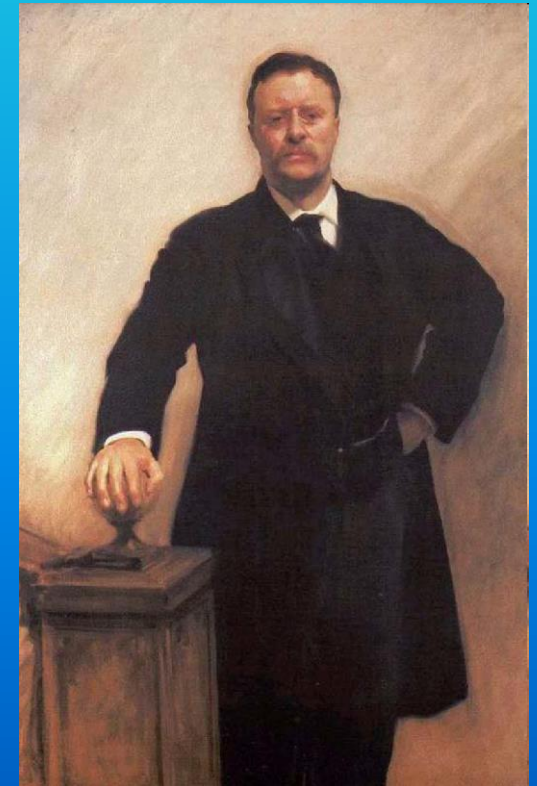


America Builds an Empire

American Imperialism and the Panama Canal



Review Questions:

1. Who were the “big dogs” during the Age of Imperialism?
2. Explain the process of Imperialism.
3. Explain 1 reason for imperialism.

The Age of Imperialism

- *The period between 1870 and 1914 has often been called the Age of Imperialism.*
- *Imperialism is the policy of powerful countries seeking to control the economic and political affairs of weaker countries or regions.*
- *During this period the United States and Japan became the imperial powers.*
- *One reason for the growth of imperialism is because industrial nations want raw materials from Africa and Asia.*
- *Many believe they had a duty to spread their religion and culture to people to whom they consider to be less civilized.*

Origins of Imperialism in America -

In his farewell address, George Washington had advised the nation to steer clear of permanent alliances. He urged Americans to have as little possible connections with other foreign nations. This policy was called isolationism, or having little to do with the political affairs of other nations.

Earlier in his career, George Washington followed a policy of expansionism, or extending its national boundaries. Americans pressed further westward to settle.

Following industrialization in America-

American factories turned out huge amounts of steel and other goods. The nation was growing rapidly, and arguments in favor of expansion held a great appeal. - A need for new markets and resources begin.

Spreading American culture and beliefs Expansionist also argued that Americans had a right and duty to bring western culture to the uncivilized people of the world. -

Other expansionist stressed the need to offset the vanishing frontier by gaining foreign lands. - Extension of Manifest Destiny

3 Factors that encouraged American Imperialism

1. Desire for increased military strength

2. Thirst for new markets

3. Belief in cultural superiority

Factor #1 Desire for Military Strength

- Captain Alfred Mahan, of the United States Navy, argued in his book: The Influence of Sea Power Upon History - that the United States needed a larger navy to protect American merchant ships.*
- A bigger navy would need more bases throughout the world.*
- Congress had begun to enlarge the modernized the navy. New steam hulled ships were being built.*
- The navy ships were called the Great White Fleet because they were painted white.*

Factor #2 Thirst for New Markets

The Purchase of Alaska

Secretary of the State, William Seward wanted the United States to dominate trade in the Pacific in 1867. However, Russia owned Alaska.

Seward was playing a card game with the Czar and he offered to sell Alaska for \$7.2 million dollars to the United States. The land cost of 2¢ per acre.

Most Americans called this purchase “Seward’s Folly”. They called this land the “icebox.”

He also persuaded Congress to annex (add) Midway Island in Pacific Ocean.

Factor #2 Thirst for New Markets

Then the United States acquired part of the island of Samoa. The people of Samoa had little say in the matter.

The United States demonstrated they have power in the Pacific Ocean.

Soon afterwards America took the land called Hawaii from the King Kalakaua. When he died his sister, Queen Liliuokalani came to the throne.

She resented the Americans that settled in Hawaii. Faced with American guns, Queen Liliuokalani would give up her throne.

- She wrote a protest to the United States government.*

Still moving West for Markets -

By acquiring Hawaii and Samoa, the United States gained important footholds in the Pacific.

- Rivalry among the industrial nations was very dominant.*
- China had once been the most advanced empire in the world, however, years of civil war weakened the empire. In addition, China failed to industrialize as other nations had in the 1800's. Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and Japan carved spheres of influence in China. A sphere of influence is an area, usually near seaport and run by another nation. The sphere had special trading privileges.*

The Spanish American War

In 1895, the Cuban people rebelled against Spanish rule.

Jose Marti, a Cuban poet and journalist was in support of a Cuban independence movement. He organized Cuban resistance against Spain using an active guerrilla campaign.

Americans invested more than \$50 million in the island of Cuba. American trade with Cuba was worth about \$100 million per year.

U.S. opinion was split over whether the United States should intervene in Cuba.

Yellow Journalism starts a war -

William Randolph Hearst used yellow journalism, or sensational stories that were often biased or untrue to anger Americans and to urge the U.S. to declare war against Spain. Hearst said, "you furnish the pictures and I'll furnish the war."

In 1898, fighting broke out in Havana, the Cuban capital.

President McKinley sent the battleship Maine to Havana to protect the American citizens there.

On February 15, a huge explosion ripped through the ship. The explosion killed at least 260 of the 350 sailors and officers on board.

Yellow journalists used the explosion to push the Americans into the war in Cuba. The real cause of the explosion has been linked to a fire in the engine room.

U.S.S. Maine



War is Declared -

On April 25, 1898 President McKinley declared war on Spain.

This war was called the Spanish-American War. The Spanish-American war lasted only four months.

The Secretary of the Navy, Theodore Roosevelt, felt it was important to attack the Spanish in the Philippines as soon as the war began.

George Dewey, commander of the Pacific fleet followed Roosevelt's instructions immediately after war was declared.



American troops land in Cuba.

None were more eager than Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt organized The First Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, later called the Rough Riders.

During the battle for the city of Santiago, Roosevelt led the Rough Riders in charge of the San Juan Hill. American troops would be successful in The Battle of San Juan Hill.

Two days later, the Americans destroyed the Spanish fleet in Santiago Bay. and the Spanish Army in Cuba surrenders.

An end to the War -

American troops then landed on Puerto Rico and claimed the island.

Spain then agreed to sign an armistice, thus ending the fighting.

In the Treaty of Paris signed in December of 1898, Spain agreed to grant Cuba its freedom as well as turn the islands of Guam and Puerto Rico over to the U.S. The U.S also acquired the Philippines by purchasing it for \$20 million dollars. After the war, American soldiers remained in Cuba while the nation debated who would rule. In the end, the United States let the Cuban people write their own constitution. However, Cuba had to accept the Platt Amendment. The amendment allowed the United States to intervene in Cuba and gave the United States control of the naval base in Guantánamo Bay. In effect, the amendment made Cuba an American protectorate, a nation whose independence is limited by the control of a more powerful country.

China

U.S imperialists saw the Philippines as a gateway to the rest of Asia, specifically to China.

China was weakened by war and foreign influence was already carved into Spheres of Influence or an area where a nation claimed special rights and economic privileges.

In fear that China would be colonized by other countries, the U.S. encouraged an Open Door Policy in China. Under the policy, all nations could trade with one another in China.

Many Chinese opposed foreign influences in the country. In 1900, in what became known as the Boxer Rebellion.

The Boxer Rebellion -

In 1900, in what became known as the Boxer Rebellion (or the Boxer Uprising), a Chinese secret organization called the Society of the Righteous and Harmonious Fists led an uprising in northern China against the spread of Western and Japanese influence there. The rebels, referred to by Westerners as Boxers because they performed physical exercises they believed would make them able to withstand bullets, killed foreigners and Chinese Christians and destroyed foreign property. From June to August, the Boxers besieged the foreign district of Beijing (then called Peking), China's capital, until an international force that included American troops subdued the uprising. By the terms of the Boxer Protocol, which officially ended the rebellion in 1901, China agreed to pay more than \$330 million in reparations.

Latin America

When Theodore Roosevelt became President in 1901, he was determined to build a canal through the Isthmus of Panama. An Isthmus is a narrow strip of land connecting larger bodies of land. Panama was the perfect place for canal because of its location. Roosevelt knew that a canal would greatly benefit the American commerce and military capability. It would also reduce the cost of shipping goods. A revolution between Columbia and Panama began. The people of Panama revolted against the Columbian's this made it very hard for Roosevelt to build the canal.

Soon, Panama won their independence from Columbia with support from the U.S. and would be recognized by the U.S. as an independent country.

Panama agreed to let the United States build a canal.

Building the Canal

In building the Canal, tropical heat and mosquitoes made it very difficult. Two tropical diseases were very common; Yellow Fever and Malaria.

Under the supervision of army engineer Colonel George Goethals, more than 40,000 workers struggled to dig the canal.

Finally in 1914, the first coach and steamship traveled through the Panama Canal.

American Politics in Latin America

In the Roosevelt Corollary (Monroe Doctrine), he claimed the right of the United States to intervene in Latin America to preserve law and order.

Roosevelt successor, William Howard Taft, also favored a strong American role in Latin America. He urged American bankers to invest in Latin America. This policy of building strong economic ties to Latin America became known as the Dollar Diplomacy. American investors responded eagerly. They helped build roads, railroads, and harbors in Latin America.

Woodrow Wilson, elected President in 1912, disliked the heavy handed foreign policies of his past predecessors. He proposed instead a policy of missionary diplomacy. Wilson's goals were to condemn imperialism, spread democracy, and promote peace in Latin America.

Results of American Imperialism

- *U.S. purchased Alaska in 1867.*
- *U.S. annexed Hawaii in 1898.*
- *Political and military competition, including the creations of strong naval forces*
- *1898, the U.S. helped Cuba win independence from Spain.*
- *Treaty of Paris - the U.S. gained Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippine Islands. Reorganized the government in Puerto Rico, crushed a bloody revolt in the Philippines*
- *Teller and Platt Amendments - established a protectorate over Cuba*
- *Open Door Policy give U.S. trading rights in China*
- *Panama Canal and the Roosevelt Corollary make U.S. the “police” of the Western Hemisphere*
- *President Wilson pressures Mexico and other countries in the W. Hemisphere to establish democratic governments.*