

## 淡江大學九十一年度碩士班招生考試試題

系別：美國研究所

科目：英文寫作

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Part A: Reading Comprehension Skills (60 pts total)

**Instructions:** READ THE ARTICLE, "WHO'S AFRAID OF BIG, BAD AMERICA?", BY TED LANGE ON PAGE 2. BELOW ARE SEVEN QUESTIONS BASED ON THAT ARTICLE. USING GOOD ENGLISH, ANSWER ALL SEVEN QUESTIONS FULLY AND COMPLETELY. ALTHOUGH THIS PART EXAMINES YOUR COMPREHENSION ABILITY, MAKE SURE YOU WRITE INTELLIGIBLY ALONG WITH PROPER SPELLING (FAILURE TO DO SO WILL AFFECT YOUR SCORE).

1. However justified, there seems to be an "inevitable" tendency to demonize America. How does the article explain that phenomenon? (5 pts)
2. What American business or corporate practice do Europeans find dreadful and appalling? Explain. (5 pts)
3. Whom specifically in Europe did the article point to as the sources of anti-Americanism in the decades of the fifties and sixties? (5 pts)
4. In "demonizing" America, the article called to the reader's attention a knee-jerk reaction of which Europeans are often guilty. Explain. (10 pts)
5. What specific examples were given to illustrate European dismissal of the "American model" in the 1990s? (10 pts)
6. Most Europeans critics, according to the article, overlook several important economic issues in comparing the American economy to theirs. What are they? Explain. (10 pts)
7. In the article you just read, several writers were mentioned. Which of those were European? Identify who they are and describe each of their views of America. If noted, use an acceptable form to cite their book or article. (15 pts)

Part B: Composition and Writing Skills (40 pts total)

**Instructions:** THIS PART EXAMINES YOUR ABILITY TO WRITE AND DEVELOP SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS IN ENGLISH. IT IS AN EVALUATION OF YOUR ABILITY TO WRITE WITH MEANING AND PURPOSE AS WELL AS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE RULES AND STRUCTURE OF THE LANGUAGE. IN THIS PART, THE FOLLOWING FIVE AREAS WILL DETERMINE YOUR SCORE: 1) VOCABULARY AND THE USAGE OF WORDS; 2) SPELLING; 3) GRAMMAR; 4) LOGIC AND THE SEQUENCING OF YOUR IDEAS; AND 5) CONTENT AND SUBSTANCE.

There are two popular sayings that Americans and English-speaking people around the world are fond of using from time to time. One is, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." In one or two paragraphs, explain what that statement means. Another saying is, "What goes around, comes around." Likewise, using one or two paragraphs, explain what the second statement means. Finally, in two or more paragraphs, explain how the ideas implied in these two statements would conflict or complement each other. Use as many examples and illustrations you think are necessary to support your explanations. (40 pts)

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## Who's Afraid of Big, Bad America?

by Ted Lange

They see the United States as a nation where cities rot, guns proliferate, politicians cheat, religion is fundamentalist and the food is always fast. Their media thrive on stories about the excesses of feminism and political correctness and the risks to young Americans of dying from gunfire. And these are countries that stood shoulder to shoulder with America during the cold war. Now America's best allies in Europe are demonizing it as never before.

Demands for change at home have fueled the onslaught. "We don't want to copy the American model, even if we need to reform our own societies in part," says editor Serge Lafaurie of the French weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur*. His magazine's cover story last week pronounced the United States "A Democracy Gone Haywire" – and depicted a polarized society divided between ghetto dwellers and swimming-pool loungers. If the Americans can't get it right, the thinking goes, then why should their society serve as a model for anybody else?

Flaying America can be handy for a government in a bind. The Greeks justified a \$1.3 billion taxpayer subsidy for its loss-making Olympic Airlines to avoid "another Pan Am," the bankrupt U.S. carrier. French officials keep sky-high worker fringe benefits, they say, to avoid creating a U.S.-style urban "underclass." All over Europe these days, charges of running an American-style campaign can cost any politician precious votes – so they consult American campaign handlers privately. The 1992 Los Angeles riots proved the American system could never work abroad if it couldn't prevent such mayhem at home, many European intellectuals believe. "America is no longer seen as the promised land," says French historian André Kaspi. "European views have changed ever since we have come to believe we enjoy a better living standard than Americans, especially in health care and jobless benefits." The new doubts about the United States are distinct, explains Kaspi, from the anti-Americanism of the 1950s and 1960s, which was promoted by Europe's Communist parties and by the Gaullists in France. Now it's a feeling that America as a society is second rate. "One third of the United States is virtually a developing country," says Dutch political scientist Jan Siccama. The controversial new book on race and intelligence, *The Bell Curve* (by Richard Herrnstein), has given more ammunition to Europeans who make this claim.

On the business front, American corporate downsizing makes Europeans shudder. One French executive, recently returned from a year in New York, was shocked by the "hire-and-fire brutality" of corporate practices there. "In some cases, longtime employees are given just one hour to empty their desks and leave the building, while an armed guard watches. That will never happen here," said the French businessman. Europeans are willing to pay a premium for job security rather than risk U.S.-style rugged individualism. Recently, 38,000 applicants turned up to take a test and compete for 93 Italian government posts that pay only \$11,800 yearly. Italian bureaucrats can't be fired.

In demonizing America, most foreign critics gloss over facts that complicate the picture. Statistics show a growing gap between rich and poor in the United States – "social apartheid," some call it – but new studies also indicate that average salaries for the past two decades in America have held up better than in the European Union. True, Europeans enjoy better health insurance, but at a price even they consider steep – up to 26 percent of their monthly wages. And Europeans' vaunted welfare societies help keep their unemployment rates stuck in the double digits. There's some obvious hypocrisy in the attacks. The same Frenchman who scoffs at "McDo" (McDonald's) forget that many of their own restaurants are now chain-operated. "They may make fun of McDonald's, but they go there," says Nicole Bernheim, author of *The America of Clinton*. Fast food is the fastest-growing sector in French restaurants, with a 15 percent annual increase. Often, cries of "American invasion" are simply a conditioned reflex to any local innovation that seems crude or tawdry – Britain's new national lottery or a door-to-door sales firm that's being investigated in France. And there's always the snob factor: Americans themselves are more than ever perceived in Europe as oafish monolingualists who invariably order the wrong wine at meals.

Whether it's justified or not, demonizing America may be inevitable, given the new world order. "With the United States as the only source of world hegemony, and with American industrial and cultural influence so strong, there's a natural desire by other nations to assert their independence," says historian Kaspi. As a result, the prestige of the world's lone superpower, despite the Haiti and Kuwait interventions, has hit a new low, a condition possibly not unrelated to the dollar's dramatic drop in the current year. It could explain the *Schadenfreude* evident in the stream of negative European reporting from America. Sure enough, when that symbol of American influence, Euro Disney, last week announced a \$345 million loss for 1993, many Parisians cheered, even though the theme park's failure would wound their city's economy. Who says the cold war is over?