

CHAPTER 22

The Quest for Empire, 1865–1914

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After you have studied Chapter 22 in your textbook and worked through this study guide chapter, you should be able to:

1. Examine the late-nineteenth-century sources of American expansionism and imperialism.
2. Discuss the role of ideology and culture in American expansionism and imperialism during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
3. Describe the expansionist vision of William H. Seward, and indicate the extent to which this vision was realized by the late 1880s.
4. Examine and evaluate relations between the United States and Great Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
5. Discuss the modernization of the U.S. Navy in the late nineteenth century.
6. Discuss the causes and consequences of the Hawaiian and Venezuelan crises.
7. Examine the causes (both underlying and immediate) and discuss the conduct of the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War, and indicate the provisions of the Treaty of Paris.
8. Outline the arguments presented by both the anti-imperialists and the imperialists in the debate over acquisition of an empire, and explain why the imperialists prevailed.
9. Examine and evaluate late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century American policy toward Asia in general and toward the Philippines, China, and Japan, specifically.
10. Examine and evaluate U.S. policy toward the countries of Latin America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

THEMATIC GUIDE

The expansionist and eventually imperialistic orientation of U.S. foreign policy after 1865 stemmed from the country's domestic situation. Those who led the internal expansion of the United States after the Civil War were also the architects of the nation's foreign policy. These national leaders, known collectively as the foreign policy elite, believed that extending American influence abroad would foster American prosperity, and they sought to use American foreign policy to open and safeguard foreign markets.

Many Americans harbored fears of the wider world, but the foreign policy elite realized that those fears could be alleviated if the world could be remade in the American image. Therefore, after the Civil War, these leaders advocated a nationalism based on the idea that Americans were a special people favored by God. Race-based arguments, gender-based arguments, and Social Darwinism were used to support the idea of American superiority and further the idea of expansion, and American missionaries went forth to convert the "heathen." Furthermore, a combination of political, economic, and cultural factors in the 1890s prompted the foreign policy elite to move beyond support of mere economic expansion

toward advocacy of an imperialistic course for the United States—an imperialism characterized by a belief in the rightness of American society and American solutions.

The analysis of American expansionism serves as a backdrop for scrutiny of the American empire from the end of the Civil War to 1914. William H. Seward, as secretary of state from 1861 to 1869 and as a member of the foreign policy elite, was one of the chief architects of this empire. In examining Seward’s expansionist vision and the extent to which it was realized by the late 1880s, we again see the relationship between domestic and foreign policy.

Acquisition of territories and markets abroad led the United States to heed the urgings of Captain Alfred T. Mahan and to embark on the building of the New Navy. The fleet gave the nation the means to protect America’s international interests and to become more assertive, as in the Hawaiian, Venezuelan, and Cuban crises of the 1890s. The varied motives that led the United States into the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War offer another striking example of the complex links between domestic and foreign policy. In these crises of the 1890s, the American frame of reference toward peoples of other nations became more noticeable in the shaping of foreign policy. In the Cuban crisis, as in the Venezuelan crisis, Americans insisted that the United States would establish the rules for nations in the Western Hemisphere.

The Treaty of Paris, which ended the Spanish American War (or, more accurately, the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War, sparked a debate between imperialists and anti-imperialists over the course of American foreign policy. We examine the arguments of the two groups and the reasons for the defeat of the anti-imperialists.

In the last two sections of the chapter, we turn to the American empire in Asia and Latin America. The White American frame of reference with regard to other ethnic groups, along with American political, economic, and social interests, led to U.S. oppression of the Filipinos and shaped the Open Door policy as well as relations with Japan. The same factors determined American relations with Latin America. But in Latin America, the United States used its power to impose its will and, through the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, assumed the role of “an international police power.”

IDENTIFICATION AND SIGNIFICANCE

After studying Chapter 22 of *A People and a Nation*, you should be able to identify fully *and* explain the historical significance of each item listed below.

- Identify each item in the space provided. Give an explanation or description of the item. Answer the questions *who*, *what*, *where*, and *when*.
- Explain the historical significance of each item in the space provided. Establish the historical context in which the item exists. Establish the item as the result of or as the cause of other factors existing in the society under study. Answer this question: *What were the political, social, economic, and/or cultural consequences of this item?*

1. expansionism versus imperialism

2. the foreign policy elite

3. the idea of a racial hierarchy
4. the “male ethos” and imperialism
5. Captain Alfred T. Mahan
6. Turner’s frontier thesis
7. the Hawaiian-annexation question
8. the 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian government
9. the Cuban revolution
10. José Martí

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11. the *Maine*

12. the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War

13. Commodore George Dewey

14. anti-imperialist arguments

15. imperialist arguments

16. Emilio Aguinaldo

17. the Philippine insurrection

18. the Open Door policy

19. Walter Reed

20. the Panama Canal

21. the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine

22. the Great White Fleet

IDEAS AND DETAILS

Objective 1

1. Foreign policy decisions in the late nineteenth century were shaped largely by
 - a. the opinions of the American people.
 - b. the business community.
 - c. the foreign policy elite.
 - d. generals and admirals.

Objective 1

2. One of the sources of the expansionist sentiment of the late nineteenth century was the
 - a. desire of American farmers to learn new agricultural techniques from foreign agricultural specialists.
 - b. belief that foreign economic expansion would relieve the problem of overproduction at home.
 - c. belief that more immigrants would solve domestic labor problems.
 - d. desire of Latin American countries for the United States to exert political control over them.

Objectives 1 and 2

3. *Our Country* by Josiah Strong provides evidence that
 - a. most American religious leaders in the late nineteenth century were critical of American foreign policy in general and of American imperialism in particular.
 - b. belief in the superiority of Anglo-Saxons was used in the late nineteenth century to justify American expansion.
 - c. late-nineteenth-century American foreign policy was based on the principle that all nations in the world should be allowed to determine their own form of government and economic system.
 - d. the unprofessional nature of the American diplomatic corps in the late nineteenth century was a constant embarrassment to the United States.

Objective 3

4. William H. Seward's vision of an American empire
 - a. was confined to the Americas.
 - b. included the building of a Central American canal.
 - c. involved acquisition of territory by military conquest.
 - d. took a giant step forward with the purchase of the Danish West Indies in 1867.

Objective 5

5. The person largely responsible for popularizing the New Navy was
 - a. Andrew Carnegie.
 - b. Ulysses Grant.
 - c. Hamilton Fish.
 - d. Alfred T. Mahan.

Objective 6

6. President Grover Cleveland opposed the annexation of Hawai'i because he
 - a. saw no economic advantages to it.
 - b. wanted no close ties with people of another race.
 - c. learned that a majority of Hawaiians opposed annexation.
 - d. was afraid it would lead to war.

Objective 6

7. In the settlement of the Venezuelan crisis of 1895,
 - a. the United States showed a disregard for the rights of Venezuela.
 - b. the United States insisted that Venezuela adopt a democratic form of government.
 - c. Great Britain was able to bully the United States into submission.
 - d. the U.S. Navy showed its inability to operate in a crisis.

Objectives 7 and 10

8. The Teller Amendment
 - a. announced that the United States would annex Cuba.
 - b. led to the declaration of war against Spain.
 - c. expanded the theater of war to the South Pacific.
 - d. renounced any American intentions to annex Cuba.

Objective 7

9. Which of the following is the best explanation for the United States's declaration of war against Spain in 1898?
 - a. The war was undertaken out of a humanitarian desire to help the Cuban people.
 - b. Many farmers and businesspeople believed that victory would open new markets for America's surplus production.
 - c. Many conservatives believed that the war would act as a national unifier by unleashing a spirit of patriotism.
 - d. All of the above were motives for the war because different groups justified the war in different ways.

Objective 7

10. Most American casualties in the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War were incurred
- through diseases contracted during the war.
 - in the Santiago campaign.
 - in Admiral Dewey's battle with the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay.
 - by the Rough Riders in the charge up San Juan Hill.

Objective 8

11. The anti-imperialist campaign against the Treaty of Paris was
- based on purely constitutional arguments.
 - hindered by the inconsistency of the anti-imperialist arguments.
 - successful because of the influence of people like Mark Twain and Andrew Carnegie.
 - successful because of Bryan's decision to support the treaty.

Objective 9

12. In the Philippines, the United States
- fought to suppress an insurrection against American rule.
 - quickly lived up to its promise to give the country its independence.
 - held a referendum to determine the wishes of the Filipino people.
 - established a democratic government that guaranteed the same basic rights enjoyed by Americans.

Objective 9

13. Which of the following best expresses the ideology behind the Open Door policy?
- The self-determination of other nations must be preserved.
 - The closing of any area to American trade is a threat to the survival of the United States.
 - Freedom of the seas will lead to the economic expansion of the world community of nations.
 - All nations of the world should be considered equals.

Objective 10

14. Which of the following best explains the rationale behind the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine and the imperialistic behavior of the United States in Latin America?
- The United States believed it had a duty to help Latin Americans find the political system best suited to their culture.
 - The United States believed it had the right to intervene in the political and financial affairs of Latin American nations so that the region could be stabilized and intervention by European nations prevented.
 - The United States believed it should share its wealth and resources with the people of Latin America.
 - The United States believed that the Roosevelt Corollary would encourage European intervention in Latin America, thereby decreasing the need for American aid.

Objective 9

15. Relations between the United States and Japan were negatively affected by
- the extension of American aid to French colonies in Indochina.
 - American refusal to recognize Japanese hegemony in Korea.
 - President Roosevelt's extension of military aid to Russia during the Russo-Japanese war.

- d. the involvement of American bankers in an international consortium to build a Chinese railway.

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Objectives 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, and 10

1. Defend or refute the following statement in the context of American policy toward Central America and the Caribbean in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: “The persistent American belief that other people cannot solve their own problems and that only the American model of government will work produced what historian William Appleman Williams has called ‘the tragedy of American diplomacy.’”

Objective 1

2. Explain the relationship between domestic affairs and foreign affairs. How did domestic affairs during the late nineteenth century lead to an expansionist foreign policy?

Objective 8

3. Discuss the debate between the imperialists and the anti-imperialists, and explain why the former prevailed.

Objective 9

4. Explain American foreign policy toward China in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

ANSWERS

Multiple-Choice Questions

1.
 - c. Correct. The foreign policy elite, made up of “opinion leaders” from many areas of American society (business, politics, the military, labor, agriculture), were instrumental in the late nineteenth century, as they are instrumental today, in shaping American foreign policy.
 - a. No. The American public has not traditionally paid a great deal of attention to nor been well educated on foreign policy issues. As a result, foreign policy, unlike domestic policy, is not usually “shaped” by the people.
 - b. No. Although the business community had a hand in the shaping of foreign policy, it is a mistake to say that the business community alone was “largely” responsible for foreign policy decisions.
 - d. No. Although military leaders had a hand in the shaping of foreign policy, it is a mistake to say that such policy in the late nineteenth century was “shaped largely” by this one group.
2.
 - b. Correct. In the final third of the nineteenth century, depressions affected the U.S. economy about once a decade. Many business and farm leaders believed overproduction was a major cause of economic declines and advocated expansion into foreign markets as a preventive measure.
 - a. No. American farm leaders did not seek an expansionist foreign policy for the purpose of learning new agricultural techniques from foreign agricultural specialists.

- c. No. The expansionist sentiment of the late nineteenth century was not fueled by the belief that domestic labor problems could be solved by increasing the number of immigrants.
- d. No. Although U.S. economic and political influence increased in Latin America in the late nineteenth century, especially after the Spanish-American War, the states of Latin America did not want the United States to exert political control over them.
3. b. Correct. In his book, Reverend Josiah Strong stated the belief that the Anglo-Saxon race was superior to and was destined to lead others.
- a. Although some religious leaders doubtless criticized American foreign policy in the late nineteenth century, it is a mistake to say that “most” did so. Certainly, Reverend Josiah Strong was not critical of American imperialism in *Our Country*.
- c. No. *Our Country* does not provide evidence that late-nineteenth-century American foreign policy was based on the principle of self-determination.
- d. No. Although it is true that the American diplomatic corps was one of the worst in the world in the late nineteenth century, this was not a topic that Reverend Josiah Strong dealt with in his book.
4. b. Correct. Seward advocated a canal through Central America as essential to the unity of the large American empire that he envisioned.
- a. No. Seward’s vision of an American empire included Iceland, Greenland, Hawai‘i, and certain Pacific islands as well as expansion throughout the Americas.
- c. No. Seward believed that other peoples would find the republican principles of American society attractive. Therefore, they would naturally gravitate toward the United States, making expansion by military means unnecessary.
- d. No. Although in 1867 Seward signed a treaty with Denmark to buy the Danish West Indies, the treaty was not ratified by the Senate. The Danish West Indies did not become part of the American empire until 1917.
5. d. Correct. Alfred T. Mahan argued that a modern, efficient naval force was essential for any nation that aspired to great-power status. Through his lectures and published works, he had an enormous impact on the successful drive to modernize the U.S. Navy, popularly known as the New Navy.
- a. No. Andrew Carnegie was founder of the Carnegie Steel Company, which controlled most of the steel production in the United States by 1900. Although he supported the concept of the New Navy and signed a lucrative naval contract in 1883, he was not responsible for “popularizing” the New Navy.
- b. No. Ulysses Grant was not responsible for popularizing the New Navy.
- c. No. Hamilton Fish, secretary of state under President Grant, was not responsible for popularizing the New Navy.
6. c. Correct. Cleveland supported economic expansion but did not believe it should lead to imperialism. () The facts of the Hawaiian revolution, revealed to him through an investigation he ordered, convinced the new president that annexation was being forced on the Hawaiians and was, therefore, imperialistic.

- a. No. Grover Cleveland was an expansionist who recognized the economic advantages of annexing the Hawaiian islands. His opposition to annexation was not based on economic issues.
- b. No. Cleveland's opposition to the annexation of Hawaii was not based on racial issues.
- d. No. Cleveland's opposition to the annexation of Hawaii was not based on fear that it would lead to war.
7. a. Correct. The boundary dispute between Venezuela and Great Britain was settled by an Anglo-American arbitration board that barely consulted Venezuela in its deliberations. By disregarding Venezuela's rights and sensibilities in this manner, the United States displayed an imperialistic attitude.
- b. No. The crisis did not center on the question of the type of government Venezuela had.
- c. No. The United States sent a strong protest to the British concerning their actions in Venezuela. The British stalled at first but then, not wanting war, bowed to American pressure. As a result, the Monroe Doctrine was strengthened and the United States and Great Britain began to form closer ties.
- d. No. The U.S. Navy did not become involved in the Venezuelan crisis of 1895.
8. d. Correct. After passing resolutions declaring Cuba to be free, Congress adopted the Teller Amendment, which disclaimed any intention by the United States to annex Cuba.
- a. No. The Teller Amendment did not announce American intentions to annex Cuba.
- b. No. The Teller Amendment, passed by the U.S. Congress, was related to the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War, but it was not a reason for the war.
- c. No. The Teller Amendment did not have the effect of expanding the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War to the South Pacific.
9. d. Correct. Those who supported the war came from a variety of groups in the United States, with each group having its own reason for supporting the war. To review the mixed and complex motives for the war, see page 406.
- a. No. Although there was a humanitarian aspect to U.S. entry into the Spanish-American War, this is not the best answer to the question.
- b. No. Although farmers and businesspeople did support the war because they believed victory would open new markets for America's surplus production, this is not the best answer to the question.
- c. No. Although many conservatives supported the war because they believed it would act as a national unifier by unleashing a spirit of patriotism, this is not the best answer to the question.
10. a. Correct. Of the over 5,400 Americans who died in the war, only 379 died in combat. All others died from malaria or yellow fever.
- b. No. In the destruction of the Spanish fleet outside Santiago harbor, the Spanish suffered 474 killed and wounded, and the United States suffered one killed and one wounded. This does not constitute "most" of the 5,400 Americans who lost their lives in the Spanish-American War.
- c. No. In the Battle of Manila Bay (May 1, 1898) Spanish losses numbered 381 killed, and American casualties consisted of eight wounded.
- d. No. In the charge up San Juan Hill, the Rough Riders lost about eighty-nine men. This does not constitute "most" of the 5,400 Americans who lost their lives in the Spanish-American War.

11. b. Correct. The anti-imperialists came from many different interest groups in American society. Each group looked at domestic issues differently and also found it impossible to speak with one voice on foreign policy issues. Therefore, they were hindered by the inconsistency of their arguments.
- a. No. The anti-imperialists used a variety of arguments in their campaign against the Treaty of Paris.
- c. No. Although Mark Twain and Andrew Carnegie spoke against the Treaty of Paris, the treaty passed by a 57-to-27 vote in the Senate.
- d. No. Believing it best to end the war and then push for Filipino independence, William Jennings Bryan supported the Treaty of Paris. However, his support for the treaty did not aid the anti-imperialist campaign. The treaty passed by a 57-to-27 vote.
12. a. Correct. The Filipinos felt betrayed by the Treaty of Paris, and under the leadership of Emilio Aguinaldo, fought for their independence in the Philippine insurrection. American forces finally suppressed the insurrection in 1901, leaving 5,000 Americans and 200,000 Filipinos dead.
- b. No. The Philippines were not granted independence until 1946.
- c. No. The United States assumed that it knew what was best for the Filipino people and held no referendum.
- d. No. The United States held sovereignty over the Philippines for forty-eight years. Although it attempted to establish a democratic government over the years, the United States did not guarantee to the Filipino people the same rights enjoyed by American citizens.
13. b. Correct. The ideology expressed in the Open Door was that the United States required exports; therefore, any area closed to American products, citizens, or ideas threatened the survival of the United States.
- a. No. As an ideology rather than just a policy, the Open Door was not based on the preservation of the self-determination of other nations.
- c. No. As an ideology rather than just a policy, the Open Door was not based on the idea that freedom of the seas would lead to the economic expansion of the world community of nations.
- d. No. As an ideology rather than just a policy, the Open Door was not based on the belief that all nations of the world should be considered equals.

14. b. Correct. The United States believed that the debts-default crisis in Latin America invited intervention by European powers acting to protect the financial interests of European banks. President Roosevelt deemed this to be a threat to the security of the United States and its interests in the region, which included not only American commercial and investment interests, but the Panama Canal as well. Therefore, the United States, to preserve its own security, believed that financial and political stability was essential in Latin America. Both the Roosevelt Corollary and U.S. behavior in the region demonstrate that the United States was willing to be the policeman of the region to protect its economic interests, its dominance, and to establish order.
- a. No. Both the Roosevelt Corollary and U.S. actions in Latin America support the idea that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the United States believed in the rightness of its own political system for Latin America.
- c. No. Although the United States has shared some of its wealth and resources with the people of Latin America, this clearly was not the rationale behind the Roosevelt Corollary.
- d. No. The Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine was an attempt to prevent European intervention in Latin America, not encourage it.
15. d. Correct. In an effort to increase American influence in Manchuria, President Taft was able to gain agreement on the inclusion of a group of American bankers in a four-power consortium to build a Chinese railway. In response (and in defiance of the Open Door policy), Japan signed a treaty with Russia by which the two staked out spheres of influence in China for themselves. This strengthened Japan's position in Manchuria and caused more friction between the United States and Japan.
- a. No. The United States did not extend aid to French colonies in Indochina in the early twentieth century.
- b. No. In its efforts to protect American interests in the Pacific (especially in the Philippines), the United States made concessions to Japan—the dominant power in Asia. Therefore, in the Taft-Katsura Agreement of 1905 the United States recognized Japanese hegemony in Korea and, in return, the Japanese pledged not to interfere with American interests in the Philippines.
- c. No. The United States did not want either Russia or Japan to become dominant in Asia but wanted each to balance the power of the other. Therefore, the United States remained neutral in the conflict and President Roosevelt, at the request of the Japanese, agreed to mediate the crisis.