

## Chapter 27: Empire and Expansion (1890-1909)

### Chapter Synopsis

- Right after the Civil War, the Americans were largely isolationist
  - They had a long period of internal reform (Reconstruction and the social/labor reforms of the Gilded Age)
- The time after the Gilded Age heralded much foreign affairs, with a new “age of empire” causing the U.S. to start on imperialistic affairs by 1900

### America Turns Outward

- There were many reasons that America started to look to foreign nations for expansion
  - Farmers and factories needed more markets because industry was increasing so quickly
  - There was a “robust growth in population, wealth, and productive capacity” that increased American power in general
  - An overseas market might act as another “safety valve” for the tensions caused by labor unions if commerce and the economy improved in general
  - The “yellow press” (exaggerated magazines, such as by Joseph Pulitzer and William Hearst)
  - Social Darwinism was strong, which had people believe that the strong should rule, and the ever-stronger Americans should expand and rule more of the less-powerful nations
- Other nations were beginning to become more imperialistic as well
  - Africa was divided into colonies of European countries
  - China gave up several colonies to some European countries
  - Americans and Germans both tried to take the Samoan Islands
- Secretary of state James Blaine created the Big Sister policy that would give American markets Latin American support and put the U.S. in the lead
  - Led to the first Pan-American Conference in Washington, D.C. (1889)
- When Britain had a disputed border with Venezuela and threatened to invade to settle it, President Cleveland sent secretary of state Richard Olney to intervene
  - Olney told the Britons that invading would violate the Monroe Doctrine, and stated that the U.S. was a formidable power in the Americas and that they should avoid conflict
  - The British were skeptical of the power of the Monroe Doctrine and were originally going to avoid it, but Germany and the Netherlands also challenged Britain’s power back in Europe; therefore, Britain decided to avoid another conflict with the U.S.
    - This was one of the events leading to the Great Rapprochement, or the reconciliation between the U.S. and Great Britain (which had high hostilities following the American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812)

*America in the World:* The world was rapidly being transformed into another age of colonization, with the European powers such as Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and others claiming parts of Africa and the far East. America had become a superpower and a large country in terms of population and size, which caused it to begin an expansionist movement. The “peer pressure” of the other nations was strong enough to break America from its isolationist bonds, one that had focused America’s government efforts

mostly on internal reform and conflict since its engenderment; the only exceptions previous to this age of expansionism were from external threats to the U.S. security or to its economy. These previous efforts included the Monroe Doctrine, which protected U.S. markets in Latin America and the U.S. itself from being invaded, and the annexation of California and other western powers from Mexico in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Russo-American treaty to prevent Russia and Britain from colonizing too much of the western North American region (which would then pose a European threat too close to the American border). This begun a trend in which America imposed its will on other countries, rather than simply protecting itself and its markets from these same foreign powers, and shows the growing influence of the U.S. and its path towards its role of “global policeman” following World War II.

### Spurning the Hawaiian Pear

- Hawaii was an important chain of islands for the Americans
  - It was a common stopping port for American ships
  - It had good sugar production
- Americans began to get a firmer grip on Hawaii
  - They warned foreign nations to keep off of Hawaii in 1840
  - They created naval base Pearl Harbor on Hawaii in 1887
- Asians on Hawaii outnumbered whites
  - The native population had mostly been killed off by the Caucasian diseases
  - The Americans were worried that Asian nations would intervene on behalf of their workers because of their poor treatment
- The sugar market in Hawaii declined when the high McKinley Tariff raised the price of Hawaiian sugar
- Americans tried to annex Hawaii, but Queen Liliuokalani of Hawaii prevented this
  - Americans led a revolt against the monarchy successfully (with the aid of American troops)
  - President Grover Cleveland refused to annex Hawaii, because he felt that the Americans were morally wrong in their actions to overthrow the Hawaiian people
    - Hawaii annexed after his presidency, in 1898

### Cubans Rise in Revolt

- Cuban people were mistreated by their Spanish colonizers
  - Cuban revolutionaries against the Spanish government, called insurrectos, used shows of force (such as “torching canefields and sugar mills and dynamiting passenger trains”)
- The sugar market was hurt by the McKinley Tariff (like in Hawaii) because it raised the price of it in America
- America had a lot of money invested in Cuba, could not afford to lose it via their revolution against Spain
  - Cuba also lay between the U.S. and Panama, where the highly-precious Panama Canal (trade access to the East) was to be located
- “Yellow journalism” greatly sensationalized the horrors of the mistreatment of the Cubans, often with overexaggeration and sometimes even with lies

- An American battleship Maine exploded on its way to Cuba, and more suspicion was put on the Cuban people for this (even though it was likely just an accidental explosion)
- President McKinley declared war on the Spaniards to free the oppressed Cubans (1898)
  - This was despite the fact that diplomats had already made agreements with Spain to end concentration camps and stop the violence
  - This was for the popular demand of the people (who wanted war because of the sensationalized press warning of the horrors that the Cubans faced)
  - America also passed the Teller Amendment stating that the U.S. would make Cuba a free state once it was freed from Spanish rule

*American and National Identity:* Much of the American identity showed in its early interventionist efforts in Hawaii and Cuba. First of all, there is the idea of Manifest Destiny above all, justifying the Americans' efforts to in their attempts to "help" these other nations by intervening and the effort to annex Hawaii despite the wants of its people and leader. Manifest Destiny also goes along with the U.S. idea of its superiority in Latin America, which rationalizes its work specifically in the Caribbean and Latin America. The strong response of Americans to the supposed oppression of Cuba, albeit exaggerated and already negotiated-out, shows the rabid anti-oppression views of the Americans, which had its roots all the way at the beginning of American history. These three factors explain why the Americans were so eager to join the international movement towards foreign intervention, on top of the reason that America had become a well-established industrial goliath.

#### Dewey's May Day Victory at Manila

- Theodore Roosevelt, assistant secretary to Navy Secretary Long, ordered Commodore George Dewey to conquer the Philippines (owned by Spain) if war broke out (which it did)
  - This was meant to be a way to force Spain to release Cuba by putting military pressure on a second Spanish colony
  - When war began, Dewey won against old Spanish ships, and later American forces conquered the capital city of the Philippines, Manila
- Focus on the Philippines also added focus to Hawaii
  - Americans concerned that diverted American attention would allow Japan to steal Hawaii, which was becoming increasingly important (i.e., to send provisions to Dewey in the Philippines)
  - The U.S. annexed Hawaii in 1898 and made Hawaii a U.S. territory in 1900, with all citizens of Hawaii granted American citizenship

#### The Confused Invasion of Cuba

- The Spanish sent warships to Cuba
  - Caused panic amongst Americans along the Eastern seaboard
- The Rough Riders were a group of fighters meant to help invade Cuba
  - They were mostly cowboys and ex-convicts
  - Led by Lieutenant Leonard Wood
- Military invasion of Santiago was successful, the Spanish retreated
- The U.S. also conquered Puerto Rico to drive out the Spanish there

- There was less fighting there and an easier American Victory
- The Spanish signed an armistice in 1898 to stop the fighting in Latin America
  - If they had held it off, the Americans might have lost due to their degrading state (many of them died of disease)

#### America's Course (Curse?) of Empire

- The Spanish and the Americans met in Cuba to discuss negotiations over the war in Latin America
  - Cuba was freed from Spain
  - Spanish Puerto Rico and Guam was taken by the U.S.
- The Philippines were the most confusing aspect of the negotiations
  - The U.S. did not want to give it back to Spain, for whom they thought gravely mistreated their colonies, yet President Cleveland did not feel that he could rightfully lead the islands
  - The U.S. ended up annexing the Philippines due to the idea that Americans needed to continue to take care of it
- There were many opponents to the annexation of Philippines
  - The opponents said that this was against the idea of self-determination (right to choose the people's form of government) because it was still ruled by a colonizing power (the U.S.) and to deny the Philippine people's request for freedom
  - They formed the Anti-Imperialist League
- Pro-expansionists argued that the Philippines were a necessary part of American expansionism; had a very positive and patriotic tone

*America in the World:* The Spanish-American war caused a great deal of interaction between the U.S. and foreign countries, many of them nations that it had never come into contact before. It became favorably acquainted with Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines, all of which it "protected" against Spanish colonialism, and its relations with Spain worsened after losing many of the latter's overseas assets. To other nations, the U.S. seemed more like any other western imperialist power, stealing colonies from another in its claims for land; however, it was somewhat different in that it claimed to free Cuba, the main source of contention during the Spanish-American war; this elevated their image over that of the monarchical, oppressive Europeans. While America ended up strengthening its interventionist policy in Latin America with the Roosevelt Corollary that was hated by the subordinate countries in South America and the Caribbean, it showed to the world a different interventionist scheme that avoided suppressive imperialism, which elevated foreign nations' respect of the U.S. while also showing the capacity for the U.S. to govern responsibly even past its own borders, again setting the scene for its place as a "global policeman".

#### Perplexities in Puerto Rico and Cuba

- Puerto Rico was anomalous
  - Anomalous means that its status is "neither a state nor a territory, and with little prospect of eventual independence"

- The Foraker Act (1900) established a little order by giving the Puerto Ricans a form of popular government
- Puerto Ricans were given full U.S. citizenship
- The Insular Cases were a group of Supreme Court rulings that stated that the Constitution and American laws did not fully extend to Puerto Rico and the Philippines
  - In other words, Puerto Ricans and Filipinos were not given full American rights even though they had full citizenship
- Many Puerto Ricans moved to New York City
  - Added to diversity of NYC's "melting pot"
- Cuba had "wondrous improvements in education, sanitation, and transportation"
  - There were cleanup efforts of the breeding areas of mosquitoes to reduce yellow fever (successfully)
- U.S. honored Teller Amendment by withdrawing troops from Cuba, but did not want to give Cubans full freedom
  - President McKinley was worried that Cuba was still weak on its own and that other imperialist powers such as Germany might try to take it (same reason they annexed the Philippines to keep under their control)
  - Cubans were forced to pass the Platt Amendment (1901) that essentially kept American power over Cuba
    - It stated that Cubans had to keep its treaties with the U.S., that the U.S. could restore troops in Cuba if it thought it was necessary to do so, and that its naval stations could only be sold to the U.S.
      - Guantanamo is a U.S. naval base in Cuba still owned by the Americans

*Politics and Power:* While Cuba was granted independence, the U.S. played a tricky power game with Puerto Rico to maintain control of it while avoiding to make it seem as though it were a colonial menace like it had shown of the Spanish in Cuba. Therefore, it established Puerto Rico as an official *territory* of the U.S. with full citizenship, but Puerto Rico was never granted the promise of citizenship at a population of 60,000 like any of the mainland states according to the Northwest Ordinance Act of 1787 that organized the Northwest and set the precedent for territorial admission as a state into the U.S. The U.S. passed the Foraker Acts and the Insular cases rulings that gave Puerto Ricans some, but not all, of the rights of Americans; among this were a lack of Congressional representation for the territory, even though Americans had long considered this of utmost importance for a country (hence the phrase, "No Taxation Without Representation!" by the Boston Tea Party raiders during the American Revolution). These political rulings show the changing political rights and powers that the Americans were granted since its creation, especially in this fervor of expansionism. Rather than giving total freedom to its territory of Puerto Rico and honoring its initial pledge to freedom and equality for all (as it had done for all of the states, slave and free, of the original colonies and new territories), it had decided to take a slightly imperialistic stance based on the global political trend towards acquiring new land.

#### New Horizons in Two Hemispheres

- The U.S. had showed itself as a military world power again

- “Britain, France, Russia, and other great powers” recognized America more seriously as a powerful nation and upgraded their ambassadors to improve their relations
- There was a general pro-fight spirit in America
  - This was strong enough to join North and South, helping heal the sectional wounds of the Civil War
- Adding new colonies to its grasp also gave larger responsibilities to the U.S.
  - In WWII, the Philippines showed to be more of a burden than a benefit, a “defenseless hostage” of Japan

#### “Little Brown Brothers” in the Philippines

- The Filipinos were not granted independence after the Spanish-American war like the Cubans, despite what they had originally hoped for
  - Emilio Aguinaldo, the same person who had helped create chaos that led to an opening in Manila that helped the Americans capture the city, led an insurgency against the Americans
    - The U.S. deployed 126,000 troops in response to quell the insurgency
    - The Filipinos led a guerrilla-style warfare
    - Americans tortured the Filipinos with the “water cure” and with reconcentration camps
    - Americans won when they captured Aguinaldo at a guerrilla camp (1901)
    - The American-Filipino War killed 4,234 Americans and 200,000 Filipinos
- Civil governor of the Philippines (and future president of the U.S.) William H. Taft was sympathetic to the Filipinos
- The U.S. government spent millions of dollars in the islands “to improve roads, sanitation, and public health”; also created a good education system
- The Filipinos kept asking for freedom, despite the funding provided by the U.S.
  - They got independence on July 4th, 1946

*American and National Identity*: The controversial efforts of the Americans to subdue the Filipinos showed the changing nature of American identity. The original view of the Americans afraid of suppression by Great Britain and other European powers had faded now that the U.S. was a powerful country that could rival those same European powers (i.e., it had defeated Britain in two wars and recently defeated Spain), which may have allowed the Americans to begin to wield those selfsame imperialistic powers that they had long despised. This goes along with the fact that the Civil War had ended only four decades prior; historians at the time may have looked back on that time as a lesson to keep the nation and its territories together at all costs to avoid the *United States* from splintering apart and losing the power in its unity and causing a disastrous conflict such as the Civil War. Also a part of national identity was an innate stubbornness, individual and political, that didn’t allow the government to stop an action that it had already begun, regardless if it was controversial or not; Andrew Jackson, for example, rammed through the “Intolerable Tariff” of 1828, which almost caused a secession of the Southern states; the subsequent rounding up of South Carolina showed the power and stubbornness of the central government; the American efforts in the Philippines echoed this part of American identity.

Hinging the Open Door in China

- Japan defeated China in 1895
  - Russia and Germany attacked economic systems of China, which was weakened from the conflict
    - Americans were alarmed because this could easily affect the free-trade status of China if the imperialistic powers of Europe and Russia monopolized the Chinese market
- Secretary of State John Hay wrote the Open Door note to all of the major world powers
  - This note asked all of these countries to leave China alone financially, and to respect Chinese rights
  - All of the major powers of the world accepted it but Russia
- The Chinese had the Boxer Rebellion (1899-901) that aimed to drive out all foreign powers
  - Was caused by the economic destruction by the foreign powers such as Russia and Germany, even after the Open Door note had been issued
  - The boxers killed foreigners and Chinese Christians, and it besieged the foreign affairs department of Beijing
  - Allied forces stopped the rebellion
    - This included thousands of American soldiers from the Philippines
      - The Americans sought to support the Wanghia Treaty to maintain trade relations between the U.S. and China
    - The Allies demanded an indemnity of \$333 million
      - The U.S. spent some of its share on educating Asian Americans (a clear sign of the American efforts to Westernize foreigners)
- Secretary of State Hay wrote another declaration that told other nations to allow China to keep its territory
  - This prevented China from being split up by foreign powers
  - This was officially added to the Nine-Power Treaty (1922)

*Work, Exchange, and Technology:* The political intervention that happened in China during the American expansionist period of the late 1800s were all driven by the potential of the market of China for the Americans, even more so than the urge to protect “inferior” and less industrially-advanced, non-European countries from oppression as it had in Latin America. As a result, Secretary of State John Hay wrote two strong letters to the powerful nations of the world urging them to prevent the mutilation of China’s financial and territorial spheres of influence. This had the double effect of showing the apparent righteousness of the Americans to free a nation from suppression (and thus again elevating the moral politics of the Americans), while also protecting their commercial interests.

Imperialism or Bryanism in 1900?

- President McKinley was very popular in his first term as president
  - He had “won a war and acquired rich, though burdensome, real estate; he had safeguarded the gold standard; and he had brought the promised prosperity of the full dinner pail”
- McKinley’s vice president for the election for 1900 was Theodore Roosevelt

- Roosevelt was the hot-headed governor of New York, who had been “kicked-out” by the bosses of the New York political machines to the vice presidency
- He was also widely supported like McKinley
- The Democrats chose William Jennings Bryan again
  - Bryan’s main issue against McKinley was the Republican imperialistic sense
- President McKinley and Vice President Theodore Roosevelt won the election of 1900

*Culture and Society:* The presidential election of 1900 showed the face of American societal interests at the time. President McKinley was commander-in-chief over the highly-popular Spanish-American war and had gained a lot of land for America and easily became president with a large difference in popular votes over Bryan. This was reminiscent of the Whig Party that had preceded the Republicans (and was also the major opponent to the Democratic Party at the time), whose only two presidents were wildly popular generals; due to America’s long history of conflicts with foreign nations and common victories, it showed how America was prone to such conflicts and how it actually invigorated its spirit— this was shown a few decades later when the Great Depression ended in the excitement of WWII. Bryan’s second loss of the presidential election also showed the weakening of the Democratic Party, which was a strong supporter of the poor, non-industrial classes, which helped the industrial side of America keep advancing and monopolizing over the poor. However, the importance of the foreign issues at hand were much more interesting and urgent than the domestic labor issues, which therefore remained mostly unsolved while foreign affairs issues were quickly resolved.

TR: Brandisher of the Big Stick

- President McKinley was killed by an anarchist after six months into second term
  - Roosevelt became president
- Roosevelt had a very unique character
  - He was very well educated (Harvard, Phi Beta Kappa honors, other education in Europe)
  - He was asthmatic but well-disciplined (exercised)
  - He was squinty, had a mustache, and was a cowboy-like figure
- Roosevelt promoted a very active government stance
  - He did denounced pacifists as “flubdubs” and “mollycuddles” and advocated for more muscular foreign affairs approaches
  - He believed that the president should lead boldly and should be very powerful
    - He believed that the president should be able to do anything that the Constitution does not specifically prohibit

Building the Panama Canal

- The Spanish-American War brought interest to having a canal through the isthmus of Central America again
  - Shipping and the U.S.’s naval needs would be greatly quickened by a canal through the Americas
- Old Clayton Bulwer Treaty with Great Britain prevented Americans from colonizing Latin America



- British had many hostilities in Europe and signed the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty (1901) that allowed the Americans to build the canal in Panama
- The New Panama Canal Company set a low price for building a canal in Panama (\$40 million)
  - Congress decided on building the canal through Panama (which settled the dispute over location; there had been previous claims to try and make it through Nicaragua)
- The Panamanians revolted in 1903, and Colombian forces almost revolted
  - Roosevelt quickly tried to ease tensions
  - Philippe Bunau-Varilla, the Panamanian minister, signed the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty that settled some aspects of the canal and its cost
  - The canal began construction in 1904
    - There were some difficulties such as “labor troubles to landslides and lethal tropical diseases”
    - It cost \$400 million and completed in 1914

#### TR's Perversion of Monroe's Doctrine

- Many of the Latin American countries remained in constant debt to European nations
  - European nations as a result acted as chronic debt collectors that remained in Latin America, thus violating the Monroe Doctrine
    - This prompted Roosevelt to pass the Roosevelt Corollary (1905) to the Monroe Doctrine that stated that the U.S. would intervene in any financial situations of Latin America, paying off the debt and doing whatever necessary in order to keep Europe away
      - Roosevelt Corollary put into action with the Dominican Republic in 1905 when the U.S. organized the tariff system of the Dominican Republic
      - The Roosevelt Corollary was seen by the Latin Americans as being an a scheme by the Americans to exert total control over Latin America, was greatly detested by them

#### Roosevelt on the World Stage

- Russia and Japan broke into war in 1904 over control of China's markets and ports (the Russo-Japanese War)
  - Both sides were collapsing: the Russians suffered military defeats and the Japanese secretly were running out of men and supplies for the war
    - The Japanese asked Theodore Roosevelt to help negotiate a peace with Russia to avoid revealing Japan's weakness
- Theodore Roosevelt happily intervened in the treaty concluding the war
  - He made both sides agree to concessions that neither of them liked, such as no cash indemnity for the Japanese
    - This worsened relations between Russia and the U.S. and Japan and the U.S.; fierce economic competition between the U.S. and Japan in Asia ensued
  - He received a Nobel Peace Prize in 1906 for this stopping of the Japanese-Russian war and for the mediation of disputes in North Africa

*Politics and Power:* Theodore Roosevelt had a unique idea of the role of the president in American politics. Rather than leading passively in the executive branch and serving as a check and balance to the other two branches, as the Constitution intended it to be, he slingshotted his role to the forefront, using his power to engage in many foreign affairs issues just because he had the power to do so. As a result, his presidential power was used to extend the Monroe Doctrine with his stronger Roosevelt Corollary, he built the Panama Canal in Panama and resolved conflicts with Colombia (who had earlier had power over the Panama region) and Britain (who had a mutual non-interventionist treaty with the Americans in Central America), and he interrupted another war between Russia and Japan. This was a degree of American power on a global level that had not been experienced before. American politics since has forever been geared towards international intervention (even in times without direct threat to Americans prompting intervention) as well as domestic affairs, and the executive branch has arguably become the most powerful branch after he set the precedent of such unilateral control.

#### Japanese Laborers in California

- Russo-Japanese War displaced many Japanese, many emigrated to the west coast of the U.S.
  - This led American nativists to worry that the Japanese would overtake the Americans in California
- A school in California asked for segregation of Asian Americans from other ethnicities
  - This act produced a storm of rage, cooled by a meeting with president Roosevelt
- Roosevelt sent battleships around the world to show American military might
- Japan signed the Root-Takahira agreement (1908) with Japan
  - It said that both nations would “respect each other’s territorial possessions in the Pacific and to uphold the Open Door in China”

*Migration and Settlement:* The Russo-Japanese conflict caused many Japanese to resettle, and some of them moved to the U.S. As a result, a new wave of exaggerated nativist xenophobia arose, even though the population of the Japanese was never very large (never more than 3% of California’s population). A school in California even wanted to segregate Koreans, Chinese, and Japanese from the rest of its students for these nativist concerns. Thus just a little stimulus caused by external migration showed the intense condescension of the Asians by the Populist party and labor unions, who thought of the Asians as an economic threat to laborers. Therefore, while Americans saw great economic opportunity in China and vowed to keep the financial “Open Door” of China open, the settlement of a few Asians into America showed the fierce social undesirability of those same asians (i.e., it showed the racism that still existed in American culture).