humanitarian perspective. For them, the fact that intervention in Iraq would inevitably be a risky exercise did not preclude the possibility that it could result in success for the Iraqi people and the international community.

The invasion of Iraq is based on an underlying imperialist agenda through which the US is repeating the same mistakes, and reflecting the same contradictions, as past empires – Up to this point in my analysis, I have attempted to outline the various ways in which anti-war intellectuals in France and in the US rejected the official rationale for war as it had been framed by the Bush administration. Given that the overriding consensus among these intellectuals generally centered on the contention that the official rationale was both false and deliberately manipulated, in the section which follows I will elucidate in more depth the manner in which anti-war intellectuals conceptualized what they saw as the true reasons behind the US drive for war. As I have sought to demonstrate throughout the preceding sections, a broad consensus emerged among both French and American intellectuals around the idea that the Iraq invasion was, at root, indicative of an underlying imperial agenda. Along with their systematic rejection of the official rationale for war, it was also often argued that this “mission” was reflected in the moralistic language used by the administration to justify the invasion, and the kinds of problems that the US has faced in the aftermath of war. Some intellectuals argued that the Iraq context shared important parallels with historical colonial-style situations, and that the US was repeating the mistakes committed by past empires. There was a high degree of consensus among French and American intellectuals on these points, and in the discussion which follows, I will attempt to dissect the recurring themes which came to predominate the discourses of these individuals.

American intellectuals – With the evolution of events in, and in the light of the official discourses surrounding, the Iraq invasion, numerous American intellectuals drew
direct parallels between US actions in Iraq, and those of past empires. Edward Said, for example, argued that the invasion of Iraq constituted an “imperialist war” based on a desire for world dominance, containing within it the same types of orientalist attitudes, clichés, demeaning stereotypes and justifications for power and violence underpinning colonial missions of the past (2003). He argued that “[e]very single empire in its official discourse has said that it is not like all the others, that its circumstances are special, that it has a mission to enlighten, civilise, bring order and democracy, and that it uses force only as a last resort” (ibid). Others argued that the September 11 attacks had inaugurated a new phase in American imperialism which was put into action through the Iraq invasion. Stanley Hoffmann described this process in a chapter entitled “A New American Imperialism” appearing in his 2004 book *Gulliver Unbound: America’s Imperial Temptation and the War in Iraq*. In his view, this new phase was marked by a contempt for international law and organizations, and a unilateral approach to international relations through the new preventive war doctrine. All of this, Hoffmann argues, was made possible by the September 11 attacks (29-31). Noam Chomsky also argued that this new form of US imperialism, as he saw it, was based on the preventive war doctrine which was enshrined in the 2002 National Security Strategy outlined by the Bush administration. This strategy, he explains, declared the right to resort to force to eliminate any perceived challenge to US global hegemony (2003a: 3). Chomsky described this US policy as one “aimed at constructing a world system open to US economic penetration and political control, tolerating no rivals or threats” (ibid.:16). In his view, “Bush-Cheney-Powell are officially declaring a more extreme policy, one aimed at permanent global hegemony by reliance on force when necessary” (ibid).

73 Francis Fukuyama’s position on the empire question represents a major exception to the view typically advanced by American intellectuals. While he acknowledged that the US was in the process of acquiring an empire, and remarked that “George W. Bush as much as admitted so when, in a speech given on Feb. 26, 2003 he laid out an ambitious agenda for democratizing Iraq and remaking the political map of the Middle East” Fukuyama did not describe this in negative terms as it was, in his judgment, based on the principles of democracy and self-government. For Fukuyama, the problem with the US was not the fact that it constituted an empire, but that it was not behaving imperially enough. Fukuyama stated, “The United States does not intend to rule anyone against their will, but only to facilitate other peoples’ efforts to govern themselves. And therein lies the problem: The politics of this region cannot be remade along the ambitious lines laid out by Bush without the United States acting much more imperially, in the old sense, than it has been willing to do. This failure to be a committed imperialist power has already undermined its early efforts at nation-building in Iraq and threatens to stymie the whole activist thrust of recent U.S. foreign policy” […] (*The Daily Yomiuri* [Tokyo], June 22, 2003).
Norman Mailer argued that the war in Iraq was intended to mark the official emergence of a fully-fledged global empire (57). For Mailer “Behind the whole push to go to war with Iraq is the desire to have a huge military presence in the Middle East as a stepping-stone to taking over the rest of the world” (51). The centrality of the “empire” theme is manifestly clear within this strand of opinion.

In the aftermath of the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal of April-May 2004, it was also argued by some observers that this type of abuse is a direct result of colonial-style situations. While this parallel was not typically discussed by most of the American intellectuals that I investigated, one intellectual who did forcefully highlight this point was Susan Sontag. While her comments did not appear in any American newspapers that I could find, in an article appearing in The Guardian in May 2004 entitled “What have we done?” Sontag argued that the Abu Ghraib photos “are representative of distinctive policies and of the fundamental corruptions of colonial rule. The Belgians in the Congo, the French in Algeria, committed identical atrocities and practiced torture and sexual humiliation on despised, recalcitrant natives.”

French intellectuals – Like their American counterparts, numerous French intellectuals also conceptualized the evolution of events in Iraq through the lens of “empire.” Following a similar line of interpretation to that advanced by Chomsky and Hoffmann, for example, Tzvetan Todorov also described the September 11 attacks as constituting a key moment in American imperialism. For Todorov, World War II and the Cold War constituted the first two phases in this process, and September 11 inaugurated the third phase of which the concept of preventive war is, in his view, a central component. In his 2003 book Le Nouveau désordre mondial, Todorov also outlined how liberation can become “imperial.” He noted, “Lorsque, pour les raisons de la sécurité, on va chez les autres et on leur impose un régime jugé par nous le meilleur, on quitte l’optique libérale et on entre dans la logique impériale (25). [When, for security reasons, we go into other countries and impose on them a regime that is judged by us to be the best, then we leave the liberal outlook and start to follow the logic of imperialism.] He
added that “L’impérialisme libéral’ dont parle Kagan\textsuperscript{74} est, à la limite, une contradiction dans les termes, qui mérite d’occuper une place à côté d’autres expressions imitant la novlangue repérée par Orwell” (ibid). [The ‘liberal imperialism’ spoken of by Kagan is, in the final analysis, a contradiction in terms which deserves to occupy a place in the repertory of other expressions that imitate Orwell’s Newspeak.]

Following a similar theme to that raised by Tariq Ali (2003), Emmanuel Todd argued that the Iraq invasion could be most accurately perceived as a “recolonisation” of the region comparable in motive and modus operandi to the actions of colonial France and Britain\textsuperscript{75} (\textit{L'Humanité}, Feb. 21, 2003). Like Edward Said, Todd maintained that the US was using the same moral pretexts as those used by other imperial systems, and he concluded that “Un système impérial a toujours de bons prétextes moraux pour intervenir au nom de la civilisation menacée” (\textit{Le Figaro}, Sept. 27, 2004). [An imperial system always has good moral pretexts for intervening in the name of a threatened civilization.]

Jacques Derrida raised a similar point, and added that the US administration’s war against the “Axis of evil” had led to a betrayal of democratic values (both at home and abroad) in the name of spreading and defending these very same principles. With regard to the enemies of the United States, Derrida remarked that the US “doit leur ressembler, se corrompre et se menacer elle-même pour se protéger contre leurs menaces” (65). [must thus come to resemble these enemies, to corrupt itself and threaten itself in order to protect itself from these enemy threats.]

Several French intellectuals highlighted the contradictions inherent in empire. For Régis Debray,\textsuperscript{76} colonial situations inevitably result in abuses of power. He argued:

\textsuperscript{74} Here, Todorov is referring to the concept of “liberal empire” as outlined in the Literature Review chapter of this dissertation.

\textsuperscript{75} Tariq Ali described the Iraq War in precisely this manner in his book \textit{Bush in Babylon: the Recolonisation of Iraq} (2003).

\textsuperscript{76} In 2002, Debray wrote a satirical novel entitled \textit{L'Edit de Caracalla or plaidoyer pour les Etats-Unis de l'Occident} (translated into English in 2004 under the title \textit{Empire 2.0 A Modest Proposal for a United States of the West} trans. Joseph Rowe.) The book was written in the form of a defense of the American empire through Debray’s fictional alter ego Xavier de C. Throughout the text, Xavier advocates the creation of a Western Union which he calls “Les Etats-Unis de l’Occident” [The United States of the West] led by the US, and including the European democracies as a means of counteracting the common threat of Islamic terrorism (this is very much like the notion of liberal empire as formulated by Kagan and others). This Union would effectively concretize and formalize the domination of the US over all other Western Powers, which Xavier argues has, in fact, already taken place. In much the same way, Vidal-Naquet described the US as an imperial republic: “[…] pour la première fois de notre histoire, nous vivons dans un monde tendant à l'unipolarité, à la domination d'une seule superpuissance” (\textit{L'Humanité}, Mar. 3, 2003).
“La complication vient de la confusion entre la démocratie et la politique de puissance. L’Angleterre était démocratique quand elle colonisait l'Inde et La France l'était aussi quand elle torturait en Algérie. L'idée est bébête selon laquelle on considère que, puisqu'on est démocratique à l'intérieur, on l'est aussi à l'extérieur (L'Humanité, Feb. 25, 2003). [The complication comes from the confusion between democracy and the politics of power. England was democratic when it colonized India, as was France when she tortured in Algeria. The idea is childish, according to which it is considered that, because a state is democratic domestically, it is so in its exterior relations as well.] Debray went on to argued that in invading Iraq, the US claim that it was pursuing a humanitarian mission mirrored the claims of 19th century European colonial powers:

Démocratie est l'équivalent contemporain du vieux [sic] civilisation, celle qu'apportaient aux arriérés les colonialismes européens du XIXe siècle, dont on a oublié le caractère profondément humanitaire (pas plus qu'on ne voit le colonial dans l'humanitaire du jour). Il s'agissait, déjà, de voler au secours des opprimés contre les tyranneaux, l'esclavage et les fanatismes (en 1900) (Le Figaro, Sept. 5, 2003).

Democracy is the contemporary equivalent of old civilization: i.e. that which the European colonialist powers of the 19th century claimed to be bringing to backwards populations and whose deeply humanitarian character is often forgotten (just as we do not see colonialism in today’s humanitarian interventions). It consisted of providing help to the oppressed against tyranny, slavery and fanaticism (in 1900).

Debray concluded that the US was, in fact, heading towards disaster by pursuing an imperial project, and remarked: “Provoquer le chaos au nom de l'ordre et le ressentiment au lieu de la reconnaissance, les empires ont l'habitude. Ainsi volent-ils, de victoire en victoire militaire, jusqu'à leur déclin final” (Le Point, Feb. 28, 2003). [Empires are used

[For the first time in our history we are living in a world tending towards unipolarity, towards the domination of a single superpower.]
to provoking chaos in the name of order, and resentment instead of recognition/respect. Thus they go from military victory to military victory until their final decline.] With specific reference to the motivations underpinning the Iraq invasion, he stated: “Un grand pays a toujours besoin d’un grand ennemi […] La vitalité des empires exige des guerres périodiques [...]” (Le Figaro, Sept. 5, 2003). [A powerful country always needs a powerful enemy (...) the vitality of empires requires periodic wars.]

Jean-François Kahn took a particularly extreme view of American power and, as became customary among numerous American intellectuals such as Chomsky and Gore-Vidal, he frequently compared the present-day US with colonial and, at times, totalitarian regimes of the past. Like Debray, he pointed out that all such regimes used a discourse of liberation to pursue and/or camouflage a mission of oppression. In his 2004 book Le Camp de la guerre, he described the US as “un pouvoir impérialiste et ontologiquement oppresseur” (8). [An imperialist and ontologically oppressive power.] He also highlighted the contradictions upon which colonial empires operated, and most notably the fact that “imperial democracies” commit massacres, tortures and so forth in the name of their interests. He argued that the Iraq invasion was no different in this regard, and stated that “La guerre d’Irak et ses répliques constituent le plus brutal et le plus dévastateur attentat qui ait été commis, depuis l’expansion coloniale, contre l’essence de la démocratie au nom d’un nominalisme démocratique” (33). [The Iraq War and its repercussions constitutes the most brutal, and the most devastating attack that has been committed, since the era of colonial expansion, against the essence of democracy, in the name of democratic nominalism.] Kahn went so far as to claim that the discourses emanating from the US today share many parallels with the Stalinism of the 1950s, describing neo-conservative discourse as “un discours néo-stalinien de droite” (57). [A neo-Stalinist discourse of the right.]

In the light of the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal of 2004, while it is true that this episode did provoke a reaction from numerous French intellectuals, somewhat to my surprise I did not uncover a large amount of intellectual commentary drawing explicit parallels between Abu Ghraib and the Algerian War (or the colonial period more generally.) This was particularly surprising given that such interconnections were appearing in the French and American media at this time.
Intellectuals who did comment on Abu Ghraib typically highlighted that the
treatment of detainees by the American army contradicted and undermined the values
supposedly defended by the United States. Jean-François Kahn, for example, described
the Abu Ghraib tortures as intolerable “justement parce qu'elles ont été perpétrées,
comme d'ailleurs l'ensemble de l'attaque américaine contre l'Irak, au nom de la
démocratie et des plus hautes valeurs que les Etats-Unis sont censés incarner” (Le Figaro,
June 12, 2004). [precisely because they were perpetrated, as was the American attack
against Iraq, in the name of democracy and of the highest values of which the United
States are supposed to be the incarnation.] Jean Baudrillard vehemently condemned what
had happened, describing the episode as “une banalité obscène.” [an obscene banality.]
He went on to state:

Avec le 11 septembre, c'était comme une réaction globale de tous ceux qui
ne savent plus quoi faire de cette puissance mondiale, et qui ne la
supportent plus. Dans le cas des sévices infligés aux Irakiens, c'est pire
encore : c'est elle-même, la puissance, qui ne sait plus quoi faire d'elle-
même et ne se supporte plus, sauf à se parodier elle-même d'une façon
inhumaine (Libération, 19 mai 2004).

September 11 was like a global reaction from all those who no longer
know what to do about this global power, and who can no longer bear it.
In the case of the abuses inflicted on the Iraqi people, it is worse still: it is
the power itself which no longer knows what to do with itself, and can no
longer bear itself, except through an inhuman parody.

Bernard-Henri Lévy was equally condemnatory, and stated, “Rarement guerre
d'ingérence aura débouché sur une débâcle si massive. Rarement si cruel démenti aura été
infligé aux buts avoués d'une intervention. Les Américains en Irak ? Une situation
exemplaire d'ange qui fait la bête (Le Figaro, 15 mai 2004[a]). [Rarely has a war of
interference resulted in such a massive débâcle. Rarely has such a cruel
betrayal of declared values occurred from such an intervention. The Americans in Iraq? A prime example of an angel turned demon.]

As previously indicated, in the light of the Abu Ghraib scandal, Pascal Bruckner, who had been a staunch supporter of intervention in Iraq, dramatically reversed his view of the war and described the US mission to introduce democracy in Iraq as a failure. In an article appearing in *Le Figaro* in May 2004, Bruckner described the tortures as war crimes, and argued that “ces bêvues découlent directement de la mentalité de l'équipe au pouvoir à Washington, aveuglée par son messianisme démocratique, sa bonne conscience inoxydable, la conviction que l'Amérique est la patrie du Bien et que ‘nous sommes fondamentalement bons,’ comme l'a dit un jour ingénument Georges W. Bush” (Le Figaro, May 11, 2004). [these blunders derive directly from the mentality of the team in power in Washington, blinded by their democratic messianism, their unshakable good conscience, the conviction that America is the home of Goodness, and that “we are fundamentally good,” as George Bush once said ingenuously.] Bruckner concluded:

Le danger de ce type d'entreprise, c'est d'épouser la logique de ses ennemis pour les défaire, c'est de détruire la démocratie pour mieux la sauver et de militariser à outrance la société, au risque de fragiliser l'édifice constitutionnel forgé par les pères fondateurs. Le fait d'avoir été attaquée ne donne pas à l'Amérique le droit de se mettre au-dessus du droit. Les tortionnaires d'Abou Ghraïb ont rabaisé leur pays au niveau des pires dictatures du globe, et leurs exactions constituent la plus belle revanche de Ben Laden sur la patrie de Lincoln. Défendre la “civilisation” n'autorise pas le recours aux méthodes de la barbarie sauf à brouiller toutes les frontières (ibid.).

The danger of this type of exercise is that it is employing the logic of one’s enemies in order to defeat them, destroying democracy in order to better rescue it, and militarizing society outrageously at the risk of weakening the constitutional edifice forged by the Founding Fathers. The fact of having been attacked does not give America the right to place itself
above the law. The torturers of Abu Ghraib have demeaned their country in ways comparable to the worst dictatorships on the planet, and their abuses of power constitute the greatest revenge of bin Laden over the fatherland of Lincoln. The defense of “civilization” does not permit the use of barbaric methods unless you are willing to blur all conventional boundaries.

Bruckner concluded with the comment: “Tous les empires sont morts un jour de démesure” (ibid). [All empires have sooner or later fallen by excess.]

However, out of the intellectuals examined in this case study, only Pierre Vidal-Naquet drew a systematic parallel between the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal, and the French treatment of detainees during the Algerian War. Since October 2000, Vidal-Naquet and eleven other intellectuals had been pressing the French government to acknowledge the wrong-doings committed by the French army against the Algerian population during (most notably) the latter part of the War. The “appel des douze” (as the appeal of this group came to be known) renewed their appeal in the light of the Abu Ghraib scandal, declaring that in recognizing and condemning the tortures for which it must take full responsibility in Algeria, the French government would be setting an example for the rest of the world, and this would render its position on the contemporary question of torture more legitimate (Le Monde, May 14, 2004). Vidal-Naquet stated:

Nous attendons toujours de la France qu'elle condamne les actes de torture dont ont été victimes les Algériens lors de ce que nous reconnaissons enfin avoir été la guerre d'Algérie. L'actualité mondiale aujourd'hui nous démontre que ce type de pratique peut aussi devenir le fait des pays démocratiques, qu'il faut dénoncer quoi qu'il en coûte. La condamnation par la France de la torture infligée aux prisonniers irakiens et à ceux de Guantanamo aura davantage de poids moral si elle condamne ses propres pratiques envers les Algériens (L'Humanité, 13 mai 2004).

77 Members of this group include Germaine Tillion, Henri Alleg, Simone de Bollardière, Josette Audin, Pierre Vidal-Naquet and Gisèle Halimi.
We are still waiting for France to condemn the acts of torture of which the Algerian people were the victims, in the same manner that we have finally recognized that it truly was a war which took place in Algeria. The current state of the world demonstrates that this type of practice can still occur in democratic countries, and this must be denounced, whatever the cost. French condemnations of tortures inflicted on Iraqi prisoners, and those held at Guantanamo, would have all the more moral weight if France condemned its own actions against the Algerian people.

However, very few intellectuals outside of the “appel des douze” group drew explicit parallels between the Algerian War period and the Abu Ghraib torture scandal. It is unclear why this parallel was not more commonly noted.

Thus, in summary, having highlighted the flaws in the official US rationale for war, this group of French and American intellectuals tended to direct the bulk of their criticism towards the US “imperial” project, and the contradictions which this implied with the democratic values supposedly defended by the US. While some parallels were drawn between wrong-doings committed in past imperial contexts, it was notable that most French intellectuals did not discuss, in detail, parallels with the Algerian War period.

*US power operates according to the “right of the strongest”* - Numerous intellectuals expressed their perceptions of American power on the basis of the above analysis. In addition to the points which I have outlined up to this point, it was also often argued that the “imperial mission” being pursued by the US could be attributed to the fact that US leaders believe their nation represents the “ultimate good” and the unique realization of history’s purpose. Thus due to the steadfast belief in this mission, along with the military and economic might at their disposal, US leaders feel that they have the right to dictate what is right for all nations. This was articulated by some intellectuals as the “right of the strongest” or “le droit du plus fort.” According this logic, the US has used its power to transform might into right, and in doing so has become the world’s leading rogue state.
Noam Chomsky formulated the American “imperialist mission” in precisely this manner. He argued, for example, that:

The guiding principle (and enduring consensus) is that the US is a historical vanguard. Accordingly, American hegemony is the realization of history’s purpose and what it achieves is for the common good. By virtue of its unique comprehension and manifestation of history’s purpose, America is entitled, indeed obligated, to act as its leaders determine to be best, for the good of all, whether others understand or not (2003a: 43).

Chomsky argued that this logic shares important parallels with that underpinning British colonialism (ibid.). Tzvetan Todorov went further and argued that when a nation frames itself as a “chosen nation,” we are entering the terrain of totalitarianism. In Todorov’s view, “Là réside la différence entre démocraties et États totalitaires [...] : les premières utilisent leurs forces armées en vue de leur légitime défense, les seconds, pour changer le reste du monde. Combattre pour la perfection d’autri – plutôt que de soi – ne s’inscrit pas dans le cadre de la morale démocratique” (34). [Here lies the difference between democracies and totalitarian states (...) : the former uses force in legitimate self-defense, the latter uses force to change the rest of the world (...) To fight for someone else’s perfection – rather than one’s own – has no part in a democratic code of ethics.]

The fact that the US was apparently defining international norms for everyone else was cited as particularly problematic by numerous intellectuals. While many intellectuals made indirect references to this idea, others specifically referred to the “right of the strongest.” In a rare example of a French intellectual commenting in a US paper78, Debray described the US as a biblical empire, operating on the basis of a belief in manifest destiny. Debray placed strong emphasis on the religious dimension of this empire, and stated that “Puritan America is hostage to a sacred morality; it regards itself as the predestined repository of Good, with a mission to strike down Evil” (New York Times op-ed Feb. 23, 2003). He argued that a religious revival was taking place under

78 With the exception of this article by Debray, and two other which mentioned Bernard-Henri-Lévy, I found no other examples of the French intellectuals in my corpus authoring or appearing in articles in US newspapers.
Bush which had culminated in empire: “C'est ce que l'on appelle le ‘manifest destiny,’ la destinée manifeste, qui est la marque de fabrique de l'impérialisme américain. Comme toujours, le religieux est là aussi facteur de paix comme facteur de guerre, facteur de paix civile et facteur de croisade planétaire” (L'Humanité, Feb. 25, 2003). [It is what is known as “manifest destiny,” which is the trade mark of American imperialism. As always, the religious is a factor of peace, as well as a factor of war, a factor of civil peace as well as a factor of planetary crusade.] Debray stated that after September 11, the US was operating according to a “contrat divin en partant attaquer le mal hors des frontières. Les talibans et Saddam Hussein servaient, au fond, comme moyens de réassurance eschatologiques, contre-preuves de la Destinée Manifeste. […] C'est la mise en scène de l'Apocalypse biblique” (La Croix, July 23, 2003). [a divine contract to attack evil outside of its frontiers. The Taliban and Saddam Hussein served, at root, as means of eschatological reassurance, as counter-proof of Manifest Destiny. (…) This was in effect acting out of the biblical Apocalypse.] Debray described the problem with American power as revolving around this “moralisme impérialiste [...] Un certain nombre de pays s'arrogeant le droit de dire le bien et le mal pour l'ensemble de la planète. J'ai la puissance donc la morale et puisque j'ai la morale je peux l'imposer à qui je veux” (L'Humanité, Feb. 25, 2003). [imperialist moralism (…) a certain number of countries assume the right to say what is good and evil for the whole planet. I have the power, thus the moral basis, and because I have the moral basis, I can impose this on whoever I wish.] Elsewhere Debray argued that “Nous avons la loi du plus fort sous sa forme hobbesienne la plus tonique. […] On sait maintenant que le fort dit le droit, fait les tribunaux, désigne les coupables” (La Croix, July 23, 2003). [We have the law of the strongest in the most flagrant Hobbesian form. We now know that the strong dictate the law, set up the courts, and designate the guilty.]

In much the same way, Jean-François Kahn argued that the US has become “une puissance impériale qui dit la norme, qui dit le droit, qui dit le vrai, qui dit le juste, qui dit le bien, elle-même se plaçant hors norme (refus de se soumettre à toute juridiction pénale internationale), violentant le droit (les conditions de détention à Guantánamo), produisant et diffusant du mensonge (les armes irakiennes de destruction massive) […] (38). [an imperial power dictating what is the norm, what is right, what is true, what is just, what is
good, while simultaneously placing itself outside of these norms (the refusal to conform/submit to any international penal jurisdiction), violating rights (the detention conditions at Guantanamo), producing and diffusing lies (the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction).] He added that because the US supports tyrannies which accept US leadership, the US has given itself the right to determine who is a rogue state. In Kahn’s view, a nation will not be considered to be a part of the “axe du mal” [the axis of evil] as long as it “respecte les règles du jeu établies par l’empire” (42). [respects the rules of the game established by the empire.] Effectively, the US empire decides which states fall into the category of “état voyou” (42) [rogue state], and this is determined by which states are hostile to US interests. The fact that a state may be developing weapons of mass destruction does not automatically consign a state to the category of “état voyou” as long as they are in the “bon camp” [the good camp] such as India or Pakistan (92).

In his 2003 text “Voyous” Jacques Derrida raised similar themes to those just discussed, and argued that due to the power of the US and her allies, these nations have been able to define terms and manipulate language in such a way as to construct the concept of rogue states as a means of creating an artificial divide between states that are and are not respectful of “international law.” Derrida stated “le mot ’voyou’ en est venu recemment à traduire, à transposer, à transcrire la stratégie de guerre portée contre l’’axe du mal’ et ledit ‘terrorisme international’ par la dénonciation américaine des rogue States” (2003: 21). [Voyou has recently come to translate, transpose, and transcribe the war strategy directed against the ‘axis of evil’ and so-called international terrorism by means of the American denunciation of rogue states]. Derrida pointed out that the term “état voyou” is used to designate a state deemed to not be obeying international law by the strongest powers, and due to the fact that these states have at their disposal the greatest force (including punitive or preemptive armed intervention), we are effectively in a situation where force is transformed into right (2003: 117-8). Derrida argued that this is extremely problematic, and he drew upon what he described as the “argumentaire implacable” [unimpeachable argument] laid out in Chomsky’s “Rogue States: the Rule of Force in World Affairs” (2000) to conclude that,
les plus rogue des rogue States, ce sont ceux qui ont mis en circulation et en œuvre un concept comme celui de rogue States, avec le langage, la rhétorique, le discours juridique et la conséquence stratégico-militaire que l’on sait. Les premiers et les plus violents rogue States, ce sont ceux qui ont ignoré et continuent de violer le droit international dont ils se prétendent les champions, au nom duquel ils parlent, au nom duquel ils partent en guerre, contre lesdits rogue States, chaque fois que leur intérêt le commande. C’est à dire les États-Unis (2003: 138).

the most roguish of rogue states are those that circulate and make use of a concept like ‘rogue state,’ with the language, rhetoric, juridical discourse, and strategico-military consequences we all know. The first and most violent of rogue states are those that have ignored and continue to violate the very international law they claim to champion, the law in whose name they speak and in whose name they go to war against so-called rogue states each time their interests so dictate. The name of these states? The United States.

Derrida concludes that an impressive body of information exists which supports the charge that the US is a rogue state. Like Chomsky, Derrida cites the US support of Noriega in Panama and Saddam Hussein during the 1980s as evidence of inconsistencies in US policy. Like Kahn, Derrida points out that certain states, such as India and Pakistan which have developed WMD, are not designated as rogue states as they do not oppose US policy (2003: 140).

Thus this group of intellectuals theorized American power as operating through, and legitimated by, a belief in a “sacred mission,” which is now manifested internationally in a tendency to act according to “the right of the strongest.” It is thus the intersection of these two components - the sacred mission coupled with the power necessary to pursue it - which represents the hallmark of contemporary American imperialism. Some of these intellectuals drew direct parallels with past empires which were also predicated on the notion of a sacred mission coupled with military might.
The US should be supported, and not seen as the enemy. The US is not behaving as a colonial empire, but is taking the lead where nobody else will. France is at fault, not the US - Defenders of the Iraq war rejected the imperial interpretation of US power and argued, instead, that rather than abusing its power, the US was, in fact, acting in defense of human rights. French pro-war intellectuals were particularly insistent on this, and at numerous points during their post-September 11 discourses, they attacked their own government and Europe as a whole for failing to support the United States. They argued, moreover, that France and Europe had caused their own isolation during the run-up to the Iraq war, and that the US should not be held responsible for French and European passivity.

André Glucksmann condemned the stance adopted by the majority of European governments, and argued that Europe should confront the post-nuclear challenged posed by terrorism and rogue states with, not against, the US (2003: 36). In his view, “La question des questions n’est pas multipolarité ou hégémonie, mais nihilisme ou civilisation” (ibid). [The question of questions is not multipolarity or hegemony, but nihilism or civilization.]

Similarly, Jean-François Revel took a highly critical view of the European position on Iraq and stated that Europe was offering no alternatives on how to resolve the crisis. In his judgment, Europe was incapable of responding to international crises and he stated: “quand un problème est trop difficile à résoudre, nous décrétons qu’il n’existe pas, le plus souvent qu’il est une invention de la paranoïa Impérialiste américaine” [...] (Le Point, Aug. 16, 2002[b]). [When a problem is too difficult to resolve, we declare that it does not exist, and most often, that it is an invention of American imperialist paranoia.]

Pro-war French intellectuals also tended to harshly criticize the position adopted by the French government. Prior to the Abu Ghraib scandal, Pascal Bruckner was particularly condemnatory of the French government’s opposition to the Bush administration’s policy, and stated that the true motive in opposing the war was to project an image of strength and importance at the expense of the Franco-American alliance. He argued that the French government had deliberately engaged in a duel with Washington via the Security Council: “se réfugier dans le droit international, brandir l'arme du veto,
c'était se hausser du col, redevenir un acteur planétaire mais sans se salir les mains, par les seules vertus du verbe et de l'incantation” (Le Figaro, June 7, 2003). [Taking refuge in international law, brandishing the veto weapon, was a way of gaining increased standing, becoming again a world actor, but without dirtying one’s hands, by virtue of words and incantation alone.] He added:

En France, l'opposition à la guerre en Irak a dégénéré cet hiver en anti-américanisme frénétique. L'Administration républicaine fut comparée, par certains de nos meilleurs esprits, aux pires monstres de tous les temps [...] Au passage on a oublié l'essentiel : l'élimination possible d'un des pires régimes du Moyen-Orient. La diplomatie des principes, chère au Quai d'Orsay, s'est résumée une fois encore au respect du statu quo c'est-à-dire des dictatures en place. A un certain moment, nos dirigeants ont donné le sentiment de ne plus savoir qui était l'ennemi principal : Bush ou Saddam Hussein. Dans ce psychodrame, notre nation, qui se prend toujours pour un empire, a tenté d'exorciser son complexe d'infériorité au risque de trahir ses amitiés, de piétiner ses propres valeurs (Le Figaro, June 7, 2003).

In France, the opposition to the war in Iraq degenerated into frenetic anti-Americanism this winter. The Republican administration was compared, by some of our best minds, to the worst monsters of all time [...] During this time, the essential point was forgotten: the possible elimination of one of the worst regimes in the Middle East. The principled diplomacy, so dear to the Quai d’Orsay, once again was reduced to respect for the status quo, i.e. established dictatorships. At one point, our leaders gave the impression of no longer knowing who the principal enemy was: Bush or Saddam Hussein. In this psycho-drama, our nation, which still takes itself for an empire, tried to exorcise its inferiority complex at the risk of betraying its friends, and of trampling on its own values.
In a joint article, Bruckner, Glucksmann and Goupil emphasized that France had sabotaged the UN process, not the US:

Les Américains ne sont pas nos ennemis [...] Par son intransigeance et la promesse d'un veto quelles que soient les circonstances, notre pays a divisé l'Europe, paralysé l'OTAN et l'ONU, anéanti les possibilités non militaires de faire céder, par un ultimatum commun et précis, la dictature irakienne. Loin d'éviter la guerre, le parti de la paix l'a précipitée en jouant Astérix contre l'Oncle Sam. La France s'est mise hors jeu, ridiculisée (Le Monde, Apr. 15, 2003).

The Americans are not our enemies [...] By its intransigence and the promise of a veto whatever the circumstances, our country has divided Europe, paralyzed NATO and the UN, destroyed any non-military possibility for gaining the submission, by a common and precise ultimatum, of the Iraqi dictatorship. Far from avoiding war, the party of peace has precipitated it by playing Asterix against Uncle Sam. France has put itself into a situation in which it is out of play, and ridiculed.

Jean-François Revel also argued that the French government had deliberately caused the UN process to fail, and had forced the Bush administration to act in the way that it did. Raising the same anti-American theme which had run through much of his recent commentary, Revel described the French position as “moins onusienne qu'antiaméricaine” (Le Figaro, Sept. 8, 2003). [less pro-UN than anti-American.]

The implications of the Iraq War for international law and the UN

Up to this point in my discussion, I have sought to outline the key themes underpinning intellectual commentary surrounding the September 11 attacks and the Iraq War. In this final section, I will briefly examine the ways in which intellectuals discussed the deeper ramifications of international developments since the September 11
attacks, most notably with regard to the US-led invasion of Iraq. A great deal of intellectual commentary surrounding Iraq highlighted the serious flaws in international law and in the operation of the UN that this episode revealed. Indeed, both the pro and anti-war groups of intellectuals typically argued that significant reforms to the UN would be needed in the light of the tensions and disagreements which took place. However, when we analyze the comments of pro and anti-war intellectuals with reference to the UN, some important disparities are apparent. In line with their formulations of the terrorist problem and the need to act according to the right of interference, pro-war intellectuals tended to advocate UN reform for the reason that international law has often been unable to respond quickly and effectively to humanitarian disasters, particularly those involving dictators committing abuses against their domestic populations. As briefly introduced earlier in the discussion, supporters of the war frequently argued that the current structure of international law allows dictators to hide behind the principle of non-interference with state sovereignty, and that this has led to a situation in which human rights abuses can occur in the face of international paralysis. Anti-war intellectuals, by contrast, typically argued that changes to international law were necessary to contain US imperialism/unilateralism in the international sphere.

UN reform is needed to contain US imperialism - Numerous opponents of the Iraq war based their opposition on the contention that an invasion would violate the international democratic order, and that this would have a highly detrimental effect upon the functioning of international law. In stark contrast to Glucksmann, who argued that the right of a population to be free from tyranny should supercede the principle of non-state interference, Tzvetan Todorov argued that the notion of the “right to interfere” was incompatible with the democratic spirit (35), and that the sovereignty of other states should be respected in international life however hateful may be the regimes that shelter behind it (56-61). While Todorov acknowledged that the current structure of the UN was far from perfect (he criticized, for example, the supremacy of the five permanent members of the Security Council, and the fact that the UN is paralyzed when these members fail to reach an agreement), he did maintain that a key reason for reforming the structure of the UN was to prevent the unilateral actions of powerful states. Todorov’s
comments with regard to the UN in many ways reflected the main points of contention underscoring the pro- and anti-war positions, particularly with regard to the tension between preventing humanitarian crises on the one hand and containing the unilateral actions of hegemonic states on the other, even in situations where such actions are undertaken ostensibly in the name of some humanitarian objective (as was the case, of course, with Iraq).

Stanley Hoffmann also made a number of pertinent observations with regard to the UN which mirrored those made by Todorov in several respects. The crux of his argument was that international law required urgent modification to contain US power (117). On regimes that oppress, he acknowledged that they raise many questions about international intervention and that international law, which is based on non-intervention and state sovereignty is not satisfactory. The main problem, he noted, lies in the fact that humanitarian interventions have been both limited and often ineffective at responding to humanitarian emergencies (71). He did argue, however, that the UN should not be abandoned and warned that the rule of pure force represented a major regression in international relations which amounted to “an invitation to transform an obviously imperfect order into a jungle in which a great power would decide what targets to hit and what regimes to punish. This would inevitably be imitated by others who had their own accounts to settle” (120). Hoffmann concluded that the world needs a force that is legitimate because it is contained – hence the rightness of France’s position on Iraq (ibid).

In Voyous (2003), Jacques Derrida provided a detailed analysis of the problems with international law as it currently exists, and he structured much of his commentary around the concept of “Rogue States” as it has been used in American discourse. Like Todorov and Hoffmann, Derrida acknowledged that human rights and the principle of state-sovereignty exist in contradiction with each other (124), and that the inability of the permanent members of the Security Council (which he described as a de facto dictatorship) to reach a consensus sets the stage for the rhetoric of rogue states (139-140). This, he argued, has led to a situation in which the “reason of the strongest” determines the policy of the UN (140-142). The implication for rogue states, he argued, is that
[...] les États qui sont en état de les dénoncer, d’accuser les violations de droit, les manquements au droit, les perversions et les déviations dont seraient coupables tel ou tel rogue State, ces États-Unis qui disent se porter garants du droit international et qui prennent l’initiative de la guerre, des opérations de police ou de maintien de la paix parce qu’ils en ont la force, ces États-Unis et les États qui s’allient à eux dans ces actions, ils sont eux-mêmes, en tant que souverains, les premiers rogue States (145).

[...] those states that are in a position to denounce or accuse some ‘rogue state’ of violating the law, of failing to live up to the law, of being guilty of some perversion or deviation, those states that claim to uphold international law and that take the initiative of war, of policing, or of peacekeeping operations because they have the force to do so, these states, namely, the United States and states allied with it in these actions, are themselves, as sovereign states, the biggest rogue states.

*The UN requires modification in order to prevent dictators hiding behind the concept of state sovereignty* – Pro-war intellectuals adopted a radically different position to that outlined above, and argued instead that the United Nations required urgent modification as a means of preventing humanitarian catastrophes arising from abuses of state sovereignty. According to this interpretation, the US is not a rogue state or an imperial power, but is compensating for major deficiencies in international law. Jean-François Revel argued this point insistently, and stated:

On peut déplorer l’entrée en guerre de l’Amérique, à condition de ne pas oublier que cette guerre résulte directement de l’incapacité de l’Onu, depuis 1991, à faire respecter ses multiples résolutions par l’Irak. Saddam a pu les violer sans être sanctionné, du moins militairement. Y compris la dernière, la fameuse résolution 1441, qui l’obligeait non pas seulement à réadmettre les promenades des inspecteurs onusiens, mais à fournir la
preuve que l'Irak avait détruit toutes les armes présentes sur son sol en 1998 (Le Point, Mar. 28, 2003).

One can deplore America’s entry into war on the condition that we do not forget that this war has resulted directly from the incapacity of the UN, since 1991, to make Iraq respect multiple resolutions. Saddam has been able to violate these resolutions without being sanctioned, at least militarily – including, most recently, the famous resolution 1441 which obliged him not only to re-admit the UN inspectors, but to provide them with the proof that Iraq had destroyed all weapons which were present on her soil in 1998.

Revel argued, moreover, that the US-led intervention in Iraq was not illegal from an international-law standpoint as the UN showed that it could not enforce international law. He remarked, “Combien de guerres, bien plus ‘illégales’ que celle incriminée aujourd'hui, combien de génocides, passés et présents, n'ont suscité ou ne suscitent aucune réaction des Nations unies !” (ibid.). [How many wars, considerably more “illegal” than that incriminated today, how many genocides, past and present, have incited or incite no reaction from the United Nations!]

This point was echoed in a joint article appearing in Le Monde written by Pascal Bruckner, André Glucksmann and Roman Goupil. In it, they argued that all too often, the international community is passive in the face of humanitarian crises. In the article, they cited the genocide in Rwanda as an emblematic example of this (Le Monde, Mar. 4, 2003). More generally, both Glucksmann and Bruckner consistently argued that the concept of absolute state sovereignty, and its supremacy in international law allows state crimes to occur in the face of international paralysis. Glucksmann expressed a particularly negative view of the UN, arguing that “Le Conseil de sécurité a couvert les plus criminelles inactions” (Le Monde, Apr. 5, 2003). [The Security Council has been responsible for the most criminal of inactions.]

Of the pro-war intellectuals examined in this chapter, Glucksmann offered the most detailed analysis of the issue of state-sovereignty as he saw it. He argued that this
effectively gave dictators permission to massacre their own populations: “Réduit au principe de souveraineté absolue, le droit international revient à donner permission à Saddam de gazer les siens, à Poutine de pousser jusqu’au génocide ses opérations antiterroristes au Caucase. Et pourquoi rétrospectivement ne pas reconnaître aux Hutus - majoritaires au Rwanda - le droit d'exterminer les Tutsis? (ibid.). [Reduced to the principle of absolute sovereignty, international law gives Saddam permission to gas his people, and Putin permission to push anti-terrorist operations in the Caucuses to the brink of genocide. And why not retrospectively recognized the right of the Hutus – the majority group in Rwanda – the right to exterminate the Tutsis?]

He also argued that because the UN was created in a climate of urgency, it should not be seen as a rigid “tribunal suprême” (2003: 67). [supreme court.] Instead – and to reiterate a major theme running throughout his post-September 11 commentary – Glucksmann argued in favor of the supremacy of human rights in the international sphere. He summarized his position as follows:

[...] il y a là deux principes de souveraineté. Le premier principe de souveraineté, c'est «charbonnier est maître chez soi ». Un Etat a tous les droits sur les sujets, sur les territoires soumis à sa juridiction. Et dans ce cas-là, il est parfaitement illégal d'attaquer Saddam Hussein, comme il était d'ailleurs illégal d'attaquer, à propos du Kosovo, Milosevic. Et puis, il y a un deuxième principe de souveraineté. C'est un acquis des luttes anticolonialistes. Ce principe dit : il faut des droits de l'homme pour qu'il y ait exercice de la souveraineté. [...] C'est-à-dire que le droit des peuples à se déterminer, à se gouverner eux-mêmes, doit être distingué et n'implique pas le droit des gouvernements à disposer de leur peuple. Exemple : le Cambodge et le génocide. Exemple : le Rwanda et le génocide. Tous les droits n'étaient pas du côté de Pol Pot, bien qu'il fût souverain sur son territoire. Et dans le cas du Rwanda, le principe de souveraineté a été respecté dans sa forme globale sans tenir compte des droits de l'homme. Et le résultat a été un million de Tutsis passant de vie à trépas en trois mois. D'où l'idée que la souveraineté implique les droits de l'homme. Alors,

The idea of sovereignty involves two different principles. The first states that “a man’s home is his castle.” A state has all rights over its subjects and over the territories lying under its jurisdiction. And in this case, it is completely illegal to attack Saddam Hussein, in the same manner that it was illegal to attack Milosevic regarding Kosovo. And then, there is a second principle of sovereignty, which arose from anti-colonial struggles. This principle says: for sovereignty to be exercised, there must be human rights [...] This means that the right of people to self-determination, to govern themselves must be distinguished from, and does not include, the right of governments to dispose of their people however they see fit. Example: the genocide in Cambodia. Another example: the genocide in Rwanda. Pol Pot’s rights were not limitless, even though he was sovereign over his own territory. And in the case of Rwanda, the principle of sovereignty was respected in a broad sense, but at the expense of human rights. The result cost the lives of one million Tutsis in the space of three months. Hence the idea that sovereignty directly involves human rights. Then came September 11, 2001. I thought to myself that now, we have finally understood that human rights, freedom in Afghanistan and New York’s security are all connected.

Glucksmann concluded that, “Le droit d'ingérence constitue un péché capital aux yeux des souverainistes [...] mais un devoir indépassable selon la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme” (Le Figaro, Dec. 22, 2003). [The right of interference represents a capital sin in the eyes of sovereigntists (...), but an unavoidable duty according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.]
Conclusion

In many ways, the main findings which emerged over the course of my investigation lead us to revise the expectations one might have as to how French intellectuals would engage during this period. I found that, while intellectuals from both countries opposed the Iraq War in far greater numbers than those who supported it, it would not be accurate to describe French intellectual engagement as “anti-American” in nature. Indeed, as I showed in this chapter, French intellectuals were mostly supportive of the US following the September 11 attacks, and the most insistent voices of support for intervention in Iraq came from French intellectuals. Those intellectuals who criticized US power generally did so through the application of the overarching concept of “empire.” A more general point arising from my analysis is that the competing positions with regard to the dangers made manifest by the September 11 terrorist attacks, the human rights questions raised by dictators such as Saddam Hussein, and the nature of American power were ultimately irreconcilable. While intellectuals in both countries approached questions from a broadly universalist standpoint (and in doing so have not reflected a decisive shift towards the “specific” intellectual as formulated by Foucault during the 1970s), they ultimately arrived at radically different conclusions. This suggests that while intellectuals may in general be less narrowly constrained than political leaders by the pursuit of national or factional interests, the logic of universalism, when applied in particular situations, may be far from incontrovertible. In a world in which international politics, morality and ideology have become radically unstable, the role of the intellectual as critical guardian of humane values has never been more important nor more challenging.
CONCLUSIONS

My objective in this dissertation has been to compare the discourses of key political and intellectual actors in France and in the United States, in order to better understand the ways in which they have articulated major global issues since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. To do this, I identified three central themes – empire, terrorism, and human rights – which have gained heightened prominence in post-September 11 debates both individually and in their interconnections. I set out to identify, within the materials at my disposal, areas of similarity and contrast between French and American discourses, and, in the case of intellectuals, within each national context. My comparative research led to a number of findings, which I will briefly summarize.

In the domain of official discourses, I conducted a systematic key word search with reference to presidential speeches and other official statements in order to examine the ways in which the empire/terrorism/human rights nexus has shaped the respective pronouncements of the French and US presidents since the September 11 attacks. I found that Presidents Bush and Chirac employed various subtle yet carefully constructed discursive strategies in an attempt to cultivate a certain perception (among both national and international audiences) of the post-September 11 world. The competing perceptions which emerged through their discourses served as a backdrop for the diplomatic friction between France and the US that took place surrounding the Iraq War. I highlighted that, not uncommonly, the pronouncements of the two leaders have shared apparently similar universalist features (underscoring similar political and moral principles around which the French and American nations have historically been structured), but reflected very different national imperatives and, consequently, conflicting strategies for approaching the post-September 11 world. Specifically, my findings suggest that both presidents have been driven primarily by realpolitik (which has undoubtedly been affected by changes in the international status of their respective countries), but have sought to advance their
national positions in the international arena by appealing to a higher global mission of which each leader considers their respective nation to be at the forefront. This higher mission has been articulated by President Bush through distinctly American formulations of the concepts of “democracy” and “freedom,” and by President Chirac, most commonly, through the concept of “les droits de l’homme.” While these seemingly universal, yet nation-centric, conceptualizations did not come into direct collision in the immediate aftermath of the September 11 attacks, the Iraq invasion led to a phase of bitter diplomatic friction between France and the U.S., which some commentators compared with the Suez crisis. The underlying reason for the dispute, I suggest, can be attributed to conflicting national interests, and more specifically, the differing manner in which they both understand the functioning of their respective national power in the international arena (i.e. in a more unilateral fashion by Bush, and through international institutions in which France retains a key voice for Chirac).

Significant differences of language emerged clearly in my statistical analysis of the two leaders’ speeches. In the domain of terrorism, President Bush constructed American foreign policy around a new international paradigm defined by him as a “war on terror.” Throughout his speeches, along with this phrase, Bush in a more general sense consistently favored the term “terror” above terrorism and “war” above conflict or struggle. In doing so, he has sought to achieve several goals: 1) to galvanize the domestic population around this new national imperative, 2) to detach the present context from (and elevate it above) any historical precedents which might constrain US actions, 3) to justify - by way of the term “war” - the exceptional measures which, in his judgment, are necessary to tackle this new threat, and 4) to define the antagonists to be tackled as part of this war in fluid terms, (through the concept of “terror”), in order to leave open the possibility for the inclusion of future enemies into this broad category.

President Chirac, by contrast, specifically avoided the French equivalents of these two terms, i.e. “guerre” and “terreur” and consistently employed the phrase “lutte contre le terrorisme” to define the anti-terrorist challenge. I argued that this avoidance of terminology comparable to that of Bush represents a discursive strategy with its own logic, which can be summarized as follows: a desire 1) to contain American power and prevent unilateral actions in the international sphere, 2) to prevent Bush from having the
sole right of definition of the post-September 11 context thus giving him the capacity to unilaterally define the appropriate reaction to it, 3) to down-grade the post-September 11 terrorist phenomenon into one which would not, automatically, demand new and unusual measures to combat it, and 4) to ensure that international institutions would not be bypassed, thus isolating France in international decision-making processes.

My investigation also highlighted the importance of religious rhetoric on the part of Bush, and specifically his frequent use of the term “evil” to designate terrorists and dictatorial regimes, which I contrasted with the absence of religious language (and most notably the avoidance of the term “mal”) in the pronouncements of Chirac. This contrast is further underscored by Chirac’s frequent use of the concept of “les droits de l’homme” and Bush’s highly infrequent use of the concept of “human rights.” Bush’s use of religious language and Chirac’s use of the concept of “les droits de l’homme” reflects the attempt of both leaders to define the nature of the post-September 11 situation in ways amenable to their respective national agendas, and just as importantly, in ways conducive to the advancement of national prestige.

Finally, with regard to the question of “empire” I found that President Bush avoided narratives on empire and colonialism (past and present) and the degree to which these may have contributed to the underlying frustrations fuelling anti-American sentiment across the globe. Bush also avoided commenting on the phenomenon of globalization. Rather, Bush tended to describe developing nations as “failed states,” and has at times subtly shifted the blame for these “failures” to the nations themselves. The solution, in his view, is the advancement of the American economic and democratic model, and in this regard, Bush’s broad position, along with the “mission” to which he refers, is not dissimilar in construction to the “liberal empire” described by Neo-Conservative and other commentators such as Robert Kagan, Niall Ferguson, and Francis Fukuyama.

Chirac, by contrast, has been far more willing to enter into introspective narratives over the legacy of European colonialism, and this has led him to diagnose certain aspects of the global poverty question very differently to President Bush. Chirac’s insistence on speaking of the “West” when discussing the virtues of Western values and condemning imperialism achieves several subtle, yet important effects. Firstly, his willingness to
acknowledge Western crimes of the past provides Chirac with a considerable amount of moral legitimacy when discussing the process of globalization, and the need for it to be fair on developing nations. The fact that he is so forthright about this, in apparent contrast to Bush, makes him appear more honest, particularly given the comparative lack of such seemingly introspective and honest commentary by the American president. However, while Chirac has amalgamated together the “European” experience of colonialism, he has not, at any point, made any direct references to France’s experience in Algeria, which remains a deeply divisive and contentious question in France today. Thus it would seem that Chirac has attempted to simultaneously confront the question of empire in his discourse, but omit any direct references to French wrong-doing.

In the domain of intellectual discourses, I adopted a slightly different methodological approach to that which structured the official discourses chapter. Here, I identified representative samples of intellectuals in France and in the United States, firstly in order to investigate the various ways in which they conceptualized the September 11 terrorist attacks, and secondly, to elucidate the ways in which they either defended or opposed the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. From a methodological perspective, this case study raised a series of challenges which were not present in the official discourses chapter. The fact that I was examining the commentary of over twenty individuals represented just one factor in this. In addition, I was conducting a comparison not simply between intellectuals in France on the one hand and in the US on the other, but also between intellectuals within the same national context. Not uncommonly, for example, I was comparing French left-leaning intellectuals with their French right-leaning counterparts, French left-leaning intellectuals with American left-leaning intellectuals, and all of the other permutations leading on from this. There was also an important temporal aspect to the intellectual discourses chapter in that the post-September 11 period contained within it distinct sub-themes which evolved in different ways during the immediate post-September 11 period on the one hand, and during the run-up to, and aftermath of, the Iraq War on the other. In some cases, a given theme was present throughout the entire period under examination. In other case, new issues emerged causing an intellectual to adjust his or her position. Within all of the above, I was dissecting the intellectual arguments which were raised according to the
empire/terrorism/human rights nexus which has provided the overarching grid of analysis for the dissertation. Therefore, for all of these reasons, the intellectuals chapter necessitated the use of a considerably more complex comparative framework, hence the disparity in length between it and the official discourses case study.

In concrete terms, the intellectuals chapter yielded a number of key findings, which can be summarized as follows. Firstly, I found that the September 11 attacks initiated an important phase of intellectual engagement in both France and the US, made manifest through the large number of news articles and books produced by them during this period. Secondly, however, there were significant differences in the treatment accorded to intellectuals by the French media on the one hand and their US counterparts on the other. French intellectuals continue to receive a significant amount of press coverage in France, reflected by the high volume of articles authored by and featuring them. The French media tend to treat intellectuals with a high degree of respect, and do not generally seek to discredit or ridicule their comments, even if the intellectual in question is not of the same political leaning as that newspaper. In the US, by contrast, my findings show that American newspapers devote very little attention to intellectual commentary. Moreover, the comments made by intellectuals – particularly those on the left – often attract condemnation and contempt. This, I argue, suggests the existence of a bias against the inclusion of intellectual commentary in the US media.

Thirdly, I found that unlike past patterns of intellectual intervention such as that which took place during the Algerian War, this most recent phase has been primarily individual rather than collective in nature. In addition, contrary to the view held by some commentators that intellectuals no longer structure their arguments (or see their role as intellectuals) from a universalist angle, my research showed that intellectuals in both countries – irrespective of the precise positions that they ultimately adopted – tended to frame their commentary around what they presented as broadly universalist concepts. While it is true that these universalist principles often competed for priority, most notably with regard to the evil of empire vs. the evil of terrorism dichotomy, such arguments were still, at their core, universalist in basis and advocated the universal application of the principle in question.
With regard to the immediate post-September 11 period, I observed that contrary to widespread perceptions of endemic anti-Americanism among French intellectuals, the vast majority of them expressed strong sympathy and solidarity towards the US at this time. They all, with very few exceptions, condemned terrorism in all of its forms. This trend persisted throughout the US-led military strike against the Taliban, and only began to shift in mid-2002 when the Bush administration began to discuss the possibility of a military strike on Iraq. American intellectuals, by contrast, typically expressed open hostility towards their own nation and government immediately after September 11, and often argued that the US had been attacked due to its imperial actions across the globe. The concept of “empire” was frequently invoked by such intellectuals, and employed as tool for attacking the motivations and actions of the Bush administration. Thus, during the immediate post-September 11 period, I found that anti-American attitudes were significantly more observable among American intellectuals than among their French counterparts.

With regard to the Iraq War, my investigation showed that the vast majority of intellectuals on both sides of the Atlantic vehemently opposed this US-led initiative. It was commonly argued that the official rationale for war, as it was presented by the Bush administration, was based on a series of lies, and was intended to answer the need to avenge the September 11 attacks, and was part and parcel of America’s broader global imperial mission. While intellectuals in both countries tended to share this interpretation of the Iraq War, the most persistent voices in support of US action were those of French intellectuals who argued that the human rights imperatives justifying this intervention should supercede any concerns over Iraq’s domestic jurisdiction or state sovereignty.

A final point emerging from my investigation into intellectual discourses concerned the manner in which pro- and anti-war intellectuals in both countries argued for the necessity to modify international laws and institutions in the light of the Iraq War. Whereas those who opposed the war typically advocated UN reform in order to contain American imperialism, those who supported the war argued that reform was necessary as the international community was not able to respond to humanitarian emergencies under the current structure of the UN. According to pro-war intellectuals, international law wrongly prioritized the principle of non-state interference to the detriment of populations.
living under dictatorships. In their view, human rights concerns justified the US-led invasion of Iraq.

To my knowledge, my study into intellectual discourses during the post-September 11 period breaks new ground in two respects. Firstly it represents the first systematic attempt to examine intellectual reactions to September 11 and the Iraq War in either country. Secondly, through my examination of the manner with which intellectuals from two different national backgrounds have taken up positions on questions of shared concern, this case study contains a multi-leveled comparative dimension which is absent from most studies of intellectuals.

While my findings shed new light on the contemporary state of relations between France and the United States, as reflected in official and intellectual discourses surrounding key policy issues raised by September 11 and its aftermath, these questions are too complex and too multi-faceted to be exhaustively analyzed within the compass of a single dissertation. There are at least two further directions in which research could be beneficially pursued. The first of these would be synchronic in nature, investigating additional types of discourse during the post-September 11 period. Examples include media, cinematic and literary discourses, all of which help to shape public perceptions of issues which have come to the fore during this period.

A second area which merits investigation is diachronic in nature. While the interconnecting relationships between empire, terror and human rights have in the contemporary period acquired unprecedented prominence in public debate in both France and the US, similar issues were raised in different historical contexts in the past and it would be interesting to compare similarities and differences over time. Although

79 With regard to the French and American media it would be interesting to compare the manner in which French and American newspapers of different political leanings report key events from both a substantive and linguistic perspective. Similar comparisons could be investigated with respect to the French and American televised media. How politically neutral are the media in each country, and what type of language is used to describe key events? In the domain of cinema, several recently-released American films have used the September 11 attacks as a backdrop (for example, The Flight that Fought Back (2005), Flight 93 (2006), United 93 (2006), and World Trade Center (2006).) It would be interesting to compare such films to French equivalents, such as 11°09°01 (2002), which was produced by the French filmmaker Alain Brigand, and includes contributions from eleven directors of different national backgrounds. Finally, in the domain of novels, we can see the beginning of a body of imaginative literature developing which was not available when I was conducting my research, and this would also be an interesting line of inquiry to pursue. Interestingly, whereas the US has been more voluminous in terms of movie production, the first novels to appear that situated their narratives against the backdrop of the September 11 attacks were produced in France as far back as 2003.
historical parallels of this kind featured from time to time in the debates which I analyzed, most notably during debates over detainee treatment at Guantanamo Bay and more recently over the Abu Ghraib torture scandal, such parallels were pursued in far less detail within the totality of my corpus than I had anticipated, and would appear to merit more systematic investigation. It would be interesting, for example, to compare possible parallels between the discourses expressed during the Algerian War and/or the Vietnam War, and those surfacing since the September 11 attacks. How was the question of prisoner abuse and torture discussed by different actors during the Algerian War period, and how does this compare to new debates over the treatment of detainees at Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib?

The debates which I have foregrounded also raise in new forms long-standing issues concerning the role and status of intellectuals and their relationship with the state. Today, these issues arise far less in the nationally defined contexts which first gave the term “intellectuel” widespread currency in France during the Dreyfus Affair. The points of interconnection and dialogue traced in this dissertation between 21st century intellectuals in France and the US suggest that there are more natural, transnational affinities between them than between most intellectuals and their respective national governments. At the same time, the discordant positions adopted by intellectuals since September 11, 2001 show that the practical application of universalism is no easier in a globalized world than in the nationally-focused frameworks of a century ago.
Appendix: Biographical information on cited intellectuals

French intellectuals

Jean Baudrillard (1929 - )

Born in Reims, France, on June 20, 1929 Jean Baudrillard is a cultural theorist, philosopher, sociologist, and political commentator best known for his analyses of consumerism, gender relations, and modes of mediation and technological communication. His work is frequently associated with post-modernism, post-structuralism, and semiotics and he was strongly influenced by Roland Barthes. Baudrillard studied German at the Sorbonne University in Paris and completed his Ph.D. thesis in 1966. From 1986 to 1990 he served as Directeur Scientifique at the IRIS (Institut de Recherche et d’Information Socio-Economique) at the Université de Paris-IX Dauphine. Highly critical of expanding global capitalism and the process of financial commodification which has accompanied it, Baudrillard has argued that Western societies have undergone what he calls a “precession of simulacra” according to which “hyper-reality” has effaced and superceded the “real” to the degree that the real no longer exists except as an empty image of itself. This led him to famously declare that the First Gulf War “did not take place.” In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks Baudrillard aroused controversy for his sustained attacks on American imperialism.

Pascal Bruckner (1948 - )

Pascal Bruckner was born on December 15, 1948 in Paris, and is well known in France as a prominent writer and intellectual. After studying at the University of Paris I and Paris VII, and then at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, he became maître de conférences at the Institut d’Etudes Politiques de Paris in 1990. His doctoral dissertation was directed by Roland Barthes, and over the course of the last decade he has been a frequent contributor to numerous French newspapers such as Le Monde and the Nouvel Observateur. A prolific writer, Bruckner is generally associated with the so-called “nouveaux philosophes,” a group of French intellectuals who were disenchanted with communist and socialist responses to the near revolutionary upheavals in France of May 1968, and subsequently advocated deeper intellectual engagement in real-word issues such as international conflict and national questions) and has published many books, the most famous of which being Le Sanglot de l’homme blanc [The Cry of the White Man] (1983) in which he attacked narcissic and destructive derives in the interest for the Third World. From 1983-1988 Bruckner was a member of the administration council for the humanitarian organization Action contre la faim [Action against hunger]. Prior to the Abu Ghraib torture scandal (after which he changed his position), Bruckner was a strong supporter of military intervention in Iraq.

Régis Debray (1940 - )

Régis Debray is a prominent French intellectual, journalist, novelist, government official and professor, and he frequently writes articles appearing in Le Monde and other major
French newspapers. He studied at the Ecole Normale Supérieure and became “agrégé de philosophie” in 1965. He formally engaged in Che Guevara’s activities, particularly in Bolivia where he was arrested and jailed in 1967. He was released in 1970 following an international campaign for his release which included Jean-Paul Sartre and André Malraux. He returned to France in 1973, and became foreign affairs advisor to newly elected socialist president François Mitterrand in 1981. In this capacity he helped to develop a policy that sought to increase France’s freedom of action in the world, decrease dependence on the United States, and promote closeness with the former colonies. Debray is commonly identified as the founder of “mediology” which attempts to scientifically study mass media and power. Much of his recent work has focused on the role of religion in society, and he helped to found the Institut Européen en Sciences des Religions in 2005. Debray was an outspoken opponent of the US-led invasion of Iraq, and has been a vehement critic of American power across the globe throughout his career.


Jacques Derrida was a French philosopher, theorist and intellectual born in Algeria on July 15, 1930. A prolific writer (a complete bibliography of his work has yet to be definitively compiled), Derrida is often associated with post-structuralism and post-modernism (although he dissociated himself from the latter term), and is widely recognized as the founder of “deconstruction” – an approach to reading or opening up a text (literary, philosophical or otherwise) to several meanings and interpretations, usually by taking binary oppositions within a text and showing that the two opposed concepts are, in fact, far more fluid than they seem. After studying at the prestigious Ecole Normale Supérieure, Derrida taught philosophy at the Sorbonne in Paris (1964-1984) and was director of studies at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris up to his death. He also held numerous visiting professor positions at universities in France and in the US, including the University of California, Irvine. His work has had a profound impact upon Western philosophy and literary theory in Europe and in the United States. Derrida was involved in many political issues over the course of his life. He initially supported the Parisian student protesters in May 1968, but later withdrew. He opposed the Vietnam War, and was active in cultural activities against the Apartheid government of South Africa. While supportive of the US government in the wake of the September 11 attacks, Derrida opposed the 2003 Iraq invasion. He died in 2004 after a long battle with cancer.

Alain Finkielkraut (1949 - )

Born in Paris on June 30, 1949, Alain Finkielkraut is a French essayist and intellectual. The only son of a Jewish Polish artisan who was deported to Auschwitz, Finkielkraut studied philosophy at the Ecole normale supérieure de Saint-Cloud, and is currently a professor of the history of ideas at the Ecole polytechnique in Paris. He has authored many books, and frequently appears on talk shows. He also publishes numerous columns in the French media. Following a number of collaborative projects with Pascal Bruckner, Finkielkraut began publishing singly-authored works on, among other subjects, the
public’s betrayal of memory and intransigence in the face of events which, he argued, should arouse more widespread concern. He has written numerous texts on anti-Semitism and the Jewish identity, and recent years has commented on a variety of political topics ranging from the breakup of the former Yugoslavia to the problem of racism in France. He also been a strong critic of modernism and “la société de masse,” and has commented extensively on the issue of social fracture. Finkielkraut was supportive of the US in the light of the September 11 attacks, but opposed the Iraq War of 2003.

André Glucksmann (1937 - )

André Glucksmann is a French philosopher, writer and intellectual, and like Pascal Bruckner and Bernard-Henri Lévy is commonly associated with the “nouveaux philosophes” school. After studying philosophy at the Ecole normale supérieure de Saint-Cloud, Glucksmann then entered the CNRS (le Centre national de la recherche scientifique) as a war specialist where he worked under the direction of historian Raymond Aron. In 1968, he published his first work Le Discours de la guerre, and participated in the 1968 student protests in Paris as a militant Maoist. In subsequent years, Glucksmann modified his political stance, and is generally situated on the right. Since the 1980s, Glucksmann has published numerous works, and has been a frequent contributor to major French newspapers. He has been an ardent supporter of the Chechen cause, and has denounced the actions of Vladimir Putin and what he considers to be the passive attitude of Western countries more generally towards this ongoing genocide. A strong critic of passivity in the face of totalitarianism, Glucksmann has consistently adopted pro-US positions on a variety of international questions, most notably the First Gulf War and NATO-led intervention in Kosovo, and most recently with regard to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Jean-François Kahn (1938 - )

Born on June 12, 1938, Jean-François Kahn is a French journalist, essayist and intellectual. He studied history (attaining a license d’histoire) after which he pursued a career in journalism. He worked as a reporter during the Algerian War, and went on to work for Paris-Presse, l’Express, Europe 1 and Le Monde. He established the weekly news and current affairs magazines L’Événement du Jeudi in 1984, and Marianne (which he directs) in 1997. Kahn has engaged in a number of political questions, most notably as a critic of economic liberalism, of NATO intervention in Serbia in 1999, and most recently the US-led invasion of Iraq.

Bernard-Henri Lévy (1948 - )

Often referred to in France today simply as BHL, Lévy was born in Algeria on November 5, 1948 and his family moved to France shortly after his birth. Lévy is a prominent French philosopher, intellectual and a prolific writer. The son of a multi-millionaire founder and manager of a timber company, Lévy attended the Louis-le Grand lycée in Paris, and then enrolled in the elite and highly-selective Ecole Normale Supérieure in
1968 from which he graduated with a degree in philosophy. Jacques Derrida and Louis Althusser were among his professors. Lévy started his career as a war reporter for Combat, the famous underground newspaper founded by Albert Camus during the Nazi occupation of France. In 1971, he traveled to the Indian subcontinent, and covered the war of independence against Pakistan. This experience was the source of his first book, Bangla-Desh, Nationalisme dans la révolution which was published in 1973. Returning to Paris, he became famous as the young founder of the Nouveaux Philosophes (New Philosophers) school. Throughout the 1970s, he taught a course on epistemology at the Université de Strasbourg, and philosophy at the Ecole Normale Supérieure. In 1977 he published Barbarism with a Human Face (La barbarie à visage humain), which argued that Marxism was inherently corrupt. In 1981 he published L'Idéologie française ("The French Ideology"), arguably his most influential work. Lévy writes many articles and opinion pieces for major French newspapers, and has a weekly column which appears in the current affairs magazine Le Point. Lévy has engaged in many political issues, and was one of the first French intellectuals to call for intervention in Bosnia in the 1990s. In 2003, he wrote what he defined as a “romanquête” which chronicled his efforts to track the murderers of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl, who had been executed by Islamic extremists the previous year. While Lévy was supportive of intervention in Afghanistan, he opposed the Iraq war of 2003.

Jean-François Revel (1924 – 2006)

Born on January 19, 1924, Jean-François Revel was a French journalist, author, politician, philosopher, and intellectual. He studied philosophy at the Ecole Normale Superieure, and participated in the French Resistance during World War Two. He began his career as a philosophy professor and taught in French Algeria, Italy and Mexico before settling in Lille. He stopped teaching in 1963 and embarked on a career as an essayist and writer. Over the course of his career, Revel has also directed numerous publications for publishers such as René Julliard, Jean-Jaques Pauvert and Robert Laffont. In 1978 he became director of the weekly French paper l’Express, but resigned in 1981 to work for Le Point. In terms of his political views, Revel has called himself a leftist and a socialist (he ran as a socialist candidate in parliamentary elections in 1967 but lost), but was known during the Cold War as a champion of the American version of values such as liberty and democracy at a time when the majority of European intellectuals praised Communism or Maoism. Revel was a vocal supporter of the United States in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, and he supported the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Emmanuel Todd (1951 - )

Emmanuel Todd is an anthropologist, political scientist, demographer, historian, sociologist and essayist. Born on May 16, 1951, Todd is the grandson of the well-respected French writer Paul Nizan, and the son of journalist Olivier Todd. He studied at the Institut d’Etudes Politiques in Paris, and received his doctorate in History from Cambridge University in the United Kingdom. He is currently a historican, political scientist and demographer at the National Institute for Demographics in Paris, and his
work has focused primarily on the rise and fall of peoples and cultures over time. Todd attracted attention in 1976 when (in a book entitled _La chute finale: Essais sur la décomposition de la sphère Soviétique_) he predicted the fall of the Soviet Union, based on indicators such as increasing infant mortality rates. More recently, Todd has made a similar prediction on the fall of the American “empire” in his 2002 book _Apres l’empire: Essai sur la décomposition du système américain_. He is a frequent commentator in major French newspapers, and was highly critical of the US-led invasion of Iraq.

Tzvetan Todorov (1939 - )

Born in Sofia, Bulgaria in 1939 Tzvetan Todorov is a semiologist, philosopher, linguist and political scientist, and he has written extensively on literary and cultural theory, and the history of ideas. Fleeing communism during the 1950s, Todorov’s family settled in Paris, and Todorov has lived permanently in France since 1963. Todorov has published 21 books including _Introduction à la littérature fantastique_ (1970), _Face à l’extrême_ (1991), and _Le jardin imparfait : la pensée humaniste en France_ (1998). His historical interests have focused on issues ranging from the conquest of the Americas to the Nazi and Stalinist concentration camps. Todorov has been a visiting professor at several universities including Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and the University of California, Berkeley. He opposed the Iraq invasion of 2003, and has advocated the establishment of a more concerted European defense system as a means of counter-balancing what he sees as aggressive US unilateralism in the international sphere.

Pierre Vidal-Naquet (1930 – 2006)

Born in Paris on July 23, 1930 Pierre Vidal-Naquet was a French historian and teacher at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales since 1969. Prior to this, he worked at the CNRS (1962-64) and was named maître de conférences at the University of Lyon (1964-66). The son of Jewish parents, Vidal-Naquet was orphaned in 1944 when his parents were sent to Aushwitz. He evaded capture and took refuge with his grandmother in France. After his studies at the lycée Carnot in Paris, Vidal-Naquet specialized in Ancient Greece, but was also concerned with contemporary history, and in particular the Algerian War of 1954-62 during which he opposed the systematic use of torture by the French army (he was a signatory of the _Manifeste des 121_ protest along with many other intellectuals of the time). Vidal-Naquet has consistently adopted an anti-colonialist stance throughout his life, and he has been a strong supporter of Middle East peace efforts. While he was loosely affiliated with the French communist party, he was never a member (nor was he with any political party). Highly critical of the US-led invasion of Iraq, Vidal-Naquet was one of the few French intellectuals to draw direct comparisons between the French experience of prisoner abuse and torture during the Algerian War, and the Abu Graib torture scandal of 2004.
American intellectuals

Paul Berman (1949 - )

Paul Berman is a senior fellow at the World Policy Institute, a professor of journalism and distinguished writer in residence at New York University, and a member of the editorial board of Dissent. The author of many articles and numerous books including A Tale of Two Utopias (1996), and more recently Terror and Liberalism (2003), Berman is a prominent liberal American intellectual. Most of his work sets out to trace the evolution of political ideas, most notably those of totalitarian ideologies (ranging from Nazism, Stalinism and radical Islam) as reactions to liberalism. Berman argues that all totalitarian movements share a number of common, nihilistic strands, and must be counteracted through “liberal interventionism.” While Berman has declared that he does not support President Bush (and that he is not a neo-conservative), he was a vocal supporter of military intervention in Afghanistan and in Iraq under the logic of liberal interventionism.

Noam Chomsky (1928 - )

Born on December 7, 1928 in Philadelphia, Noam Chomsky is the Institute Professor Emeritus of linguistics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and has been teaching continuously at MIT for the last fifty years. He received his Ph.D. in linguistics from the University of Pennsylvania in 1955 and conducted much of his doctoral research at Harvard University as a Harvard Junior Fellow. In his doctoral thesis, he began to develop some of his linguistic ideas, elaborating on them in his 1957 book Syntactic Structures, perhaps his best-known work in linguistics. Chomsky is credited with the creation of the theory of generative grammar, considered to be one of the most significant contributions to the field of theoretical linguistics made in the 20th century. Beginning with his critique of the Vietnam War in the 1960s, Chomsky has become more widely known - especially internationally - for his media criticism and radical politics than for his linguistic theories. He is generally considered to be a key intellectual figure within the left wing of United States politics. Chomsky is widely known (and has generated a certain notoriety) for his political activism, and for his criticism of the foreign policy of the United States and other governments. Chomsky describes himself as a libertarian socialist and a sympathizer of anarcho-syndicalism. He was a leading critic of US foreign policy following the September 11 attacks, and he vehemently opposed the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Francis Fukuyama (1952 - )

Born in Chicago on October 27, 1952 Francis Fukuyama is an American philosopher, political economist and author. He received his B.A. from Cornell University in classics, his Ph.D. from Harvard in Political Science, and is currently Bernard L. Schwartz Professor of International Political Economy and Director of the International Development Program at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at
the Johns Hopkins University. Fukuyama is best known as the author of *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992), in which he argued that the progression of human history as a struggle between ideologies is largely at an end, with the world settling on liberal democracy after the end of the Cold War in 1989. Politically, Fukuyama has in the past been considered neoconservative. He was active in the Project for the New American Century think-tank starting in 1997, and signed the organization's letter recommending that President Bill Clinton overthrow the then-President of Iraq, Saddam Hussein. He also signed a second, similar letter to President George W. Bush after the September 11, 2001 attacks, a letter that called for removing Saddam Hussein from power “even if evidence does not link Iraq directly to the attack.” Thereafter, however, he drifted from the neoconservative agenda, which he felt had become overly militaristic and based on muscular, unilateral armed intervention to further democratization within authoritarian regimes (particularly in the Middle East). Thus, while he did not oppose the removal of Saddam Hussein per se, he did not approve of the way in which this was ultimately executed. Recently, Fukuyama summed up his views on American foreign policy (and the dangers of nation-building exercises) in his 2004 book, *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century*.

Stanley Hoffmann (1928 - )

Stanley Hoffmann is the Paul and Catherine Buttenweiser University Professor at Harvard University in the United States. His special fields of study are international politics and French politics. Hoffmann was born in Vienna in 1928, and he lived and studied in France from 1929 to 1955. He has taught at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques of Paris (Sciences Po), from which he graduated, and at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales. Since 1955, Hoffmann has taught at Harvard university in the United States in the fields of French intellectual and political history, American foreign policy, post-World War Two European history, the sociology of war, international politics, ethics and world affairs, modern political ideologies, and the development of the modern state. Hoffmann took a firmly pro-French stance during the run-up to the Iraq War in 2003, and was a vocal critic of the Bush administration.

Norman Mailer (1923 - )

Born on January 31, 1923 Norman Mailer is an American novelist, journalist, playwright, screenwriter and film director who, along with Truman Capote and Tom Wolfe, is considered an innovator of creative nonfiction, a genre sometimes called New Journalism. He has been nominated on several occasions for the Nobel Prize for Literature. Mailer was born to a Jewish family in Long Branch, New Jersey. He was brought up in Brooklyn, New York, and began attending Harvard University in 1939, where he studied aeronautical engineering. At Harvard, he became interested in writing and published his first story when he was 18. Mailer was drafted into the Army in World War II and served in the South Pacific. In 1948, just before enrolling in the Sorbonne in Paris, he wrote a book that made him world-famous: *The Naked and the Dead*, based on his personal experiences during World War II. It was hailed by many as one of the best American novels to come out of the war years and named one of the "100 best novels" by
the Modern Library. In the following years, Mailer continued to work in the field of the novel. Politically, Mailer has commented publicly on a number of topics, most notably the Vietnam War, and more recently on the US-led invasion of Iraq which he vehemently opposed.


Edward Said was a prominent Palestinian-American intellectual, literary theorist, critic, and outspoken Palestinian activist. He was a University Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University, and is regarded as not only a founding figure in post-colonial theory, but also one of the most important public intellectuals of the late twentieth century. Said earned a B.A. from Princeton University and an M.A. and a Ph.D. from Harvard University. He joined the faculty of Columbia University in 1963 and served as a professor of English and Comparative Literature for several decades. In 1992 he attained the rank of University Professor, Columbia's most prestigious academic position. Said also taught at Harvard, Johns Hopkins, and Yale universities, and was bestowed with numerous honorary doctorates from universities around the world. Said's writing regularly appeared in The Nation, The Guardian, the London Review of Books, Le Monde Diplomatique, Counterpunch, Al Ahram, and the pan-Arab daily al-Hayat. He gave interviews alongside his good friend, fellow political activist, and colleague Noam Chomsky regarding US foreign policy for various independent radio programs. Said is best known for describing and critiquing “Orientalism,” which he perceived as a constellation of false assumptions underlying Western attitudes toward the East. In Orientalism (1978), Said described the “subtle and persistent Eurocentric prejudice against Arabo-Islamic peoples and their culture.” Said died at the age of 67 on September 25, 2003, in New York City, after a decade-long battle with chronic myelogenous leukemia.

Susan Sontag (1933 – 2004)

Susan Sontag was a prominent American essayist, novelist, intellectual, filmmaker and activist. The daughter of Jewish-Americans Jack Rosenblatt and Mildred Jacobsen, Sontag was born in New York City and attended the University of Chicago where she graduated with a B.A. She went on to pursue graduate work in philosophy, literature, and theology at Harvard, St Anne's College, Oxford and the Sorbonne in Paris. Sontag's literary career began and ended with works of fiction. At age 30, she published an experimental novel called The Benefactor (1963), but it was the publication of Against Interpretation in 1966 which truly established Sontag's reputation as an important writer. She also gained fame and notoriety as an essayist. During the nearly 4-year siege of Sarajevo, Sontag drew attention for directing Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot. Early in the conflict, Sontag referred to the Serbian invasion and massacre in Bosnia as the “Spanish Civil War of our time” and sparked controversy among US leftists for openly advocating US and European military intervention. Sontag lived in Sarajevo for many months of the Sarajevo siege. More recently, Sontag sparked controversy for what many saw as anti-American remarks in The New Yorker (September 24, 2001) in the immediate

Gore Vidal (1925 - )

Eugene Luther Gore Vidal is a prolific American writer of novels, stage plays, screenplays, and essays, and, of late, a liberal political pundit. For nearly sixty years, he has been a public, often controversial figure in both the American literary and political scenes. In the aftermath of September 11, Vidal attracted attention for arguing that the Bush administration knew of the impending attacks, but allowed them to occur in order to pursue an expansionist mission in the Middle East. His self-described “pamphlets” *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace* (2002), *Dreaming War: Blood for Oil and the Cheney-Bush Junta* (2002), and *Imperial America* (2004), are powerful critiques of American expansionism, the military-industrial complex, the national security state, and the current administration.
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Presidential Speeches

Speeches and other statements by President Bush

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President Bush Inaugural Address
http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/inaugural-address.html

Joint Session of Congress Address

Statement by the President in His Address to the Nation

Remarks by the President In Photo Opportunity with the National Security Team

National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for the Victims Of the Terrorist Attacks on September 11, 2001 by the President

National Day of Prayer

Radio Address of the President to the Nation

“Islam is Peace” Says President. Remarks by the President at Islamic Center of Washington, D.C.

Joint Session of Congress
Radio Address of the President to the Nation

Presidential Address

President Says Terrorists Won't Change American Way of Life.
Remarks by the President in Photo Opportunity with Members of Congress

Nov. 6, 2001.
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Matthew Alva Kemp was born in Kettering, England on April 29, 1977. In 2000, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree (First Class with Honors) from Loughborough University (UK) in Modern European Studies, with a concentration in French, economics and politics. In 1999 he studied political science for one year at the Institut d’Etudes Politiques in Lyon, France, where he received the Certificat d’Etudes Politiques. In 2001 he came to Florida State University to pursue his doctoral studies under Dr. Alec Hargreaves, and received his Masters and Doctoral degrees from FSU in the Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics in 2006. While at FSU, he has taught French language courses, and has worked as a translator for the Winthrop-King Institute for Contemporary French and Francophone Studies, and for the Haiti Advisory Committee established by Governor Jeb Bush.