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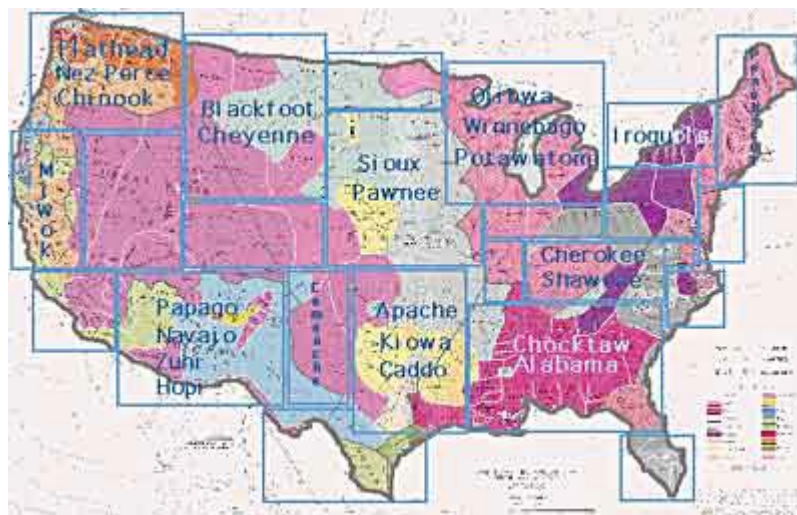
Week 1

Native American Society on the Eve of British Colonization

In Renaissance times, Europeans were not the only ones accomplishing great things. No one can deny the beauty of Michelangelo's brushwork or the brilliance of Shakespeare's verse. But societies elsewhere also flourished. As the modern world turned 1600, it seems as though each corner of the globe had its own "renaissance." The Native American societies of North America were no different. They had diverse cultures and languages, much like Europe.

When the British staked their claim to the east coast of the modern United States, they could not have dreamed of the complexity of the peoples they were soon to encounter.

There are between 140 and 160 different American Indian tribes. There is no single Native American language. It would be as difficult for the Mohawk Indians of the East to converse with Zuni Indians of the West as it would be for Germans to converse with Turks.



Before Europeans arrived in North America, Native peoples inhabited every region. This map shows Native American tribes, culture areas, and linguistic stocks.

Twenty-seven states derive names from Indian languages. Native Americans turned wild plants such as corn, potatoes, pumpkin, yams, and lima beans into farm crops for human consumption. More than half of modern American farm products were grown by Native Americans before British colonization.

Medicine was not an unknown science in the Western Hemisphere. Most natural herbs used for medicinal purposes in the modern world had also been used by Native Americans before European contact. Archaeologists have learned that North American Indians made salt by evaporation and mined a great many minerals including copper, lead, and coal.

Despite myths to the contrary, not all Native Americans were peaceful. Like Europe, the American continent faced tribal warfare that sometimes led to human and cultural destruction.

The buffalo played an important role in the survival of Native American tribes. In addition to providing food, the buffalo provided clothing and more.

In short, there is no simple way to tell the tale of a continent that had been peopled by diverse communities for thousands of years. Their tales are as complex as any others, their cultures as rich, their knowledge as deep. British contact did not mark the replacement of established cultures by a better way of life, but rather the beginning of a new civilization based on a blend of diverse folkways.

Diversity of Native American Groups

Since 1492, European explorers and settlers have tended to ignore the vast diversity of the people who had previously lived here. It soon became common to lump all such groups under the term "Indian." In the modern American world, we still do. There are certain experiences common to the survivors of these tribes. They all have had their lands compromised in some way and suffered the horrors of reservation life.

Language Lessons

Stereotyping Indians in this way denies the vast cultural differences between tribes. First, there is the issue of language. The Navajo people of the Southwest and the Cherokees of the Southeast have totally unrelated languages.

There were over 200 North American tribes speaking over 200 different languages. The United States used the uniqueness of the Navajo language to its advantage in World War II. Rather than encrypting radio messages, it proved simpler to use Navajos to speak to each other in their everyday language to convey high-security messages. It worked.

Navajo Code Talkers

Between 1942 and 1945, about 400 Navajos served as code talkers for the U.S. Marines. They could encode, transmit, and decode a message in a fraction of the time it took a machine to do the same. And unlike with machine codes, the Japanese were never able to break the Navajo code.

Excerpts from the Navajo Code Talkers' Dictionary

MEANING	NAVAJO PRONUNCIATION	LITERAL TRANSLATION
ALASKA	BEH-HGA	WITH WINTER
AMERICA	NE-HE-MAH	OUR MOTHER
BOMBER PLANE	JAY-SHO	BUZZARD
BOMB	A-YE-SH	EGGS
BOOBY TRAP	DINEH-BA-WHOA-BLEHI	MAN TRAP
GERMANY	BESH-BE-CHA-HE	IRON HAT
PLATOON	HAS-CLISH-NIH	MUD
FIGHTER PLANE	DA-HE-TIH-HI	HUMMING BIRD
MINUTE	AH-KHAY-EL-KIT-YAZZIE	LITTLE HOUR
PROBLEM	NA-NISH-TSOH	BIG JOB
PYROTECHNIC	COH-NA-CHANH	FANCY FIRE
ROUTE	GAH-BIH-TKEEN	RABBIT TRAIL
SPAIN	DEBA-DE-NIH	SHEEP PAIN
TANK DESTROYER	CHAY-DA-GAHI-NAIL-TSAIDI	TORTOISE KILLER

– excerpted from the Navajo Code Talkers' Dictionary (revised as of June 15, 1945), Department of the Navy

Different Strokes for Different Folks

Lifestyles varied greatly. Most tribes were domestic, but the Lakota followed the buffalo as nomads. Most engaged in war, but the Apache were particularly feared, while the Hopis were pacifistic. Most societies were ruled by men, but the Iroquois women chose the leaders.

Native Americans lived in wigwams, hogans, igloos, tepees, and longhouses. Some relied chiefly on hunting and fishing, while others domesticated crops. The Algonkian chiefs tried to achieve consensus, but the Natchez "Sun" was an absolute monarch. The totem pole was not a universal Indian symbol. It was used by tribes such as the Chinook in the Pacific Northwest to ward off evil spirits and represent family history.

It is important that students of history explore tribal nuances. Within every continent, there is tremendous diversity. The tribal differences that caused the Apache and Navajo peoples to fight

each other are not so different from the reasons Germans fought the French. Recognizing tribal diversity is an important step in understanding the history of America.

The Anasazi

The Anasazi built glorious cities in the cliffs of the modern Southwest. Their rise and fall mark



one of the greatest stories of pre-Columbian American history. The Anasazi employed a wide variety of means to grow high-yield crops in areas of low rainfall. Their baskets and pottery are highly admired by collectors and are still produced by their descendants for trade. It is their cliff dwellings, however, that captivate the modern archaeologist, historian, and tourist.

The Anasazi built their dwellings under overhanging cliffs to protect them from the elements. Using blocks of sandstone and a mud mortar, the tribe crafted some of the world's longest standing structures.

Algonkians

As the first group to encounter the English, the Algonkians became the first to illustrate the deep cultural misunderstandings between British settlers and Native Americans. British Americans thought Algonkian women were oppressed because of their work in the fields. Algonkian men laughed at the British men who farmed — traditionally work reserved for females. Hunting was a sport in England, so British settlers thought the Algonkian hunters to be unproductive.

The greatest misunderstanding was that of land ownership. In the minds of the Algonkians selling land was like selling air. Eventually this confusion would lead to armed conflict.

Britain in the New World

Most modern American citizens consider Great Britain to be their European "parent" country.

However, by the time British arrived in the New World and established their first permanent settlement at Jamestown in 1607, much of the continent had already been claimed by other European nations.

All of the modern Southwest, including Texas and California, had been peopled by Spanish settlers for about a century. The entire expanse of land between the Appalachian Mountains and the Rocky Mountains had at one point been claimed by France.

Many factors contributed to Britain's tardiness. England was not the most powerful European nation in the 16th century. Spain was most influential. Along with Portugal, Spain dominated New World exploration in the decades that followed Columbus. France, the Netherlands, and Sweden all showed greater interest in the Western Hemisphere than England did.

Joint-Stock Companies

Compared with other European nations in 1600, England was relatively poor.

As new agricultural techniques made fewer farmers necessary, the poor multiplied in the streets of cities such as London and Bristol. Much to the dismay of the wealthier classes, the impoverished were an increasingly burdensome presence and problem.

A Pain to Spain

Richard Hakluyt, a 16th-century geographer interested in explorers and travel narratives, suggested to Queen Elizabeth that New World colonies could serve two purposes. First, they could challenge Spanish domination of the New World. Second, the ever-growing poorer classes could be transported there, easing England's population pressures.

But Elizabeth was not persuaded to invest the public treasury in a venture that was likely to fail. She was not opposed to private investors taking such a chance, however. Raleigh had tried and failed. When it became clear that the wealth of an individual was not enough, the joint-stock company arose.

Joint-Stock Companies

The joint-stock company was the forerunner of the modern corporation. In a joint-stock venture, stock was sold to high net-worth investors who provided capital and had limited risk. These companies had proven profitable in the past with trading ventures. The risk was small, and the returns were fairly quick.

Granted a charter by King James I in 1606, the Virginia Company was a joint-stock company created to establish settlements in the New World. This is a seal of the Virginia Company, which established the first English settlement in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607.

But investing in a colony was an altogether different venture.

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The risk was larger as the colony might fail. The startup costs were enormous and the returns might take years. Investors in such endeavors needed more than a small sense of adventure.

Expedition Investors, Leaders, and Laborers

Who led these English colonial expeditions? Often, these leaders were second sons from noble families. Under English law, only the first-born male could inherit property. As such, Sir Francis Drake, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Sir Humphrey Gilbert were all second sons with a thirst to find their own riches.

Merchants who dissented from the Church of England were also willing investors in New World colonies. There were plenty of Puritans who had the necessary capital, and with the Catholic-leaning Stuart monarchs assuming the throne the Puritans' motive to move became stronger.

With an excess landless population to serve as workers, and motivated, adventurous, or devout investors, the joint-stock company became the vehicle by which England finally settled the Western Hemisphere.

This starkly contrasted with Spanish and French settlements. New Spain and New France were developed by their kings. The English colonies were developed by their people. Many historians argue that the primary reason the relatively small and late English colonization effort ultimately outlasted its predecessors was because individuals had a true stake in its success.

Massachusetts Bay — "The City Upon a Hill"

The passengers of the *Arbella* who left England in 1630 with their new charter had a great vision. They were to be an example for the rest of the world in rightful living. Future governor John Winthrop stated their purpose quite clearly: "We shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us."

The *Arbella* was one of eleven ships carrying over a thousand Puritans to Massachusetts that year. It was the largest original venture ever attempted in the English New World. The passengers were determined to be a beacon for the rest of Europe, "A Modell of Christian Charity," in the words of the governor. John Winthrop travelled to the New World aboard the *Arbella*. He was elected and dismissed as governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony several times.

Puritans believed in predestination. This doctrine holds that God is all-powerful and all-knowing; therefore, the fate of each individual soul is known to God at birth. Nothing an individual can do or say could change their ultimate fate. Puritans believed that those chosen by God to be saved — the elect — would experience "conversion." In this process, God would reveal to the individual His grace, and the person would know he was saved.

Only the elect could serve as Church members. If a person were truly saved, he would only be capable of behavior endorsed by God. These "living saints" would serve as an example to the rest of the world. During the early years, ministers such as John Cotton carefully screened individuals claiming to have experienced conversion.

The colony needed more than a fervent church to survive. Many dissenters — Christian men and women who were not converted — also lived within the ranks of Massachusetts Bay. Towns such as Marblehead were founded by non-Puritan settlers. The Puritans allowed this for the sake of commerce. Many skills were necessary for a vibrant economy.

An elected legislature was established, echoing the desire for self-government already seen in other English colonies. Although ministers were prohibited from holding political office, many of the most important decisions were made by the clergy. In 1636, Harvard College was instituted for the purpose of training Puritan ministers.



This engraving shows the Harvard campus as it looked during the 18th century.

By the end of the 1630s, as part of a "Great Migration" of Puritans out of England, nearly 14,000 more Puritan settlers came to Massachusetts, and the colony began to spread. In 1691, Plymouth colony, still without a charter, was absorbed by their growing neighbor to the West.

The great experiment seemed to be a smashing success for the first few decades. In the end however, worldly concerns led to a decline in religious fervor as the 1600s grew old.

Indentured Servants

The growth of tobacco, rice, and indigo and the plantation economy created a tremendous need for labor in Southern English America. Without the aid of modern machinery, human sweat and blood was necessary for the planting, cultivation, and harvesting of these cash crops. While slaves existed in the English colonies throughout the 1600s, indentured servitude was the method of choice employed by many planters before the 1680s. This system provided incentives for both the master and servant to increase the working population of the Chesapeake colonies.

Virginia and Maryland operated under what was known as the "headright system." The leaders of each colony knew that labor was essential for economic survival, so they provided incentives for planters to import workers. For each laborer brought across the Atlantic, the master was rewarded with 50 acres of land. This system was used by wealthy plantation aristocrats to increase their land holdings dramatically. In addition, of course, they received the services of the workers for the duration of the indenture.

This system seemed to benefit the servant as well. Each indentured servant would have their fare across the Atlantic paid in full by their master. A contract was written that stipulated the length of service — typically five years. The servant would be supplied room and board while working in the master's fields. Upon completion of the contract, the servant would receive "freedom dues," a pre-arranged termination bonus. This might include land, money, a gun, clothes or food. On the surface it seemed like a terrific way for the luckless English poor to make their way to prosperity in a new land. Beneath the surface, this was not often the case.

Only about 40 percent of indentured servants lived to complete the terms of their contracts. Female servants were often the subject of harassment from their masters. A woman who became pregnant while a servant often had years tacked on to the end of her service time. Early in the century, some servants were able to gain their own land as free men. But by 1660, much of the best land was claimed by the large land owners. The former servants were pushed westward, where the mountainous land was less arable and the threat from Indians constant. A class of angry, impoverished pioneer farmers began to emerge as the 1600s grew old. After Bacon's Rebellion in 1676, planters began to prefer permanent African slavery to the headright system that had previously enabled them to prosper.

The Growth of Slavery

Africans were the immigrants to the British New World that had no choice in their destinations or destinies. The first African Americans that arrived in Jamestown in 1619 on a Dutch trading ship were not slaves, nor were they free. They served time as indentured servants until their obligations were complete. Although these lucky individuals lived out the remainder of their lives as free men, the passing decades would make this a rarity. Despite the complete lack of a slave tradition in mother England, slavery gradually replaced indentured servitude as the chief means for plantation labor in the Old South.

Virginia would become the first British colony to legally establish slavery in 1661. Maryland and the Carolinas were soon to follow. The only Southern colony to resist the onset of slavery was Georgia, created as an Enlightened experiment. Seventeen years after its formation, Georgia too succumbed to the pressures of its own citizens and repealed the ban on African slavery. Laws soon passed in these areas that condemned all children of African slaves to lifetimes in chains.

No northern or middle colony was without its slaves. From Puritan Massachusetts to Quaker Pennsylvania, Africans lived in bondage. Economics and geography did not promote the need for slave importation like the plantation South. Consequently, the slave population remained small compared to their southern neighbors. While laws throughout the region recognized the existence of slavery, it was far less systematized. Slaves were more frequently granted their freedom, and opposition to the institution was more common, especially in Pennsylvania.

As British colonists became convinced that Africans best served their demand for labor, importation increased. By the turn of the eighteenth century African slaves numbered in the tens of thousands in the British colonies. Before the first shots are fired at Lexington and Concord, they totaled in the hundreds of thousands. The cries for liberty by the colonial leaders that were to follow turned out to be merely white cries.

Slave Life on the Farm and in the Town

Slaves on Southern plantations worked a variety of tasks and performed many kinds of labor.



What was it like to live in bondage? The experiences of slaves in captivity varied greatly. Indeed, Puritan merchants and Southern planters have as much in common as their slaves. The type of life slaves could expect to live depended first and foremost on whether they lived on farms or in towns.

The first image that comes to mind when considering chattel slavery is plantation life. Of course the cultivation of the planter's crop was the priority. Beyond these duties, slaves might also be expected to clear land, build a fence, or perform other odd jobs as the circumstances might dictate. Larger plantations usually brought harsher working conditions. Overseers might be assigned to monitor the work. As they had little connection to the slave, they tended to treat the slaves more brutally. Sometimes a slave, called a driver, would be enticed into holding this position. Accordingly, drivers were hated in the slave community. Living quarters were small and spartan, and food usually consisted of a few morsels of meat and bread.

Large plantations might also have household slaves. These domestic servants would prepare the master's meals, tend the house, prepare for guests, and sometimes look after the master's children. Household slaves often were treated better than plantation slaves. They usually ate better and were in some cases considered part of the extended family.



This painting shows slaves picking cotton on a Mississippi plantation. All slaves and their offspring were put to work — youngsters would begin carrying water at the age of 5 or 6 years.

Slaves that lived on smaller farms often enjoyed closer relations with their masters than plantation slaves. It stands to reason that a farmer working side by side with four slaves might develop closer bonds than a planter who owns four hundred. This sometimes, but not always, led to kinder treatment.

Some urban merchants and artisans employed slave labor in their shops. This enabled slaves to acquire marketable skills. In fact, white craftsmen often displayed strong resentment, believing the price of their labor would suffer. Generally, slaves that lived in towns had greater freedom than those that lived on the farm. They met more people and became more worldly. Daring individuals sometimes took the opportunity to escape.

A New African-American Culture

When immigrants reach a new land, their old ways die hard. This has been the case with most immigrant groups to the New World. The language, customs, values, religious beliefs, and artistic forms they bring across the Atlantic are reshaped by the new realities of America and, in turn, add to its fabric. The rich traditions of Africa combined with the British colonial experience created a new ethnicity — the African American.

Much controversy arises when attempts are made to determine what African traditions have survived in the New World. Hundreds of words, such as "banjo" and "okra" are part of American

discourse. Africans exercised their tastes over cuisine whenever possible. Song and dance traditions comparable to African custom were commonly seen in the American South. Folk arts such as basket weaving followed the African model. Even marriage patterns tended to mirror those established overseas.

Much of African history is known through oral tradition. Folk tales passed down through the generations on the African continent were similarly dispatched in African American communities. Some did learn the written word. Poet and slave Phillis Wheatley is still studied. Her writings vividly depict the slave experience on the eve of the American Revolution.

Many devout British colonists saw conversion of slaves to Christianity as a divine duty. Consequently, the Christian religion was widely adopted by slaves. The practice of Christianity by slaves differed from white Christians. Musical traditions drew from rhythmic African and melodic European models. The religious beliefs of many African tribes merged with elements of Christianity to form voodoo. Spirituals also demonstrate this merger.

Despite laws regulating slave literacy, African Americans learned many elements of the English language out of sheer necessity. Since the planters' children were often raised by slaves, their dialects, values and customs were often transmitted back. This reflexive relationship is typical of *cultural fusion throughout American history*.

Irish and German Immigration

In the middle half of the nineteenth century, more than one-half of the population of Ireland emigrated to the United States. So did an equal number of Germans. Most of them came because of civil unrest, severe unemployment or almost inconceivable hardships at home. This wave of immigration affected almost every city and almost every person in America. From 1820 to 1870, over seven and a half million immigrants came to the United States — more than the entire population of the country in 1810. Nearly all of them came from northern and western Europe — about a third from Ireland and almost a third from Germany. Burgeoning companies were able to absorb all that wanted to work. Immigrants built canals and constructed railroads. They became involved in almost every labor-intensive endeavor in the country. Much of the country was built on their backs

Letter to the *London Times* from an Irish Immigrant in America, 1850

I am exceedingly well pleased at coming to this land of plenty. On arrival I purchased 120 acres of land at \$5 an acre. You must bear in mind that I have purchased the land out, and it is to me and mine an "estate for ever", without a landlord, an agent or tax-gatherer to trouble me. I would advise all my friends to quit Ireland — the country most dear to me; as long as they remain in it they will be in bondage and misery. What you labour for is sweetened by contentment and happiness; there is no failure in the potato crop, and you can grow every crop you wish, without manuring the land during life. You need not mind feeding pigs, but let them into the woods and they will feed themselves, until you want to make bacon of them. I shudder when I think that starvation prevails to such an extent in poor Ireland. After supplying the entire population of America, there would still be as much corn and provisions left us would supply the world, for there is no limit to cultivation or end to land. Here the meanest labourer has beef and mutton, with bread, bacon, tea, coffee, sugar and even pies, the whole year round — every day here is as good as Christmas day in Ireland.

In Ireland almost half of the population lived on farms that produced little income. Because of their poverty, most Irish people depended on potatoes for food. When this crop failed three years in succession, it led to a great famine with horrendous consequences. Over 750,000 people starved to death. Over two million Irish eventually moved to the United States seeking relief from their desolated country. Impoverished, the Irish could not buy property. Instead, they congregated in the cities where they landed, almost all in the northeastern United States. Today, Ireland has just half the population it did in the early 1840s. There are now more Irish Americans than there are Irish nationals.

In the decade from 1845 to 1855, more than a million Germans fled to the United States to escape economic hardship. They also sought to escape the political unrest caused by riots, rebellion and eventually a revolution in 1848. The Germans had little choice — few other places besides the United States allowed German immigration. Unlike the Irish, many Germans had enough money to journey to the Midwest in search of farmland and work. The largest settlements of Germans were in New York City, Baltimore, Cincinnati, St. Louis and Milwaukee.

With the vast numbers of German and Irish coming to America, hostility to them erupted. Part of the reason for the opposition was religious. All of the Irish and many of the Germans were Roman Catholic. Part of the opposition was political. Most immigrants living in cities became Democrats because the party focused on the needs of commoners. Part of the opposition occurred because Americans in low-paying jobs were threatened and sometimes replaced by groups willing to work for almost nothing in order to survive. Signs that read NINA — "No Irish Need Apply" — sprang up throughout the country.

Ethnic and anti-Catholic rioting occurred in many northern cities, the largest occurring in Philadelphia in 1844 during a period of economic depression. Protestants, Catholics and local militia fought in the streets. 16 were killed, dozens were injured and over 40 buildings were demolished. "Nativist" political parties sprang up almost overnight. The most influential of these parties, the Know Nothings, was anti-Catholic and wanted to extend the amount of time it took immigrants to become citizens and voters. They also wanted to prevent foreign-born people from ever holding public office. Economic recovery after the 1844 depression reduced the number of serious confrontations for a time, as the country seemed to be able to use all the labor it could get.

Later Immigrants.

Except for Native Americans, all United States citizens can claim some immigrant experience, whether during prosperity or despair, brought by force or by choice. However, immigration to the United States reached its peak from 1880-1920. The so-called "old immigration" brought thousands of Irish and German people to the New World.

This time, although those groups would continue to come, even greater ethnic diversity would grace America's populace. Many would come from Southern and Eastern Europe, and some would come from as far away as Asia. New complexions, new languages, and new religions confronted the already diverse American mosaic.

Most immigrant groups that had formerly come to America by choice seemed distinct, but in fact had many similarities. Most had come from Northern and Western Europe. Most had some experience with representative democracy. With the exception of the Irish, most were Protestant. Many were literate, and some possessed a fair degree of wealth.

The new groups arriving by the boatload in the Gilded Age were characterized by few of these traits. Their nationalities included Greek, Italian, Polish, Slovak, Serb, Russian, Croat, and others. Until cut off by federal decree, Japanese and Chinese settlers relocated to the American West Coast. None of these groups were predominantly Protestant.

The vast majority were Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox. However, due to increased persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe, many Jewish immigrants sought freedom from torment. Very few newcomers spoke any English, and large numbers were illiterate in their native tongues. None of these groups hailed from democratic regimes. The American form of government was as foreign as its culture.

The new American cities became the destination of many of the most destitute. Once the trend was established, letters from America from friends and family beckoned new immigrants to ethnic enclaves such as Chinatown, Greektown, or Little Italy. This led to an urban ethnic patchwork, with little integration. The dumbbell tenement and all of its woes became the reality for most newcomers until enough could be saved for an upward move.

Despite the horrors of tenement housing and factory work, many agreed that the wages they could earn and the food they could eat surpassed their former realities. Still, as many as 25% of the European immigrants of this time never intended to become American citizens. These so-called "birds of passage" simply earned enough income to send to their families and returned to their former lives.

Resistance to Immigration



Political cartoons sometimes played on Americans' fears of immigrants. This one, which appeared in a 1896 edition of the Ram's Horn, depicts an immigrant carrying his baggage of poverty, disease, anarchy and sabbath desecration, approaching Uncle Sam.

Not all Americans welcomed the new immigrants with open arms. While factory owners greeted the rush of cheap labor with zeal, laborers often treated their new competition with hostility. Many religious leaders were awestruck at the increase of non-Protestant believers. Racial purists feared the genetic outcome of the eventual pooling of these new bloods.

Gradually, these "nativists" lobbied successfully to restrict the flow of immigration. In 1882, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, barring this ethnic group in its entirety. Twenty-five years later, Japanese immigration was restricted by executive agreement. These two Asian groups were the only ethnicities to be completely excluded from America.

Criminals, contract workers, the mentally ill, anarchists, and alcoholics were among groups to be gradually barred from entry by Congress. In 1917, Congress required the passing of a literacy test to gain admission. Finally, in 1924, the door was shut to millions by placing an absolute cap on new immigrants based on ethnicity. That cap was based on the United States population of 1890 and was therefore designed to favor the previous immigrant groups.

But millions had already come. During the age when the Statue of Liberty beckoned the world's "huddled masses yearning to breathe free," American diversity mushroomed. Each brought pieces of an old culture and made contributions to a new one. Although many former Europeans swore to their deaths to maintain their old ways of life, their children did not agree. Most enjoyed a higher standard of living than their parents, learned English easily, and sought American lifestyles. At least to that extent, America was a melting pot.

Westward Expansion

The United States' third president, Thomas Jefferson, favored western expansion and access to international markets for American farm products. This vision was threatened, however, because France had control of Louisiana. Napoleon, who had now risen to power in the French Revolution, threatened to block American access to the important port of New Orleans on the Mississippi River. New American settlements west of the Appalachian Mountains depended upon river transport to get their goods to market since overland trade to the east was expensive and impractical.

Jefferson sent diplomats to France to bargain for continued trade access along the Mississippi. James Monroe, the top person negotiating in Paris, was empowered to purchase New Orleans and West Florida for between two and ten million dollars. Surprisingly, however, Napoleon offered much more. He was militarily overextended and needing money to continue his war against Britain. Knowing full well that he could not force Americans out of the land France possessed in North America, Napoleon offered all of Louisiana to the U.S. for 15 million dollars. The massive territory stretched from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains and more than doubled the size of the United States. Napoleon's asking price worked out to be about four cents an acre.

The deal was struck in April 1803, but it brought a good deal of controversy. While American development in the 19th century depended on western expansion, it also raised controversial

issues that might lead to the disunion of the United States. Some New England Federalists, for example, began to talk of seceding from the U.S. since their political power was dramatically reduced by the purchase. Federalist critics howled that the Constitution nowhere permitted the federal government to purchase new land. Jefferson was troubled by the inconsistency, but in the end decided that the Constitution's treaty-making provisions allowed him room to act.

Most of the Senate agreed and the Louisiana Purchase easily passed 26 to 6. Although 15 million dollars was a relatively small sum for such a large amount of land, it was still an enormous price tag for the modest federal budget of the day.



Thomas Jefferson's purchase of the Louisiana Territory in 1803 — over 600 million acres at less than 4¢ an acre — was an economic as well as a political victory, as it avoided a possible war with the French.

The gains were dramatic, as the territory acquired would in time add 13 new states to the union. In 1812, Louisiana became the first state to join the union from land bought in the purchase. Louisiana was allowed to enter the United States with its French legal traditions largely in place. Even today, Louisiana's legal code retains many elements that do not follow English common law traditions. The federal system could be remarkably flexible.

The Importance of the West

Land. Lots of land.

The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 intensified American migration to the west that was already well underway. Anglo-American settlement in the 18th century had largely been confined to the eastern seaboard. It made its boldest inroads where rivers allowed easy internal transportation. As a result the chief population centers of early North America were clustered on the coast or along its major inland waterways.

In 1790 the fast-growing population of the United States was 3.9 million, but only 5% of Americans lived west of the Appalachian Mountains that run from Maine to Georgia. By 1820, however, the total U.S. population had already reached 9.6 million and fully 25 percent of them lived west of the Appalachians in nine new states and three territories.



Conestoga wagons, most commonly found during a 100-year-span starting in 1750, carried everything from flour to furs, and became the symbol of settlers' journeys to the western frontier.

Western migration had become central to the American way of life and as much as two-thirds of all western families moved every decade. Interestingly, Cincinnati's most important trade connection was not with relatively nearby (but upriver) Pittsburgh, but instead lay 1500 miles south along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers at the great port of New Orleans. The most efficient route to market remained along waterways and access to New Orleans remained crucial for the western economy and its settlement.

This rapid population growth and geographic expansion caused a great deal of conflict. Native Americans in the west resisted American intrusion and fought renewed wars in the early 19th century. Furthermore, the expansion of plantation slavery beyond the coastal southeast meant that huge numbers of slaves were forcibly moved to new territories. In spite of these enormous human costs, the overwhelming majority of white Americans saw western expansion as a major opportunity. To them, access to western land offered the promise of independence and prosperity to anyone willing to meet the hardships of frontier life.

Most politicians of the era believed that the health of the republic depended upon providing affordable land to ordinary white Americans. Among Jeffersonian Republicans most popular policies was an expansionist agenda that encouraged western development. This played an important part in cementing the Democratic-Republican party's strength in the south and west.

Even among white settlers who benefited most from western migration, the expansion of the nation caused major alterations in American life. For instance, getting crops to market required improved transportation. States responded by giving charters to private companies to build roads (called turnpikes since they charged a fee), bridges, canals, or to operate ferry services. The state gave these companies special legal privileges because they provided a service that could benefit a wide segment of the population.

Nevertheless, many people opposed these special benefits as contradicting republican notions of equal opportunity for all. These new transportation projects reshaped the American landscape, but the larger economic promise for most of the new western lands lay in the massive inland rivers of the Ohio, Tennessee, and Mississippi, all of which ultimately flowed south to New Orleans.

Manifest Destiny

Expansion westward seemed perfectly natural to many Americans in the mid-nineteenth century. Like the Massachusetts Puritans who hoped to build a "city upon a hill," courageous pioneers believed that America had a divine obligation to stretch the boundaries of their noble republic to the Pacific Ocean. Independence had been won in the Revolution and reaffirmed in the War of 1812. The spirit of nationalism that swept the nation in the next two decades demanded more territory. The "every man is equal" mentality of the Jacksonian Era fueled this optimism. Now, with territory up to the Mississippi River claimed and settled and the Louisiana Purchase explored, Americans headed west in droves. Newspaper editor John O'Sullivan coined the term "manifest destiny" in 1845 to describe the essence of this mindset..

The religious fervor spawned by the Second Great Awakening created another incentive for the drive west. Indeed, many settlers believed that God himself blessed the growth of the American nation. The Native Americans were considered heathens. By Christianizing the tribes, American missionaries believed they could save souls and they became among the first to cross the Mississippi River.

Economic motives were paramount for others. The fur trade had been dominated by European trading companies since colonial times. German immigrant John Jacob Astor was one of the first American entrepreneurs to challenge the Europeans. He became a millionaire in the process. The desire for more land brought aspiring homesteaders to the frontier. When gold was discovered in California in 1848, the number of migrants increased even more.

At the heart of manifest destiny was the pervasive belief in American cultural and racial superiority. Native Americans had long been perceived as inferior, and efforts to "civilize" them had been widespread since the days of John Smith and Miles Standish. The Hispanics who ruled Texas and the lucrative ports of California were also seen as "backward."

Expanding the boundaries of the United States was in many ways a cultural war as well. The desire of southerners to find more lands suitable for cotton cultivation would eventually spread slavery to these regions. North of the Mason-Dixon line, many citizens were deeply concerned about adding any more slave states. Manifest destiny touched on issues of religion, money, race, patriotism, and morality. These clashed in the 1840s as a truly great drama of regional conflict began to unfold.

Seeking Empire

Since the early days of Jamestown colony, Americans were constantly stretching their boundaries to encompass more territory. When the United States government was formed, the practice continued. The first half of the 19th century was spent defining the nation's borders through negotiation and war, and the second half was spent populating the fruits of the labor. As the 20th century dawned, many believed that the expansion should continue.

Before 1890, American lands consisted of little more than the contiguous states and Alaska. By the end of World War I, America could boast a global empire. American Samoa and Hawaii were added in the 1890s by force. The Spanish-American War brought Guam, Puerto Rico, and

the Philippines under the American flag. Through initial negotiation and eventual intimidation, the United States secured the rights to build and operate a canal in Panama. Between 1890 and the start of World War I, the United States earned a seat at the table of imperial powers.

Purchase of Alaska

When William Seward proposed the purchase of Alaska in 1867, his peers thought he had gone mad. Russian America, as it was called, was a vast frozen wasteland surely not worth 7.2 million American dollars. "Seward's Folly," some scoffed. "Seward's Icebox," others razzed. The Senate saw the potential of its vast natural resources and approved the treaty, but the House stalled the purchase of the "Polar Bear Garden" for over a year. Not too much attention was paid to the new acquisition at first. Americans were too busy mending the fractured Union and then settling the continental West.

Hawaiian Annexation

By the time the United States got serious about looking beyond its own borders to conquer new lands, much of the world had already been claimed. Only a few distant territories in Africa and Asia and remote islands in the Pacific remained free from imperial grasp. Hawaii was one such plum. Led by a hereditary monarch, the inhabitants of the kingdom prevailed as an independent state. American expansionists looked with greed on the strategically located islands and waited patiently to plan their move.

Foothold in Hawaii

Interest in Hawaii began in America as early as the 1820s, when New England missionaries tried in earnest to spread their faith. Since the 1840s, keeping European powers out of Hawaii became a principal foreign policy goal. Americans acquired a true foothold in Hawaii as a result of the sugar trade. The United States government provided generous terms to Hawaiian sugar growers, and after the Civil War, profits began to swell. A turning point in U.S.-Hawaiian relations occurred in 1890, when Congress approved the McKinley Tariff, which raised import rates on foreign sugar. Hawaiian sugar planters were now being undersold in the American market, and as a result, a depression swept the islands. The sugar growers, mostly white Americans, knew that if Hawaii were to be annexed by the United States, the tariff problem would naturally disappear. At the same time, the Hawaiian throne was passed to Queen Liliuokalani, who determined that the root of Hawaii's problems was foreign interference. A great showdown was about to unfold.



(a)



(b)

Annexing Hawaii

In January 1893, the planters staged an uprising to overthrow the Queen. At the same time, they appealed to the United States armed forces for protection. Without Presidential approval, marines stormed the islands, and the American minister to the islands raised the stars and stripes in Honolulu. The Queen was forced to abdicate, and the matter was left for Washington politicians to settle. By this time, Grover Cleveland had been inaugurated President. Cleveland was an

outspoken anti-imperialist and thought Americans had acted shamefully in Hawaii. He withdrew the annexation treaty from the Senate and ordered an investigation into potential wrongdoings. Cleveland aimed to restore Liliuokalani to her throne, but American public sentiment strongly favored annexation.

The matter was prolonged until after Cleveland left office. When war broke out with Spain in 1898, the military significance of Hawaiian naval bases as a way station to the Spanish Philippines outweighed all other considerations. President William McKinley signed a joint resolution annexing the islands, much like the manner in which Texas joined the Union in 1845. Hawaii remained a territory until granted statehood as the fiftieth state in 1959.

Setting The Stage For Empire

While the United States slowly pushed outward and sought to absorb the borderlands (and the indigenous cultures that lived there), the country was also changing how it functioned. As a new industrial United States began to emerge in the 1870s, economic interests began to lead the country toward a more expansionist foreign policy. By forging new and stronger ties overseas, the United States would gain access to international markets for export, as well as better deals on the raw materials needed domestically. The concerns raised by the economic depression of the early 1890s further convinced business owners that they needed to tap into new markets, even at the risk of foreign entanglements.

As a result of these growing economic pressures, American exports to other nations skyrocketed in the years following the Civil War, from \$234 million in 1865 to \$605 million in 1875. By 1898, on the eve of the Spanish-American War, American exports had reached a height of \$1.3 billion annually. Imports over the same period also increased substantially, from \$238 million in 1865 to \$616 million in 1898. Such an increased investment in overseas markets in turn strengthened Americans' interest in foreign affairs.

Businesses were not the only ones seeking to expand. Religious leaders and Progressive reformers joined businesses in their growing interest in American expansion, as both sought to increase the democratic and Christian influences of the United States abroad. Imperialism and Progressivism were compatible in the minds of many reformers who thought the Progressive impulses for democracy at home translated overseas as well. Editors of such magazines as *Century*, *Outlook*, and *Harper's* supported an imperialistic stance as the democratic responsibility of the United States. Several Protestant faiths formed missionary societies in the years after the Civil War, seeking to expand their reach, particularly in Asia. Influenced by such works as Reverend Josiah Strong's *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (1885), missionaries sought to spread the gospel throughout the country and abroad. Led by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, among several other organizations, missionaries conflated Christian ethics with American virtues, and began to spread both gospels with zeal. This was particularly true among women missionaries, who composed over 60 percent of the overall missionary force. By 1870, missionaries abroad spent as much time advocating for the American version of a modern civilization as they did teaching the Bible.

Social reformers of the early Progressive Era also performed work abroad that mirrored

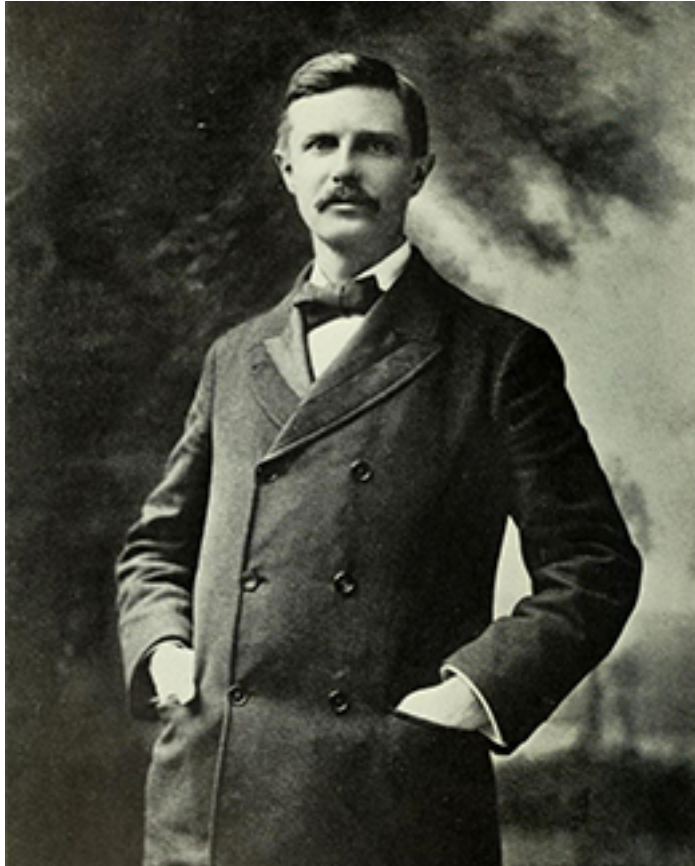
the missionaries. Many were influenced by recent scholarship on race-based intelligence and embraced the implications of social Darwinist theory that alleged inferior races were destined to poverty on account of their lower evolutionary status. While certainly not all reformers espoused a racist view of intelligence and civilization, many of these reformers believed that the Anglo-Saxon race was mentally superior to others and owed the presumed less evolved populations their stewardship and social uplift—a service the British writer Rudyard Kipling termed “the white man’s burden.”

By trying to help people in less industrialized countries achieve a higher standard of living and a better understanding of the principles of democracy, reformers hoped to contribute to a noble cause, but their approach suffered from the same paternalism that hampered Progressive reforms at home. Whether reformers and missionaries worked with native communities in the borderlands such as New Mexico; in the inner cities, like the Salvation Army; or overseas, their approaches had much in common. Their good intentions and willingness to work in difficult conditions shone through in the letters and articles they wrote from the field. Often in their writing, it was clear that they felt divinely empowered to change the lives of other, less fortunate, and presumably, less enlightened, people. Whether overseas or in the urban slums, they benefitted from the same passions but expressed the same paternalism.

Turner, Mahan, And The Plan For Empire

The initial work of businesses, missionaries, and reformers set the stage by the early 1890s for advocates of an expanded foreign policy and a vision of an American empire. Following decades of an official stance of isolationism combined with relatively weak presidents who lacked the popular mandate or congressional support to undertake substantial overseas commitments, a new cadre of American leaders—many of whom were too young to fully comprehend the damage inflicted by the Civil War—assumed leadership roles. Eager to be tested in international conflict, these new leaders hoped to prove America’s might on a global stage. The Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Theodore Roosevelt, was one of these leaders who sought to expand American influence globally, and he advocated for the expansion of the U.S. Navy, which at the turn of the century was the only weapons system suitable for securing overseas expansion.

Turner and naval strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan were instrumental in the country’s move toward foreign expansion, and writer Brooks Adams further dramatized the consequences of the nation’s loss of its frontier in his *The Law of Civilization and Decay* in 1895. As mentioned in the chapter opening, Turner announced his Frontier Thesis—that American democracy was largely formed by the American frontier—at the Chicago World’s Colombian Exposition. He noted that “for nearly three centuries the dominant fact in American life has been expansion.” He continued: “American energy will continually demand a wider field for its exercise.”

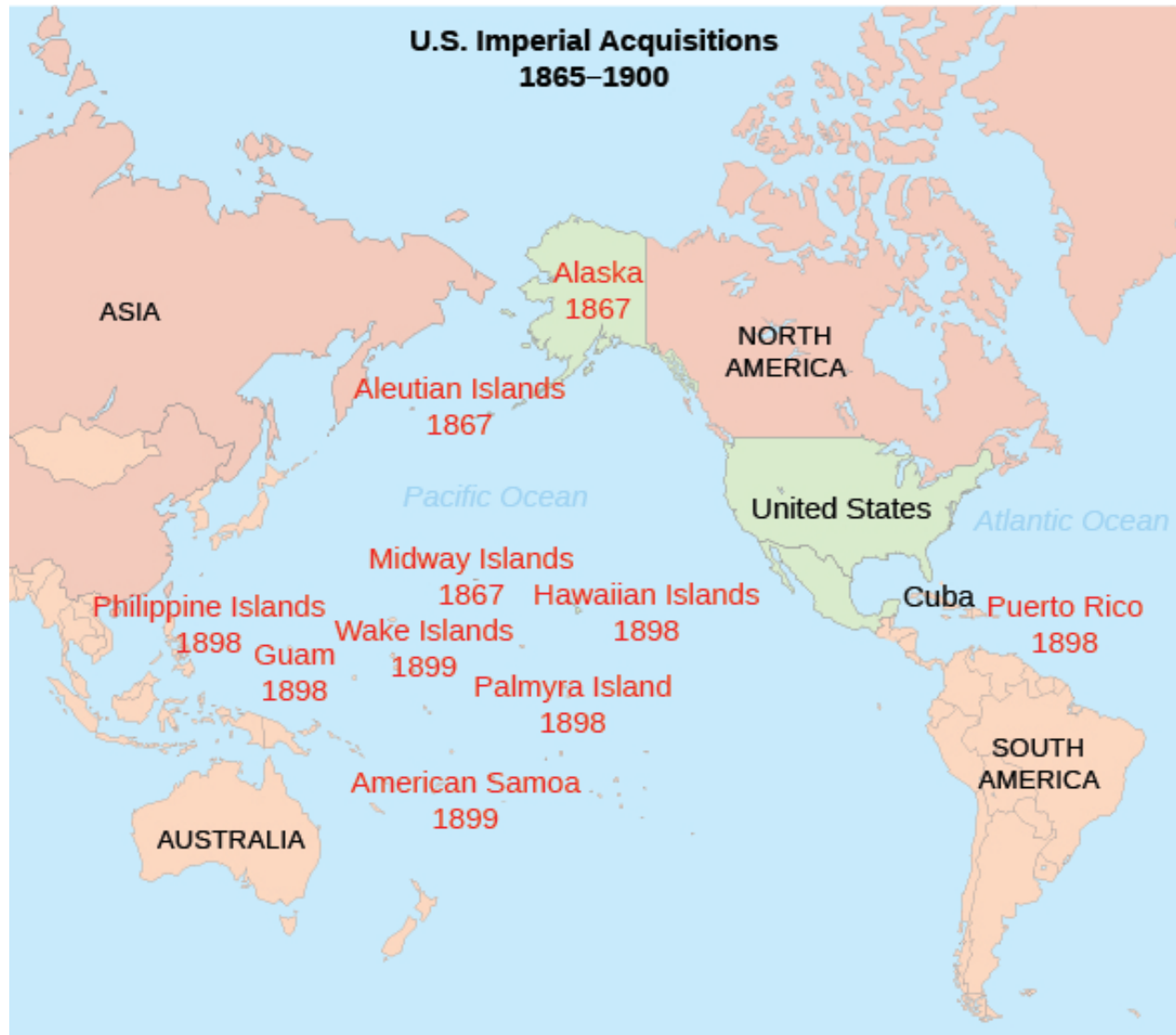


Historian Frederick Jackson Turner's Frontier Thesis stated explicitly that the existence of the western frontier forged the very basis of the American identity.

Although there was no more room for these forces to proceed domestically, they would continue to find an outlet on the international stage. Turner concluded that "the demands for a vigorous foreign policy, for an interoceanic canal, for a revival of our power upon our seas, and for the extension of American influence to outlying islands and adjoining countries are indications that the forces [of expansion] will continue." Such policies would permit Americans to find new markets. Also mindful of the mitigating influence of a frontier—in terms of easing pressure from increased immigration and population expansion in the eastern and midwestern United States—he encouraged new outlets for further population growth, whether as lands for further American settlement or to accommodate more immigrants. Turner's thesis was enormously influential at the time but has subsequently been widely criticized by historians. Specifically, the thesis underscores the pervasive racism and disregard for the indigenous communities, cultures, and individuals in the American borderlands and beyond.

While Turner provided the idea for an empire, Mahan provided the more practical guide. In his 1890 work, *The Influence of Seapower upon History*, he suggested three strategies that would assist the United States in both constructing and maintaining an empire. First, noting the sad state of the U.S. Navy, he called for the government to build a stronger, more powerful version. Second, he suggested establishing a network of naval bases to fuel this expanding fleet. Seward's previous acquisition of the Midway Islands served this purpose by providing an essential naval coaling station, which was vital, as the limited reach of steamships and their dependence on coal made naval coaling stations imperative for increasing the navy's geographic reach. Future acquisitions in the Pacific and

Finally, Mahan urged the future construction of a canal across the isthmus of Central America, which would decrease by two-thirds the time and power required to move the new navy from the Pacific to the Atlantic oceans. Heeding Mahan's advice, the government moved quickly, passing the Naval Act of 1890, which set production levels for a new, modern fleet. By 1898, the government had succeeded in increasing the size of the U.S. Navy to an active fleet of 160 vessels, of which 114 were newly built of steel. In addition, the fleet now included six battleships, compared to zero in the previous decade. As a naval power, the country catapulted to the third strongest in world rankings by military experts, trailing only Spain and Great Britain.



The United States had similar strategic interests in the Samoan Islands of the South Pacific, most notably, access to the naval refueling station at Pago Pago where American merchant vessels as well as naval ships could take on food, fuel, and supplies. In 1899, in an effort to mitigate other foreign interests and still protect their own, the United States joined Great Britain and Germany in a three-party protectorate over the islands, which assured American access to the strategic ports located there.

The Rise of American Imperialism

The Spanish-American War was the first significant international military conflict for the United States since its war against Mexico in 1846; it came to represent a critical milestone in the country's development as an empire. Ostensibly about the rights of Cuban rebels to fight for freedom from Spain, the war had, for the United States at least, a far greater importance in the country's desire to expand its global reach.

The Spanish-American War was notable not only because the United States succeeded in seizing territory from another empire, but also because it caused the global community to recognize that the United States was a formidable military power. In what Secretary of State John Hay called "a splendid little war," the United States significantly altered the balance of world power, just as the twentieth century began to unfold.



Despite its name, the Spanish-American War had less to do with the foreign affairs between the United States and Spain than Spanish control over Cuba and its possessions in the Far East. Spain had dominated Central and South America since the late fifteenth century. But, by 1890, the only Spanish colonies that had not yet acquired their independence were Cuba and Puerto Rico. On several occasions prior to the war, Cuban independence fighters in the Cuba Libre movement had attempted unsuccessfully to end Spanish control of their lands. In 1895, a similar revolt for independence erupted in Cuba; again, Spanish forces under the command of General Valeriano Weyler repressed the insurrection. Particularly notorious was their policy of re-concentration in which Spanish

troops forced rebels from the countryside into military- controlled camps in the cities, where many died from harsh conditions.

As with previous uprisings, Americans were largely sympathetic to the Cuban rebels' cause, especially as the Spanish response was notably brutal. Evoking the same rhetoric of independence with which they fought the British during the American Revolution, several people quickly rallied to the Cuban fight for freedom. Shippers and other businessmen, particularly in the sugar industry, supported American intervention to safeguard their own interests in the region. Likewise, the "Cuba Libre" movement founded by José Martí, who quickly established offices in New York and Florida, further stirred American interest in the liberation cause. The difference in this uprising, however, was that supporters saw in the renewed U.S. Navy a force that could be a strong ally for Cuba. Additionally, the late 1890s saw the height of yellow journalism, in which newspapers such as the New York Journal, led by William Randolph Hearst, and the New York World, published by Joseph Pulitzer, competed for readership with sensationalistic stories. These publishers, and many others who printed news stories for maximum drama and effect, knew that war would provide sensational copy.

However, even as sensationalist news stories fanned the public's desire to try out their new navy while supporting freedom, one key figure remained unmoved. President William McKinley, despite commanding a new, powerful navy, also recognized that the new fleet—and soldiers—were untested. Preparing for a reelection bid in 1900, McKinley did not see a potential war with Spain, acknowledged to be the most powerful naval force in the world, as a good bet. McKinley did publicly admonish Spain for its actions against the rebels, and urged Spain to find a peaceful solution in Cuba, but he remained resistant to public pressure for American military intervention.

McKinley's reticence to involve the United States changed in February 1898. He had ordered one of the newest navy battleships, the USS Maine, to drop anchor off the coast of Cuba in order to observe the situation, and to prepare to evacuate American citizens from Cuba if necessary. Just days after it arrived, on February 15, an explosion destroyed the Maine, killing over 250 American sailors. Immediately, yellow journalists jumped on the headline that the explosion was the result of a Spanish attack, and that all Americans should rally to war. The newspaper battle cry quickly emerged, "Remember the Maine!" Recent examinations of the evidence of that time have led many historians to conclude that the explosion was likely an accident due to the storage of gun powder close to the very hot boilers. But in 1898, without ready evidence, the newspapers called for a war that would sell papers, and the American public rallied behind the cry.

\$50,000 REWARD.—WHO DESTROYED THE MAINE?—\$50,000 REWARD.

The Journal will give \$50,000 for information furnished in a timely way, that will identify the perpetrator of the crime.

EDITION FOR GREATER NEW YORK
NEW YORK JOURNAL
AND ADVERTISER.

The Journal will give \$50,000 for information furnished in a timely way, that will identify the perpetrator of the crime.

DESTRUCTION OF THE WAR SHIP MAINE WAS THE WORK OF AN ENEMY

\$50,000!
\$50,000 REWARD!
For the Detection of the Perpetrator of the Maine Outrage!

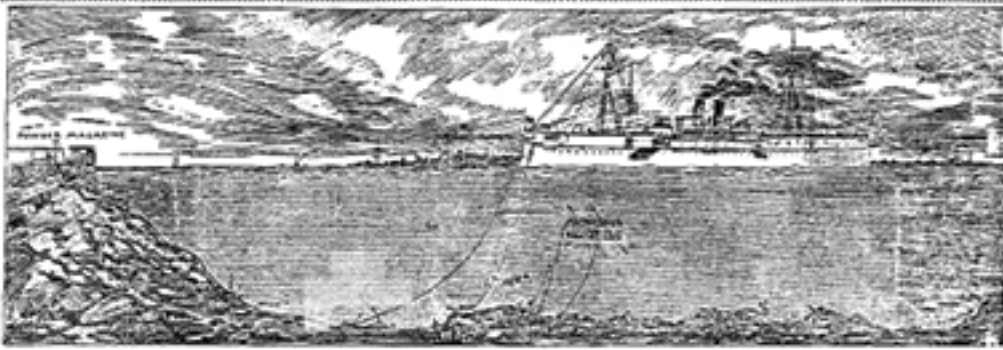
The New York Journal offers a reward of \$50,000 for information furnished in a timely way, that will identify the perpetrator of the crime. The reward will be paid in full as soon as the perpetrator is identified and the crime is proven. The reward will be paid in full as soon as the perpetrator is identified and the crime is proven. The reward will be paid in full as soon as the perpetrator is identified and the crime is proven.

Assistant Secretary Roosevelt
Convinced the Explosion of
the War Ship Was Not
an Accident.

The Journal Offers \$50,000 Reward for the
Conviction of the Criminals Who Sent
258 American Sailors to Their Death.
Naval Officers Unanimous That
the Ship Was Destroyed
on Purpose.

\$50,000!
\$50,000 REWARD!
For the Detection of the Perpetrator of the Maine Outrage!

The New York Journal offers a reward of \$50,000 for information furnished in a timely way, that will identify the perpetrator of the crime. The reward will be paid in full as soon as the perpetrator is identified and the crime is proven. The reward will be paid in full as soon as the perpetrator is identified and the crime is proven. The reward will be paid in full as soon as the perpetrator is identified and the crime is proven.



NAVAL OFFICERS THINK THE MAINE WAS DESTROYED BY A SPANISH MINE.

Large Spanish Torpedo, the Journal's special correspondent at Havana, tells that in the night before the Maine was destroyed, a Spanish torpedo was fired at the ship. The torpedo is believed to have struck the ship's magazine, causing the explosion. The Journal offers a reward of \$50,000 for information that will identify the perpetrator of the crime.

Hidden Mine or a Sunken Torpedo Believed to Have Been the Weapon Used Against the American Man-of-War—Officers and Men Tell Thrilling Stories of Being Blown Into the Air Amid a Mass of Shattered Steel and Exploding Shells—Survivors Brought to Key West Scout the Idea of Accident—Spanish Officials Protest Too Much—Our Cabinet Orders a Searching Inquiry—Journal Sends Divers to Havana to Report Upon the Condition of the Wreck.

McKinley made one final effort to avoid war, when late in March, he called on Spain to end its policy of concentrating the native population in military camps in Cuba, and to formally declare Cuba's independence. Spain refused, leaving McKinley little choice but to request a declaration of war from Congress. Congress received McKinley's war message, and on April 19, 1898, they officially recognized Cuba's independence and authorized McKinley to use military force to remove Spain from the island. Equally important, Congress passed the Teller Amendment to the resolution, which stated that the United States would not annex Cuba following the war.

The Spanish-American War lasted approximately ten weeks, and the outcome was clear: The United States triumphed in its goal of helping liberate Cuba from Spanish control. Despite the positive result, the conflict did present significant challenges to the United States military. Although the new navy was powerful, the ships were, as McKinley feared, largely untested. Similarly untested were the American soldiers. The country had fewer than thirty thousand soldiers and sailors, many of whom were unprepared to do battle with a formidable opponent. But volunteers sought to make up the difference. Over one million American men—many lacking a uniform and coming equipped with their own guns—

quickly answered McKinley's call for able-bodied men. Nearly ten thousand African American men also volunteered for service, despite the segregated conditions and additional hardships they faced, including violent uprisings at a few American bases before they departed for Cuba. The government, although grateful for the volunteer effort, was still unprepared to feed and supply such a force, and many suffered malnutrition and malaria for their sacrifice.

To the surprise of the Spanish forces who saw the conflict as a clear war over Cuba, American military strategists prepared for it as a war for empire. More so than simply the liberation of Cuba and the protection of American interests in the Caribbean, military strategists sought to further Mahan's vision of additional naval bases in the Pacific Ocean, reaching as far as mainland Asia. Such a strategy would also benefit American industrialists who sought to expand their markets into China. Just before leaving his post for volunteer service as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. cavalry, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt ordered navy ships to attack the Spanish fleet in the Philippines, another island chain under Spanish control. As a result, the first significant military confrontation took place not in Cuba but halfway around the world in the Philippines. Commodore George Dewey led the U.S. Navy in a decisive victory, sinking all of the Spanish ships while taking almost no American losses. Within a month, the U.S. Army landed a force to take the islands from Spain, which it succeeded in doing by mid-August 1899.

The victory in Cuba took a little longer. In June, seventeen thousand American troops landed in Cuba. Although they initially met with little Spanish resistance, by early July, fierce battles ensued near the Spanish stronghold in Santiago. Most famously, Theodore Roosevelt led his Rough Riders, an all-volunteer cavalry unit made up of adventure-seeking college graduates, and veterans and cowboys from the Southwest, in a charge up Kettle Hill, next to San Juan Hill, which resulted in American forces surrounding Santiago. The victories of the Rough Riders are the best known part of the battles, but in fact, several African American regiments, made up of veteran soldiers, were instrumental to their success. The Spanish fleet made a last-ditch effort to escape to the sea but ran into an American naval blockade that resulted in total destruction, with every Spanish vessel sunk. Lacking any naval support, Spain quickly lost control of Puerto Rico as well, offering virtually no resistance to advancing American forces. By the end of July, the fighting had ended and the war was over. Despite its short duration and limited number of casualties—fewer than 350 soldiers died in combat, about 1,600 were wounded, while almost 3,000 men died from disease—the war carried enormous significance for Americans who celebrated the victory as a reconciliation between North and South.

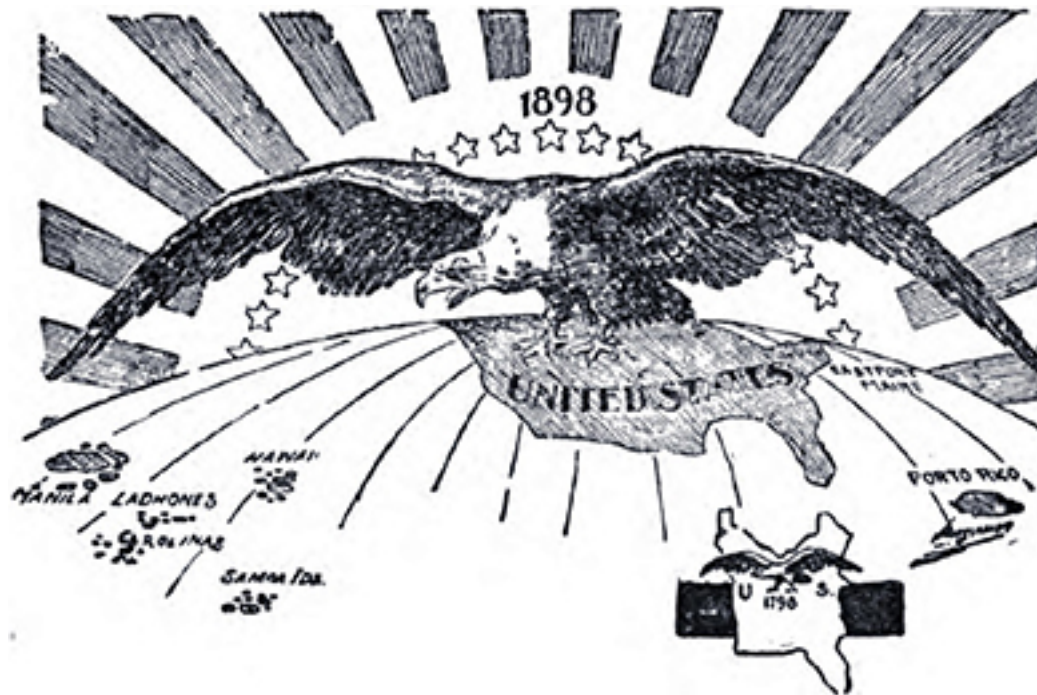
Establishing Peace And Creating An Empire

As the war closed, Spanish and American diplomats made arrangements for a peace conference in Paris. They met in October 1898, with the Spanish government committed to regaining control of the Philippines, which they felt were unjustly taken in a war that was solely about Cuban independence. While the Teller Amendment ensured freedom for Cuba, President McKinley was reluctant to relinquish the strategically useful prize of the Philippines. He certainly did not want to give the islands back to Spain, nor did he want

another European power to step in to seize them. Neither the Spanish nor the Americans considered giving the islands their independence, since, with the pervasive racism and cultural stereotyping of the day, they believed the Filipino people were not capable of governing themselves. William Howard Taft, the first American governor-general to oversee the administration of the new U.S. possession, accurately captured American sentiments with his frequent reference to Filipinos as “our little brown brothers.”

As the peace negotiations unfolded, Spain agreed to recognize Cuba’s independence, as well as recognize American control of Puerto Rico and Guam. McKinley insisted that the United States maintain control over the Philippines as an annexation, in return for a \$20 million payment to Spain. Although Spain was reluctant, they were in no position militarily to deny the American demand. The two sides finalized the Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898. With it came the international recognition that there was a new American empire that included the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Guam. The American press quickly glorified the nation’s new reach, as expressed in the cartoon below, depicting the glory of the American eagle reaching from the Philippines to the Caribbean.

Domestically, the country was neither unified in their support of the treaty nor in the idea of the United States building an empire at all. Many prominent Americans, including Jane Addams, former President Grover Cleveland, Andrew Carnegie, Mark Twain, and Samuel Gompers, felt strongly that the country should not be pursuing an empire, and, in 1898, they formed the Anti-Imperialist League to oppose this expansionism. The reasons for their opposition were varied: Some felt that empire building went against the principles of democracy and freedom upon which the country was founded, some worried about competition from foreign workers, and some held the xenophobic viewpoint that the assimilation of other races would hurt the country. Regardless of their reasons, the group, taken together, presented a formidable challenge. As foreign treaties require a two-thirds majority in the U.S. Senate to pass, the Anti-Imperialist League’s pressure led them to a clear split, with the possibility of defeat of the treaty seeming imminent. Less than a week before the scheduled vote, however, news of a Filipino uprising against American forces reached the United States. Undecided senators were convinced of the need to maintain an American presence in the region and preempt the intervention of another European power, and the Senate formally ratified the treaty on February 6, 1899.



Ten thousand miles from tip to tip.—Philadelphia Press.

The newly formed American empire was not immediately secure, as Filipino rebels, led by Emilio Aguinaldo, fought back against American forces stationed there. The Filipinos' war for independence lasted three years, with over four thousand American and twenty thousand Filipino combatant deaths; the civilian death toll is estimated as high as 250,000. Finally, in 1901, President McKinley appointed William Howard Taft as the civil governor of the Philippines in an effort to disengage the American military from direct confrontations with the Filipino people. Under Taft's leadership, Americans built a new transportation infrastructure, hospitals, and schools, hoping to win over the local population. The rebels quickly lost influence, and Aguinaldo was captured by American forces and forced to swear allegiance to the United States. The Taft Commission, as it became known, continued to introduce reforms to modernize and improve daily life for the country despite pockets of resistance that continued to fight through the spring of 1902. Much of the commission's rule centered on legislative reforms to local government structure and national agencies, with the commission offering appointments to resistance leaders in exchange for their support. The Philippines continued under American rule until they became self-governing in 1946.

After the conclusion of the Spanish-American War and the successful passage of the peace treaty with Spain, the United States continued to acquire other territories. Seeking an expanded international presence, as well as control of maritime routes and naval stations, the United States grew to include Hawaii, which was granted territorial status in 1900, and Alaska, which, although purchased from Russia decades earlier, only became a recognized territory in 1912. In both cases, their status as territories granted U.S. citizenship to their residents. The Foraker Act of 1900 established Puerto Rico as an American territory with its own civil government. It was not until 1917 that Puerto Ricans were granted American citizenship. Guam and Samoa, which had been taken as part of the war, remained under the control of the U.S. Navy. Cuba, which after the war was technically a free country,

adopted a constitution based on the U.S. Constitution. While the Teller Amendment had prohibited the United States from annexing the country, a subsequent amendment, the Platt Amendment, secured the right of the United States to interfere in Cuban affairs if threats to a stable government emerged. The Platt Amendment also guaranteed the United States its own naval and coaling station on the island's southern Guantanamo Bay and prohibited Cuba from making treaties with other countries that might eventually threaten their independence. While Cuba remained an independent nation on paper, in all practicality the United States governed Cuba's foreign policy and economic agreements.



While American forays into empire building began with military action, the country concurrently grew its scope and influence through other methods as well. In particular, the United States used its economic and industrial capacity to add to its empire, as can be seen in a study of the China market and the “Open Door notes” discussed below.

Why China?

Since the days of Christopher Columbus's westward journey to seek a new route to the East Indies (essentially India and China, but loosely defined as all of Southeast Asia), many westerners have dreamt of the elusive “China Market.” With the defeat of the Spanish navy in the Atlantic and Pacific, and specifically with the addition of the Philippines as a base for American ports and coaling stations, the United States was ready to try and make the myth a reality. Although China originally accounted for only a small

percentage of American foreign trade, captains of American industry dreamed of a vast market of Asian customers desperate for manufactured goods they could not yet produce in large quantities for themselves.

American businesses were not alone in seeing the opportunities. Other countries—including Japan, Russia, Great Britain, France, and Germany—also hoped to make inroads in China. Previous treaties between Great Britain and China in 1842 and 1844 during the Opium Wars, when the British Empire militarily coerced the Chinese empire to accept the import of Indian opium in exchange for its tea, had forced an “open door” policy on China, in which all foreign nations had free and equal access to Chinese ports. This was at a time when Great Britain maintained the strongest economic relationship with China; however, other western nations used the new arrangement to send Christian missionaries, who began to work across inland China. Following the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895 over China’s claims to Korea, western countries hoped to exercise even greater influence in the region. By 1897, Germany had obtained exclusive mining rights in northern coastal China as reparations for the murder of two German missionaries. In 1898, Russia obtained permission to build a railroad across northeastern Manchuria. One by one, each country carved out their own sphere of influence, where they could control markets through tariffs and transportation, and thus ensure their share of the Chinese market.

Alarmed by the pace at which foreign powers further divided China into pseudo-territories, and worried that they had no significant piece for themselves, the United States government intervened. In contrast to European nations, however, American businesses wanted the whole market, not just a share of it. They wanted to do business in China with no artificially constructed spheres or boundaries to limit the extent of their trade, but without the territorial entanglements or legislative responsibilities that anti-imperialists opposed. With the blessing and assistance of Secretary of State John Hay, several American businessmen created the American Asiatic Association in 1896 to pursue greater trade opportunities in China.

The Open Door Notes

In 1899, Secretary of State Hay made a bold move to acquire China’s vast markets for American access by introducing Open Door notes, a series of circular notes that Hay himself drafted as an expression of U.S. interests in the region and sent to the other competing powers. These notes, if agreed to by the other five nations maintaining spheres of influences in China, would erase all spheres and essentially open all doors to free trade, with no special tariffs or transportation controls that would give unfair advantages to one country over another. Specifically, the notes required that all countries agree to maintain free access to all treaty ports in China, to pay railroad charges and harbor fees (with no special access), and that only China would be permitted to collect any taxes on trade within its borders. While on paper, the Open Door notes would offer equal access to all, the reality was that it greatly favored the United States. Free trade in China would give American businesses the ultimate advantage, as American companies were producing higher-quality goods than other countries, and were doing so more efficiently and less expensively. The “open doors” would flood the Chinese market with American goods, virtually squeezing other countries out of the market.

Although the foreign ministers of the other five nations sent half-hearted replies on behalf of their respective governments, with some outright denying the viability of the notes, Hay proclaimed them the new official policy on China, and American goods were unleashed throughout the nation. China was quite welcoming of the notes, as they also stressed the U.S. commitment to preserving the Chinese government and territorial integrity.

The notes were invoked barely a year later, when a group of Chinese insurgents, the Righteous and Harmonious Fists—also known as the Boxer Rebellion—fought to expel all western nations and their



influences from China. The United States, along with Great Britain and Germany, sent over two thousand troops to withstand the rebellion. The troops signified American commitment to the territorial integrity of China, albeit one flooded with American products. Despite subsequent efforts, by Japan in particular, to undermine Chinese authority in 1915 and again during the Manchurian crisis of 1931, the United States remained resolute in defense of the open door principles through World War II. Only when China turned to communism in 1949 following an intense civil war did the principle become relatively meaningless. However, for nearly half a century, U.S. military involvement and a continued relationship with the Chinese government cemented their roles as preferred trading partners, illustrating how the country used economic power, as well as military might, to grow its empire.



While President McKinley ushered in the era of the American empire through military strength and economic coercion, his successor, Theodore Roosevelt, established a new foreign policy approach, allegedly based on a favorite African proverb, “speak softly, and carry a big stick, and you will go far” At the crux of his foreign policy was a thinly veiled threat. Roosevelt believed that in light of the country’s recent military successes, it was unnecessary to use force to achieve foreign policy goals, so long as the military could threaten force. This rationale also rested on the young president’s philosophy, which he termed the “strenuous life,” and that prized challenges overseas as opportunities to instill American men with the resolve and vigor they allegedly had once acquired in the Trans-Mississippi West.

Roosevelt believed that while the coercive power wielded by the United States could be harmful in the wrong hands, the Western Hemisphere’s best interests were also the best interests of the United States. He felt, in short, that the United States had the right and the

obligation to be the policeman of the hemisphere. This belief, and his strategy of “speaking softly and carrying a big stick,” shaped much of Roosevelt’s foreign policy.

The Construction Of The Panama Canal

As early as the mid-sixteenth century, interest in a canal across the Central American isthmus began to take root, primarily out of trade interests. The subsequent discovery of gold in California in 1848 further spurred interest in connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and led to the construction of the Panama Railway, which began operations in 1855. Several attempts by France to construct a canal between 1881 and 1894 failed due to a combination of financial crises and health hazards, including malaria and yellow fever, which led to the deaths of thousands of French workers.



Upon becoming president in 1901, Roosevelt was determined to succeed where others had failed. Following the advice that Mahan set forth in his book *The Influence of Seapower upon History*, he sought to achieve the construction of a canal across Central America, primarily for military reasons associated with empire, but also for international trade considerations. The most strategic point for the construction was across the fifty-mile isthmus of Panama, which, at the turn of the century, was part of the nation of Colombia. Roosevelt negotiated with the government of Colombia, sometimes threatening to take the project away and build through Nicaragua, until Colombia agreed to a treaty that would grant the United States a lease on the land across Panama in exchange for a payment of \$10 million and an additional \$250,000 annual rental fee. The matter was far from settled, however. The Colombian people were outraged over the loss of their land to the United

States, and saw the payment as far too low. Influenced by the public outcry, the Colombian Senate rejected the treaty and informed Roosevelt there would be no canal.

Undaunted, Roosevelt chose to now wield the “big stick.” In comments to journalists, he made it clear that the United States would strongly support the Panamanian people should they choose to revolt against Colombia and form their own nation. In November 1903, he even sent American battleships to the coast of Colombia, ostensibly for practice maneuvers, as the Panamanian revolution unfolded. The warships effectively blocked Colombia from moving additional troops into the region to quell the growing Panamanian uprising. Within a week, Roosevelt immediately recognized the new country of Panama, welcoming them to the world community and offering them the same terms—\$10 million plus the annual \$250,000 rental fee—he had previously offered Colombia. Following the successful revolution, Panama became an American protectorate, and remained so until 1939.

Once the Panamanian victory was secured, with American support, construction on the canal began in May 1904. For the first year of operations, the United States worked primarily to build adequate housing, cafeterias, warehouses, machine shops, and other elements of infrastructure that previous French efforts had failed to consider. Most importantly, the introduction of fumigation systems and mosquito nets following Dr. Walter Reed’s discovery of the role of mosquitoes in the spread of malaria and yellow fever reduced the death rate and restored the fledgling morale among workers and American-born supervisors. At the same time, a new wave of American engineers planned for the construction of the canal. Even though they decided to build a lock-system rather than a sea-level canal, workers still had to excavate over 170 million cubic yards of earth with the use of over one hundred new rail-mounted steam shovels (Figure 22.15). Excited by the work, Roosevelt became the first sitting U.S. president to leave the country while in office. He traveled to Panama where he visited the construction site, taking a turn at the steam shovel and removing dirt. The canal opened in 1914, permanently changing world trade and military defense patterns.



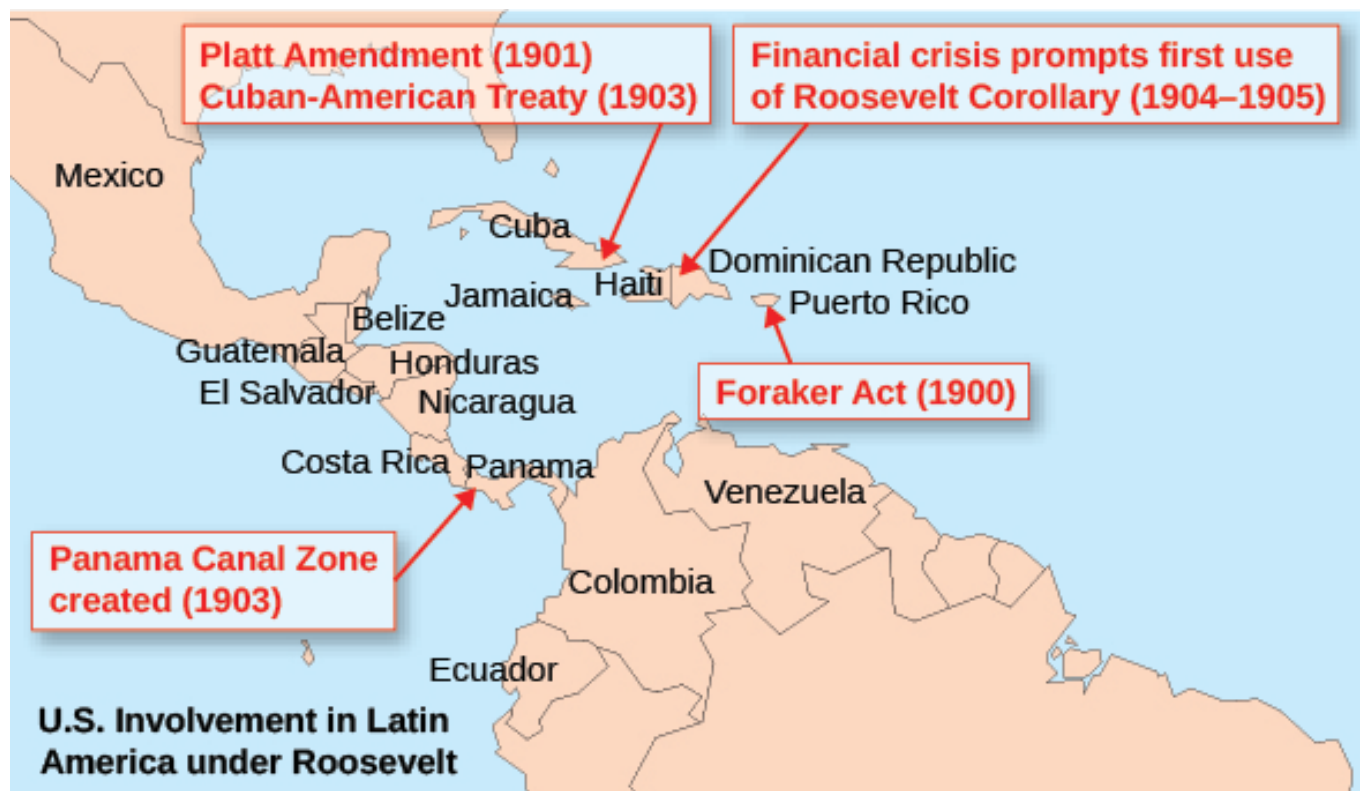
The Roosevelt Corollary

With the construction of the canal now underway, Roosevelt next wanted to send a clear message to the rest of the world—and in particular to his European counterparts—that the colonization of the Western Hemisphere had now ended, and their interference in the countries there would no longer be tolerated. At the same time, he sent a message to his counterparts in Central and South America, should the United States see problems erupt in the region, that it would intervene in order to maintain peace and stability throughout the hemisphere.

Roosevelt articulated this seeming double standard in a 1904 address before Congress, in a speech that became known as the Roosevelt Corollary. The Roosevelt Corollary was based on the original Monroe Doctrine of the early nineteenth century, which warned European nations of the consequences of their interference in the Caribbean. In this addition, Roosevelt states that the United States would use military force “as an international police power” to correct any “chronic wrongdoing” by any Latin American nation that might threaten stability in the region. Unlike the Monroe Doctrine, which proclaimed an American policy of noninterference with its neighbors’ affairs, the Roosevelt Corollary loudly proclaimed the right and obligation of the United States to involve itself whenever necessary.

Roosevelt immediately began to put the new corollary to work. He used it to establish protectorates over Cuba and Panama, as well as to direct the United States to manage the

Dominican Republic's custom service revenues. Despite growing resentment from neighboring countries over American intervention in their internal affairs, as well as European concerns from afar, knowledge of Roosevelt's previous actions in Colombia concerning acquisition of land upon which to build the Panama Canal left many fearful of American reprisals should they resist. Eventually, Presidents Herbert Hoover and Franklin Roosevelt softened American rhetoric regarding U.S. domination of the Western Hemisphere, with the latter proclaiming a new "Good Neighbor Policy" that renounced American intervention in other nations' affairs. However, subsequent presidents would continue to reference aspects of the Roosevelt Corollary to justify American involvement in Haiti, Nicaragua, and other nations throughout the twentieth century.



American Intervention In The Russo-Japanese War

Although he supported the Open Door notes as an excellent economic policy in China, Roosevelt lamented the fact that the United States had no strong military presence in the region to enforce it. Clearly, without a military presence there, he could not as easily use his "big stick" threat credibly to achieve his foreign policy goals. As a result, when conflicts did arise on the other side of the Pacific, Roosevelt adopted a policy of maintaining a balance of power among the nations there. This was particularly evident when the Russo-Japanese War erupted in 1904.

In 1904, angered by the massing of Russian troops along the Manchurian border, and the threat it represented to the region, Japan launched a surprise naval attack upon the Russian fleet. Initially, Roosevelt supported the Japanese position. However, when the Japanese fleet quickly achieved victory after victory, Roosevelt grew concerned over the growth of Japanese influence in the region and the continued threat that it represented to China and

American access to those markets. Wishing to maintain the aforementioned balance of power, in 1905, Roosevelt arranged for diplomats from both nations to attend a secret peace conference in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The resultant negotiations secured peace in the region, with Japan gaining control over Korea, several former Russian bases in Manchuria, and the southern half of Sakhalin Island. These negotiations also garnered the Nobel Peace Prize for Roosevelt, the first American to receive the award.

When Japan later exercised its authority over its gains by forcing American business interests out of Manchuria in 1906–1907, Roosevelt felt he needed to invoke his “big stick” foreign policy, even though the distance was great. He did so by sending the U.S. Great White Fleet on maneuvers in the western Pacific Ocean as a show of force from December 1907 through February 1909. Publicly described as a goodwill tour, the message to the Japanese government regarding American interests was equally clear. Subsequent negotiations reinforced the Open Door policy throughout China and the rest of Asia. Roosevelt had, by both the judicious use of the “big stick” and his strategy of maintaining a balance of power, kept U.S. interests in Asia well protected.



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When William Howard Taft became president in 1909, he chose to adapt Roosevelt’s foreign policy philosophy to one that reflected American economic power at the time. In what became known as “dollar diplomacy,” Taft announced his decision to “substitute dollars for bullets” in an effort to use foreign policy to secure markets and opportunities for American businessmen. Not unlike Roosevelt’s threat of force, Taft used the threat of American economic clout to coerce countries into agreements to benefit the United States.

Of key interest to Taft was the debt that several Central American nations still owed to various countries in Europe. Fearing that the debt holders might use the monies owed as leverage to use military intervention in the Western Hemisphere, Taft moved quickly to pay off these debts with U.S. dollars. Of course,

this move made the Central American countries indebted to the United States, a situation that not all nations wanted. When a Central American nation resisted this arrangement, however, Taft responded with military force to achieve the objective. This occurred in Nicaragua when the country refused to accept American loans to pay off its debt to Great Britain. Taft sent a warship with marines to the region to pressure the government to agree. Similarly, when Mexico considered the idea of allowing a Japanese corporation to gain significant land and economic advantages in its country, Taft urged Congress to pass the Lodge Corollary, an addendum to the Roosevelt Corollary, stating that no foreign corporation—other than American ones—could obtain strategic lands in the Western Hemisphere.



In Asia, Taft's policies also followed those of Theodore Roosevelt. He attempted to bolster China's ability to withstand Japanese interference and thereby maintain a balance of power in the region. Initially, he experienced tremendous success in working with the Chinese government to further develop the railroad industry in that country through arranging international financing. However, efforts to expand the Open Door policy deeper into Manchuria met with resistance from Russia and Japan, exposing the limits of the American government's influence and knowledge about the intricacies of diplomacy. As a

result, he reorganized the U.S. State Department to create geographical divisions (such as the Far East Division, the Latin American Division, etc.) in order to develop greater foreign policy expertise in each area.

Taft's policies, although not as based on military aggression as his predecessors, did create difficulties for the United States, both at the time and in the future. Central America's indebtedness would create economic concerns for decades to come, as well as foster nationalist movements in countries resentful of American's interference. In Asia, Taft's efforts to mediate between China and Japan served only to heighten tensions between Japan and the United States. Furthermore, it did not succeed in creating a balance of power, as Japan's reaction was to further consolidate its power and reach throughout the region.

As Taft's presidency came to a close in early 1913, the United States was firmly entrenched on its path towards empire. The world perceived the United States as the predominant power of the Western Hemisphere—a perception that few nations would challenge until the Soviet Union during the Cold War era. Likewise, the United States had clearly marked its interests in Asia, although it was still searching for an adequate approach to guard and foster them. The development of an American empire had introduced with it several new approaches to American foreign policy, from military intervention to economic coercion to the mere threat of force.

The playing field would change one year later in 1914 when the United States witnessed the unfolding of World War I, or “the Great War.” A new president would attempt to adopt a new approach to diplomacy—one that was well-intentioned but at times impractical. Despite Woodrow Wilson's best efforts to the contrary, the United States would be drawn into the conflict and subsequently attempt to reshape the world order as a result.

(Adapted from Independence Hall Association. (2014). U.S. history: Precolumbian to the new millennium. Retrieved from <http://www.ushistory.org/us/index.asp>)