

AP US History

Chapter 9 - Jacksonian America

Finn Frankis

Key Concepts

What are this chapter's key concepts?

- **4.1.I.C** - New Whig Party, led by Henry Clay, emerged by 1820s; disagreed with Jackson's Democrats on role/powers of federal government, issues such as national bank, tariffs, federal funding
- **4.1.I.D** - Regional interests often prioritized over national concerns for leaders' positions on slavery/economy
- **4.2.III.D** - American System (among other plans to unify U.S. economy), caused debates over whether agriculture or industry would be favored
- **4.3.I.A** - U.S. government sought to control North America, Western Hemisphere through exploration, removal of natives, Monroe Doctrine
- **4.3.I.B** - Frontier settlers championed expansion efforts; native resistance -> sequence of wars, federal efforts for relocation

The Rise of Mass Politics

How did Jackson usher in the rise of politics controlled by the masses?

Jackson, known for his success in the battle of New Orleans, was predated by but also led a great increase in democracy: before him, many states began to expand suffrage beyond propertyholders (with many compromises), but there was still significant room to improve in African American, women, and native suffrage. Jackson, himself, legitimized the partisan system through his election and aimed to appeal to the common people by dethroning the long-standing elites in favor of commoners for rule; ultimately, he appealed more to his followers than the masses.

What characterized Jackson's inauguration?

Thousands of Americans from throughout the country of all social ranks crowded before Washington Capitol to watch his inauguration, with the crowd following their hero to the White House after the ceremonies concluded. They followed him into the White House, ruining the elegant furniture and carpetry to meet the new president. Many viewed it as a mob uprising, however.

What was Andrew Jackson's history?

- Born in 1767 to Irish parents in Carolinas; captured by British during Revolution at age of 13, injured after refusing to clean boot -> enduring hatred
- Sporadic education, various shops/farms; studied law, was admitted to practice
- Known for extensive yet dynamic political history
 - Early work was basic land claims
 - Soon elected as delegate to TN constitutional convention, becoming Congressman in same year (1797)
 - Resigned as Senator after one year; appointed to TN Supreme Court from 1798-1804
- Became prosperous as planter/merchant with slaves in elegant Nashville plantation; among largest in state
- Joined militia in 1801, soon became general; fought natives in AL/GA; fought British in War of 1812 with decisive victory in Battle of New Orleans
 - War of 1812 -> many hailed as hero, called for him to run for president

Andrew Jackson started with modest beginnings but eventually worked up to a career in law. He was a delegate to the constitutional convention of Tennessee, a Congressman, a Senator, a member of the Tennessee Supreme Court, a planter and merchant, and a militia-man.

What were the major democratic changes occurring pre-Jackson?

Jackson had little effect on economic equality, instead giving many more the right to vote. Up to the 1820s, most states had restricted right to vote to white male property owners and taxpayers, causing the less wealthy to be left out. However, change began in the western states and rapidly spread elsewhere to the eastern states fearful of emigration.

- Significant change -> great resistance, as in MA constitutional convention of 1820
 - Radicals demanded more poor representation, but conservatives resisted (including Daniel Webster) -> property requirement eliminated
 - Still had to be taxpayer to vote, own real estate to be governor
- Often far more successful, like in NY convention of 1821
 - Conservatives insisted that tax-paying requirement was insufficient, at least for state senators
 - Reformers cited Decl. of Indep., maintaining that property was not a fundamental concern of society -> requirement abolished
- Changes which went through often -> great instability
 - RI constitution (old colonial charter) had barred half of adult males from voting with conservative legislature blocking any reform efforts
 - Lawyer Thomas W. Dorr under "People's Party" drafted new constitution, submitted for pop. vote -> overwhelming approval but legislatures would not accept, submitting their own constitution (but narrowly defeated)
 - Dorr became governor in eyes of followers (Dorr Rebellion) -> old government proclaimed insurrection, began to imprison Dorrites
 - * Unable to capture state arsenal; Dorr surrendered
 - * Long-term effect of drafting new constitution to expand suffrage

Many began to call for universal suffrage, with significant resistance often leading to compromises (like in MA, with taxpaying requirement still intact), other states experiencing great success (like NY by citing the Declaration of Independence), and others seeing instability from great changes (like in RI with the Dorr Rebellion).

How could the U.S. still improve in terms of suffrage?

- In south, little overall success w/ election laws continually favoring plantation owners, politicians of past
- Even in North, blacks were unable to vote (PA removed right in 1838)
- Women could vote in no states
- Voting was undemocratic: ballot not secret with spoken vote -> politicians could bribe/intimidate

The U.S. still needed many significant improvements to approach universal suffrage, including removing the property restriction/bias in the south, allowing African Americans and women to vote universally (no states allowed it), and changing voting to a more democratic format without rampant bribery.

What were some significant democratic reforms in the early nineteenth century?

The method of selecting presidential electors changed drastically, with a gradual shift from legislature selection to popular vote: by 1828, all states had shifted but SC. This allowed the number of voters to increase drastically over time.

Who was Tocqueville and how did he view American democracy?

- French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville, intrigued, documented growth of electorate, shift to political parties, rapid spread in right to vote after spending two years in U.S. during Jackson's time
 - Sent to study American prisons for humane influence; went beyond to write *Democracy in America*, examining daily lives of key Americans and cultures, associations, democratic visions
- French democracy had been restricted to landowners/aristocrats; Tocqueville realized failing aristocracy
- Tocqueville understood limits of democracy: favored white men, remaining a distant hope for many
- Ultimately spread American democracy to France, other European nations

Tocqueville wrote *Democracy in America*, examining American democracy and noting the significance of the collapsing aristocracy but also of the limits, still restricted to mostly white men and leaving out women, blacks, and natives. In the long term, he spread the ideals American democracy to many European nations.

How was the party system legitimized over time?

- Voter participation also result of interest in politics, party organization, party loyalty
- Initially, parties viewed as evil entities, with many believing nation should come to consensus without factional lines
- Quickly fell apart in 1820s, 1830s, believing discordant parties were key to democracy, beginning at state level
 - Van Buren's post-War of 1812 political faction (Bucktails) in NY state challenging established aristocratic leadership (under De Witt Clinton)
 - * Argued that institutionalized party could secure democracy unlike Clinton's closed elite
 - * Proposed ideological commitments trumped by party loyalty with main goal to preserve party's success
 - * Competing parties required for any given party to survive -> would force politicians to remain interested in will of people to balance each other
 - Jackson's election further legitimized on federal level
 - * Two-party system became official with legitimate institution under powerful opponents: Whigs
 - * Jackson's followers were officially Democrats

Parties were long viewed as evil and destructive, going directly against democracy. However, beginning with Martin Van Buren's political faction, the Bucktails, in New York state, with the argument that competing parties and party loyalty were essential factors to appeal to the people, parties were quickly legitimized on the state level. Jackson's election further legitimized it on the federal level: his followers were the Democrats and the opposition formally became the Whigs.

How did Jackson appeal to the common people?

- Jackson not a philosopher (unlike Jefferson) -> no uniform ideology, but embraced simple theory of democracy: to offer equal protection to all white males regardless of class
 - Represented direct assault on eastern aristocracy, effort to promote rising westerners/southerners
 - Justified subjugation of African Americans/natives: to protect white men
- Jackson first targeted federal officeholders, many of whom had ruled for over a generation; believed offices belonged to people, not long-term holders
 - Removed no more than one-fifth during eight years, mostly for misuse of funds or corruption
 - Dismissed no more than Jefferson, but philosophy gave future elected officials right to appoint their own followers to office
- Transformed process to win party's nomination, resenting caucuses for favoring elites
 - For 1832 election, established partisan convention to nominate for presidency; creators saw as democratic triumph where power would arise from people

Jackson's main goal was to limit the power of the elites and give the lower classes the opportunity to rise: he accomplished this by targeting long-standing federal officeholders (though few were ultimately removed) and by replacing the caucus system with a partisan convention to nominate the presidential candidate. In all, Jackson did successfully detrench the elites, but mostly transferred power to his own allies: those nominated at the conventions were rarely common men.

1 What were the critical tensions during Jackson's first term and how did this affect the political standings of many key players?

The most significant tension was Calhoun's proposed theory of nullification, which would allow states to nullify federal law; this tension escalated in the Webster-Hayne debate, where Hayne argued against Northeastern tyranny in favor of independent state control and the Jackson-supported Webster pushed for the Union and federal supremacy. Crisis emerged when SC attempted to nullify the Treaty of 1816, angering Jackson and potentially inciting violence; however, Clay's compromise of a gradual reduction solved this. Ultimately Calhoun's standing was reduced greatly in the eyes of Jackson while Van Buren, his greatest opponent, remained a strong ally of Jackson, and his influence was further strengthened by his social etiquette.

What fundamental beliefs pushed Jackson to despise the federal power?

Although he despised the concentration of power in Washington, reducing the potential of those without connections, and thus pushed an economic plan to restrict it, Jackson still asserted the overall control and power of the union in facing the theory of nullification.

What formed the basis of Calhoun's theory of nullification?

- 46 year-old Calhoun fell out of grace due to support for tariff of 1816
 - South Carolinians blamed tariff for economic stagnation
 - Realistically due to farmland exhaustion -> unable to compete w/ SW -> many called for secession
- Calhoun had to solve issue in home state -> secession alternative: nullification where states had could hold special council to nullify federal law
 - Supported by many South Carolinians but not by federal government
 - Rationale was because federal government was creation of states, not other way around

Calhoun, in an attempt to solve the economic stagnation emergent in SC leading to potential secession, introduced the controversial theory of nullification, which allowed states to hold special conventions to nullify federal law if declared unconstitutional.

How did Van Buren put himself in a favorable position with Jackson?

- Van Buren was governor of NY from 1828-1829, when Jackson appointed secretary of state
- Quickly established as critical political ally, part of circle (known as "Kitchen Cabinet")
- Van Buren's influence over Jackson was immense, but further increased due to etiquette quarrel
 - Peggy O'Neale, married daughter of Washington tavernkeeper who had lodged w/ senators Jackson + Eaton
 - Eaton rumored to have affair w/ O'Neale; husband soon died (1828) and Eaton soon married her
 - Eaton named secretary of war by Jackson, but other administration wives would not accept O'Neale -> Jackson furious, Van Buren jumped in and accepted family while Calhoun refused -> by 1831, chosen as successor

Van Buren, as a close friend and political ally of Jackson's, further expanded his influence over the presidency by accepting a cabinet wife of Jackson's friend who had committed adulterous acts.

What were the critical themes of the Webster-Hayne Debate?

- Senate debate unfolded in early 1830 as nullification crisis intensified where CT senator argued that land sales/surveys be slowed to reduce spread of slavery
 - Supported by Daniel Webster, attacking Hayne and inadvertently Calhoun by subtly arguing conflict between state rights, national power
- SC senator Hayne argued importance of Western lands to prevent dominance of East and boost position in Congress to lower tariff, prevent alleged joint tyranny of Northeast
 - Coached by Calhoun to argue for nullification; Webster presented "Second Reply to Hayne" over two full afternoons, with powerful conclusion concerning deep connectedness of liberty/union
- Jackson supported Webster's argument against Calhoun, made clear by push for strength of Union at Democratic Party banquet honoring Jefferson while looking directly at Calhoun and receiving Van Buren's support

The Webster-Hayne Debate, despite being based on the surface around whether western expansion should be slowed to reduce slavery, was fundamentally an argument concerning state rights and national power: Hayne, an SC senator, pushed that Western lands were critical to prevent eastern dominance and northeastern tyranny, going against the central government in favor of that of his own state; Webster, supported by Jackson against Hayne and Calhoun, pushed against nullification to argue the conflict between state rights and national power.

What crisis emerged over nullification?

- When Congress passed a bill without any change in Tariff of 1816, SC called for state convention to nullify tariffs of 1828, 1832, appoint Hayne as governor and resigned Calhoun as senator
- Jackson called nullification treasonous, accused perpetrators of being traitors
 - Sent warship to Charleston, bolstered federal military forts
 - Proposed force bill to allow the president to use military to enforce Congressional acts
- Senator Calhoun received no support from other states, even experienced great divisions within state
- Crisis prevented by Clay, producing compromise allowing for steady decrease in tariffs to reach same level as 1816 by 1842
 - Passed on same day as force bill, both signed by Jackson
 - SC recalled convention, repealed nullification; Calhoun claimed victory due to change in tariff but situation ultimately showed federal dominance

With the Carolinians outraged by Congress' lack of bills designed to limit the Tariff of 1816, nullification was implemented to eliminate the tariff. Violence seemed near: Jackson sent warships to Charleston and devised a bill to allow military authorization for Congressional treason. Calhoun lacked the support of any other state, pushing him to concede simply a change in the tariff which would allow a steady reduction.