Major Problems in American History Volume II Since 1865

Documents and Essays

THIRD EDITION

EDITED BY

ELIZABETH COBBS HOFFMAN
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

EDWARD J. BLUM
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

JON GJERDE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

GENERAL EDITOR

THOMAS G. PATERSON

WADSWORTH
CENGAGE Learning

Australia • Brazil • Japan • Korea • Mexico • Singapore • Spain • United Kingdom • United States

CHAPTER 4

Imperialism and World Power

In 1898 the United States embarked on its first war on behalf of the rights of people other than its own. Revolutionaries in Cuba had fought for thirty years (1868–1898) to break Spain's grasp on its last colony in the New World. With U.S. help, they finally did. Eighty years earlier, John Quincy Adams had warned at a similar moment that entanglement in foreign revolutions should be avoided because it would involve the United States "beyond the power of extrication in all the wars of interest and intrigue." No matter how righteous the initial cause, he stated, "the fundamental maxims of her policy would insensibly change from liberty to force.... She might become dictatress of the world. She would no longer be the ruler of her own spirit." The war against Spain to secure Cuba's independence, in line with Adams's prediction, in fact did not end there. The U.S. Congress passed the Platt Amendment in 1903, requiring Cuba to agree to unilateral American intervention indefinitely. More shockingly, in the course of the war the United States took the Philippine Islands, Guam, and Puerto Rico from Spain. The United States had initially collaborated with Filipino independence fighter Emilio Aguinaldo, but then, against his wishes, it transformed the islands into an American colony. When Aguinaldo detected this U.S. treachery, he launched a new rebellion, which the American army brutally suppressed. The U.S.-Philippine war lasted three years. Over four thousand U.S. troops died, along with nearly 200,000 Filipino rebels and civilians.

These first conflicts of the twentieth century contained in full measure the contradictions and danger that were to shape relations between the United States and the rest of the globe for the coming century. Presidents William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson, under whose direction the United States took up a leading role on the world stage, agreed that the time had come to exercise America's tremendous potential for international influence. They disagreed on the reasons for doing so. Should the United States be an imperial power, or should it fight to eradicate colonialism? Should the United States promote stability and the status quo, or should it promote decolonization and democracy? Should the United States "speak softly and carry a big stick," as Roosevelt argued, or should it exercise a moral diplomacy, as Woodrow Wilson believed?

Of course, even the existence of the debate reflected how far the United States had strayed from its traditional policy of "nonentanglement," dating back to George Washington. Any form of intervention involved the United States in disputes beyond its control and

often beyond its understanding. Even the process of promoting democracy meant meddling in ways that undermined other people's self-determination. The United States did not have to exercise regional, and ultimately global, police power. But at the start of the twentieth century, it chose to do so. Why?

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

How could a nation with democratic values fight a colonial war? What rhetoric made this undertaking palatable—and what insecurities fueled it? Who opposed the war? Did democratic values stop at the water's edge?

DOCUMENTS

The documents in this chapter show the many sides to the debate over imperialism within the United States, and some of the ways in which people abroad perceived American actions and influence. In document 1, President William McKinley asks Congress to declare war against Spain "in the cause of humanity." Document 2 is a speech by New York Governor and former "Rough Rider" Theodore Roosevelt, given a year after the Spanish-American War. Roosevelt scorned anti-imperialists as weak. Only "the overcivilized man, who has lost the great fighting, masterful virtues," distrusted his country's motives, according to Roosevelt. The pugnacious New Yorker was elected vice president in 1898, and became president following the assassination of William McKinley in 1901. In document 3, the Filipino revolutionary Emilio Aguinaldo reveals what he thought of the United States in 1899: that it had sent an "army of occupation." The following two documents also condemn the policy of the McKinley administration. In document 4, the Anti-Imperialist League claims that the administration sought "to extinguish the spirit of 1776 in those islands." Mark Twain, author of *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, fiercely criticizes the racial and imperialist assumptions of the United States in document 5. In document 6, a soldier writes that American troops made more enemies than friends in the Philippines by calling the natives "Niggers" and by burning the houses of rebels and civilians alike. Document 7 reveals the world context: European powers often invaded countries that defaulted on their debts. Here, Argentine foreign minister Luis Drago reminds American leaders in 1902 of the equality of nations and their pledge under the Monroe Doctrine of 1823 to oppose European meddling in the Western Hemisphere. Would the U.S. help? Document 8 is the Platt Amendment, by which the U.S. government limited Cuban sovereignty following the war with Spain. In 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt expanded the meaning of the Monroe Doctrine, which had originally warned the great powers of Europe not to colonize or intervene in the affairs of the independent nations of Latin America. In the last reading, document 9, Roosevelt claimed a new role for the United States in his annual speech to

Congress as "an international police power" to prevent "chronic wrong-doing." In the following decade, the United States sent troops into the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, and Nicaragua, all in the name of democracy and keeping the peace.

1. President William McKinley Asks for War to Liberate Cuba, 1898

...Our people have beheld a once prosperous community reduced to comparative want, its lucrative commerce virtually paralyzed, its exceptional productiveness diminished, its fields laid waste, its mills in ruins, and its people perishing by tens of thousands from hunger and destitution. We have found ourselves constrained, in the observance of that strict neutrality which our laws enjoin and which the law of nations commands, to police our own waters and watch our own seaports in prevention of any unlawful act in aid of the Cubans....

The war in Cuba is of such a nature that, short of subjugation or extermination, a final military victory for either side seems impracticable. The alternative lies in the physical exhaustion of the one or the other party, or perhaps of both—a condition which in effect ended the ten years' war by the truce of Zanjon. The prospect of such a protraction and conclusion of the present strife is a contingency hardly to be contemplated with equanimity by the civilized world, and least of all by the United States, affected and injured as we are, deeply and intimately, by its very existence....

The grounds for... intervention may be briefly summarized as follows:

First. In the cause of humanity and to put an end to the barbarities, bloodshed, starvation, and horrible miseries now existing there, and which the parties to the conflict are either unable or unwilling to stop or mitigate. It is no answer to say this is all in another country, belonging to another nation, and is therefore none of our business. It is specially our duty, for it is right at our door.

Second. We owe it to our citizens in Cuba to afford them that protection and indemnity for life and property which no government there can or will afford, and to that end to terminate the conditions that deprive them of legal protection.

Third. The right to intervene may be justified by the very serious injury to the commerce, trade, and business of our people and by the wanton destruction of property and devastation of the island.

Fourth, and which is of the utmost importance. The present condition of affairs in Cuba is a constant menace to our peace and entails upon this Government an enormous expense. With such a conflict waged for years in an island so near us and with which our people have such trade and business relations; when the lives and liberty of our citizens are in constant danger and their property destroyed and themselves ruined; where our trading vessels are liable to seizure and are seized at our very door by war ships of a foreign nation; the expeditions of filibustering that we are powerless to prevent altogether, and the irritating questions and

---

This document can be found in John Bassett Moore, *A Digest of International Law* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1906), VI, 211–223. Reprinted in Dennis Merrill and Thomas G. Paterson, eds., *Major Problems in American Foreign Relations*, Vol. I: to 1920, Sixth Ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), 331–333.

entanglements thus arising—all these and others that I need not mention, with the resulting strained relations, are a constant menace to our peace and compel us to keep on a semi war footing with a nation with which we are at peace....

In view of these facts and of these considerations I ask the Congress to authorize and empower the President to take measures to secure a full and final termination of hostilities between the Government of Spain and the people of Cuba, and to secure in the island the establishment of a stable government, capable of maintaining order and observing its international obligations, insuring peace and tranquillity and the security of its citizens as well as our own, and to use the military and naval forces of the United States as may be necessary for these purposes....

2. Governor Theodore Roosevelt Praises the Manly Virtues of Imperialism, 1899

In speaking to you, men of the greatest city of the West, men of the state which gave to the country Lincoln and Grant, men who preeminently and distinctly embody all that is most American in the American character, I wish to preach not the doctrine of ignoble ease but the doctrine of the strenuous life; the life of toil and effort; of labor and strife; to preach that highest form of success which comes not to the man who desires mere easy peace but to the man who does not shrink from danger, from hardship, or from bitter toil, and who out of these wins the splendid ultimate triumph....

We of this generation do not have to face a task such as that our fathers faced, but we have our tasks, and woe to us if we fail to perform them! We cannot, if we would, play the part of China, and be content to rot by inches in ignoble ease within our borders, taking no interest in what goes on beyond them; sunk in a scrambling commercialism; heedless of the higher life, the life of aspiration, of toil and risk; busying ourselves only with the wants of our bodies for the day; until suddenly we should find, beyond a shadow of question, what China has already found, that in this world the nation that has trained itself to a career of unwarlike and isolated ease is bound in the end to go down before other nations which have not lost the manly and adventurous qualities. If we are to be a really great people, we must strive in good faith to play a great part in the world. We cannot avoid meeting great issues. All that we can determine for ourselves is whether we shall meet them well or ill. Last year we could not help being brought face to face with the problem of war with Spain. All we could decide was whether we should shrink like cowards from the contest or enter into it as beseemed a brave and high-spirited people; and, once in, whether failure or success should crown our banners. So it is now. We cannot avoid the responsibilities that confront us in Hawaii, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. All we can decide is whether we shall meet them in a way that will redound to the national credit, or whether we shall make of our dealings with these new problems a dark and shameful page in our history. To refuse to deal

---

Theodore Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life and Other Essays* (New York, The Century Company, 1900), 4–10.

with them at all merely amounts to dealing with them badly. We have a given problem to solve. If we undertake the solution there is, of course, always danger that we may not solve it aright, but to refuse to undertake the solution simply renders it certain that we cannot possibly solve it aright.

The timid man, the lazy man, the man who distrusts his country, the over-civilized man, who has lost the great fighting, masterful virtues, the ignorant man and the man of dull mind, whose soul is incapable of feeling the mighty lift that thrills "stern men with empires in their brains"—all these, of course, shrink from seeing the nation undertake its new duties; shrink from seeing us build a navy and army adequate to our needs; shrink from seeing us do our share of the world's work by bringing order out of chaos in the great, fair tropic islands from which the valor of our soldiers and sailors has driven the Spanish flag. These are the men who fear the strenuous life, who fear the only national life which is really worth leading....

...I have scant patience with those who fear to undertake the tasks of governing the Philippines, and who openly avow that they do fear to undertake it, or that they shrink from it because of the expense and trouble; but I have even scanter patience with those who make a pretense of humanitarianism to hide and cover their timidity, and who cant about "liberty" and the "consent of the governed," in order to excuse themselves for their unwillingness to play the part of men. Their doctrines, if carried out, would make it incumbent upon us to leave the Apaches of Arizona to work out their own salvation, and to decline to interfere in a single Indian reservation. Their doctrines condemn your forefathers and mine for ever having settled in these United States....

I preach to you, then, my countrymen, that our country calls not for the life of ease, but for the life of strenuous endeavor. The twentieth century looms before us big with the fate of many nations. If we stand idly by, if we seek merely swollen, slothful ease, and ignoble peace, if we shrink from the hard contests where men must win at hazard of their lives and at the risk of all they hold dear, then the bolder and stronger peoples will pass us by and will win for themselves the domination of the world.

3. Filipino Leader Emilio Aguinaldo Rallies His People to Arms, 1899

By my proclamation of yesterday I have published the outbreak of hostilities between the Philippine forces and the American forces of occupation in Manila, unjustly and unexpectedly provoked by the latter.

In my manifest of January 8 [1899] last I published the grievances suffered by the Philippine forces at the hands of the army of occupation. The constant outrages and taunts, which have caused the misery of the people of Manila, and, finally the useless conferences and the contempt shown the Philippine government prove the premeditated transgression of justice and liberty.

Major-General E. S. Otis, *Report on Military Operations and Affairs in the Philippine Islands, 1899* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1899), 95–96.

I know that war has always produced great losses; I know that the Philippine people have not yet recovered from past losses and are not in the condition to endure others. But I also know by experience how bitter is slavery, and by experience I know that we should sacrifice all on the altar of our honor and of the national integrity so unjustly attacked.

I have tried to avoid, as far as it has been possible for me to do so, armed conflict, in my endeavors to assure our independence by pacific means and to avoid more costly sacrifices. But all my efforts have been useless against the measureless pride of the American Government and of its representatives in these islands, who have treated me as a rebel because I defend the sacred interests of my country and do not make myself an instrument of their dastardly intentions....

Be not discouraged. Our independence has been watered by the generous blood of our martyrs. Blood which may be shed in the future will strengthen it. Nature has never despised generous sacrifices.

4. The American Anti-Imperialist League Denounces U.S. Policy, 1899

We hold that the policy known as imperialism is hostile to liberty and tends toward militarism, an evil from which it has been our glory to be free. We regret that it has become necessary in the land of Washington and Lincoln to reaffirm that all men, of whatever race or color, are entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We maintain that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. We insist that the subjugation of any people is "criminal aggression" and open disloyalty to the distinctive principles of our Government.

We earnestly condemn the policy of the present National Administration in the Philippines. It seeks to extinguish the spirit of 1776 in those islands. We deplore the sacrifice of our soldiers and sailors, whose bravery deserves admiration even in an unjust war. We denounce the slaughter of the Filipinos as a needless horror. We protest against the extension of American sovereignty by Spanish methods.

We demand the immediate cessation of the war against liberty, begun by Spain and continued by us. We urge that Congress be promptly convened to announce to the Filipinos our purpose to concede to them the independence for which they have so long fought and which of right is theirs.

The United States have always protested against the doctrine of international law which permits the subjugation of the weak by the strong. A self-governing state cannot accept sovereignty over an unwilling people. The United States cannot act upon the ancient heresy that might makes right.

Imperialists assume that with the destruction of self-government in the Philippines by American hands, all opposition here will cease. This is a grievous error. Much as we abhor the war of "criminal aggression" in the Philippines, greatly as we regret that the blood of the Filipinos is on American hands, we

---

Frederic Bancroft, ed., *Speeches, Correspondence, and Political Papers of Carl Schurz* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1913), VI, 77–79.

more deeply resent the betrayal of American institutions at home. The real firing line is not in the suburbs of Manila. The foe is of our own household. The attempt of 1861 was to divide the country. That of 1899 is to destroy its fundamental principles and noblest ideals....

We hold, with Abraham Lincoln, that "no man is good enough to govern another man without the other's consent. When the white man governs himself, that is self-government, but when he governs himself and also governs another man, that is more than self-government—that is despotism. Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in us. Our defense is in the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men in all lands. Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves, and under a just God cannot long retain it."

We cordially invite the cooperation of all men and women who remain loyal to the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States.

5. Mark Twain Satirizes "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," 1900

Mine eyes have seen the orgy of the launching of the Sword;
He is searching out the hoardings where the stranger's wealth is stored;
He hath loosed his fateful lightnings, and with woe and death has scored;
His lust is marching on.

I have seen him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps,
They have builded him an altar in the Eastern dews and damps;
I have read his doomful mission by the dim and flaring lamps—
His night is marching on.

I have read his bandit gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:
"As ye deal with my pretensions, so with you my wrath shall deal;
Let the faithless son of Freedom crush the patriot with his heel;
Lo, Greed is marching on!"

We have legalized the strumpet and are guarding her retreat;
Greed is seeking out commercial souls before his judgment seat;
O, be swift, ye clods, to answer him! be jubilant my feet!
Our god is marching on!

In a sordid slime harmonious, Greed was born in yonder ditch,
With a longing in his bosom—and for others' goods an itch—
As Christ died to make men holy, let men die to make us rich—
Our god is marching on.

Frederick Anderson, ed., *A Pen Warmed Up in Hell. Mark Twain in Protest* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).

every nation, whether in America or anywhere else, which desires to maintain its freedom, its independence, must ultimately realize that the right of such independence can not be separated from the responsibility of making good use of it.

ESSAYS

Historians have proposed many explanations for why the United States embarked on a war that spread far from its shores after having so long avoided what were called "foreign entanglements." Scholars have argued variously that it was for economic gain, that it grew out of concern for the Cuban people, that "yellow" journalists created a war hysteria to sell newspapers, and even that the war happened by accident. At base, most authors are troubled by a fundamental question: did the United States intend to exploit weaker nations by creating an empire, or did it intend to "spread the American dream" of self-determination? These essays show two possible explanations for the war. Both reflect a recent emphasis in historical scholarship on the ways that underlying values concerning race and gender may have influenced strategic decisions at the highest levels of government. Gail Bederman of Notre Dame University argues that Theodore Roosevelt, a leading proponent of the wars against Spain and the Philippines, was powerfully influenced by images of race and gender. These cultural concepts led him to see imperialism as the next stage in the healthy growth of the republic. As you read Bederman, think about how underlying psychological insecurities may have influenced the decisions of leaders. Paul A. Kramer of Vanderbilt University argues that racism was an intentional tool of empire-building. American leaders viewed much of the Filipino population as "savages" who needed to be conquered "for their own good." As you read Kramer, think about how underlying prejudices shaped strategic thinking. Also consider how foreign peoples sometimes utilized American precedents like the Monroe Doctrine and Declaration of Independence to resist or undermine U.S. and European dominance to the extent they could.

Gendering Imperialism: Theodore Roosevelt's Quest for Manhood and Empire

GAIL BEDERMAN

In 1882, a newly elected young state assemblyman arrived in Albany. Theodore Roosevelt, assuming his first elective office, was brimming with self-importance and ambition. He was only twenty-three—the youngest man in the legislature—and he looked forward to a promising career of wielding real political power. Yet Roosevelt was chagrined to discover that despite his intelligence, competence, and real legislative successes, no one took him seriously. The more strenuously he

---

labored to play "a man's part" in politics, the more his opponents derided his manhood.

Daily newspapers lampooned Roosevelt as the quintessence of effeminacy. They nicknamed him "weakling," "Jane-Dandy," "Punkin-Lily," and "the exquisite Mr. Roosevelt." They ridiculed his high voice, tight pants, and fancy clothing. Several began referring to him by the name of the well-known homosexual Oscar Wilde, and one actually alleged (in a less-than-veiled phallic allusion) that Roosevelt was "given to sucking the knob of an ivory cane." While TR might consider himself a manly man, it was becoming humiliatingly clear that others considered him effeminate.

Above all other things, Roosevelt desired power. An intuitive master of public relations, he knew that his effeminate image could destroy any chances for his political future. Nearly forty years before women got the vote, electoral politics was part of a male-only subculture, fraught with symbols of manhood. Besides, Roosevelt, who considered himself a man's man, detested having his virility impugned. Although normally restrained, when he discovered a Tammany legislator plotting to toss him in a blanket, TR marched up to him and swore, "By God! if you try anything like that, I'll kick you, I'll bite you, I'll kick you in the balls, I'll do anything to you—you'd better leave me alone!" Clearly, the effeminate "dude" image would have to go.

And go it did. Roosevelt soon came to embody powerful American manhood. Within five years, he was running for mayor of New York as the "Cowboy of the Dakotas" [in reference to his taking up residence on a South Dakota ranch in 1884]. Instead of ridiculing him as "Oscar Wilde," newspapers were praising his virile zest for fighting and his "blizzard-seasoned constitution." In 1898, after a brief but highly publicized stint as leader of a regiment of volunteers in the Spanish American War, he became known as Colonel Roosevelt, the manly advocate of a virile imperialism. Never again would Roosevelt's name be linked to effeminacy. Even today, historians invoke Roosevelt as the quintessential symbol of turn-of-the-century masculinity.

Roosevelt's great success in masculinizing his image was due, in large part, to his masterful use of the discourse of civilization. As a mature politician, he would build his claim to political power on his claim to manhood. Skillfully, Roosevelt constructed a virile political person for himself as a strong but civilized white man.

Yet Roosevelt's use of the discourse of civilization went beyond mere public relations: Roosevelt drew on "civilization" to help formulate his larger politics as an advocate of both nationalism and imperialism. As he saw it, the United States was engaged in a millennial drama of manly racial advancement, in which American men enacted their superior manhood by asserting imperialistic control over races of inferior manhood. To prove their virility, as a race and a nation, American men needed to take up the "strenuous life" and strive to advance civilization—through imperialistic warfare and racial violence if necessary....

...Beginning in 1894, unhappy with President Cleveland's reluctance to annex Hawaii, Roosevelt began to exhort the American race to embrace a manly, strenuous imperialism, in the cause of higher civilization. In Roosevelt's imperialistic pronouncements, as in *The Winning of the West* [a celebratory history

of European American westward expansion published between 1889 and 1896], issues of racial dominance were inextricably conflated with issues of manhood. Indeed, when Roosevelt originally coined the term "the strenuous life," in an 1899 speech, he was explicitly discussing only foreign relations: calling on the United States to build up its army and to take imperialistic control of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. Ostensibly, the speech never mentions gender at all. Yet the phrase "the strenuous life" soon began to connote a virile, hard-driving manhood, which might or might not involve foreign relations, at all.

How did the title of an essay calling for American imperialism become a catchphrase to describe vigorous masculinity? To answer this question, we need to understand the logic behind Roosevelt's philosophies about American nationalism and imperialism. For Roosevelt, the purpose of American expansionism and national greatness was always the millennial purpose behind human evolution—human racial advancement toward a higher civilization. And the race that could best achieve this perfected civilization was, by definition, the one with the most superior manhood.

It was not coincidental that Roosevelt's advocacy of manly imperialism in the 1890s was contemporaneous with a widespread cultural concern about effeminacy, overcivilization, and racial decadence.... [T]hroughout Europe and Anglo-America intellectuals were worried about the emasculating tendencies of excessive civilization. Roosevelt shared many of his contemporaries' fears about the future of American manly power; and this gave his imperialistic writings an air of especial urgency....

...Roosevelt understood decadence in terms of the racial conflict through which he believed civilizations rose and fell. As he had shown in *The Winning of the West,* TR believed that manly racial competition determined which race was superior and deserved to control the earth's resources. A race which grew decadent, then, was a race which had lost the masculine strength necessary to prevail in this Darwinistic racial struggle. Civilized advancement required much more than mere masculine strength, of course; it also required advanced manliness. Intelligence, altruism, and morality were essential traits, possessed by all civilized races and men. Yet, as important as these refined traits were, they were not enough, by themselves, to safeguard civilization's advance and prevent racial decadence. Without the "virile fighting virtues" which allowed a race to continue to expand into new territories, its more civilized racial traits would be useless. If American men lost their primal fighting virtues, a more manful race would strip them of their authority, land, and resources. This effeminate loss of racial primacy and virility was what Roosevelt meant by overcivilized racial decadence....

This concept of overcivilized decadence let Roosevelt construct American imperialism as a conservative way to retain the race's frontier-forged manhood, instead of what it really was—a belligerent grab for a radically new type of nationalistic power. As Roosevelt described it, asserting the white man's racial power abroad was necessary to avoid losing the masculine strength Americans had already established through race war on the frontier. Currently the American race was one of the world's most advanced civilized races. They controlled a rich

and mighty continent because their superior manhood had allowed them to annihilate the Indians on the Western frontier. If they retained their manhood, they could continue to look forward to an ever higher civilization, as they worked ever harder for racial improvement and expansion. But if American men ever lost their virile zest for Darwinistic racial contests, their civilization would soon decay. If they ignored the ongoing racial imperative of constant expansion and instead grew effeminate and luxury-loving, a manlier race would inherit their mantle of the highest civilization.

From 1894 until he became president in 1901, Roosevelt wrote and lectured widely on the importance of taking up what Rudyard Kipling, in 1899, would dub "the White Man's burden." Kipling coined this term in a poem written to exhort American men to conquer and rule the Philippines. "The white man"... simultaneously meant the white race, civilization itself, and white males as a group. In "The White Man's Burden," Kipling used the term in all these senses to urge white males to take up the racial burden of civilization's advancement. "Take up the White Man's burden," he wrote, capitalizing the essential term, and speaking to the manly civilized on behalf of civilization. "Send forth the best ye breed"—quality breeding was essential, because evolutionary development (breeding) was what gave "the White Man" the right and duty to conquer uncivilized races.

Go bind your sons to exile
    To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness,
    on fluttered folk and wild—
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
    Half-devil and half-child....

Roosevelt called Kipling's poem "poor poetry but good sense from the expansionist standpoint." Although Roosevelt did not use the term "the white man's burden" in his writings on imperialism, he drew on the same sorts of race and gender linkages which Kipling deployed in his poem. TR's speeches of this period frequently conflate manhood and racial power, and draw extended analogies between the individual American man and the virile American race.

For example, "National Duties," one of TR's most famous speeches, represents both American men and the American race as civilized entities with strong virile characters—in popular parlance, both were "the white man." Roosevelt begins by outlining this racial manhood, which he calls "the essential manliness of the American character." Part of this manliness centered around individual and racial duties to the home. On the one hand, individual men must work to provide for the domestic needs of themselves and their families. On the other hand, the men of the race must work to provide for their collective racial home, their nation. Men who shirked these manly homemaking duties were despicably unsexed; or, as TR put it, "the willfully idle man" was as bad as "the willfully barren woman."

Yet laboring only for his own hearth and nation was not enough to satisfy a real man. Virile manhood also required the manly American nation to take up

imperialistic labors outside its borders, just as manhood demanded individual men to labor outside the home: "Exactly as each man, while doing first his duty to his wife and the children within his home, must yet, if he hopes to amount to much, strive mightily in the world outside his home, so our nation, while first of all seeing to its own domestic well-being, must not shrink from playing its part among the great nations without." It would be as unmanly for the American race to refuse its imperialist destiny as it would be for a cowardly man to spend all his time loafing at home with his wife. Imperialist control over primitive races thus becomes a matter of manhood—part of a male-only public sphere, which TR sets in contradistinction to the home.

After setting up imperialism as a manly duty for both man and race, Roosevelt outlines the imperialist's appropriate masculine behavior—or, should we say, his appropriate masculine appendage? Roosevelt immediately brings up the "big stick." It may be a cheap shot to stress the phallic implications of TR's imagery, yet Roosevelt himself explained the meaning of the "big stick" in terms of manhood and the proper way to assert the power of a man: "A good many of you are probably acquainted with the old proverb: "Speak softly and carry a big stick—you will go far.' If a man continually blusters, if he lacks civility, a big stick will not save him from trouble; and neither will speaking softly avail, if back of the softness there does not lie strength, power." Just as a manly man avoided bluster, relying instead on his self-evident masculine strength and power, so virile American men should build a powerful navy and army, so that when they took up the white man's burden in primitive lands, they would receive the respect due to a masterful, manly race....

Roosevelt was not content merely to make speeches about the need for violent, imperialistic manhood. He always needed to embody his philosophy. The sickly boy had remade himself into an adventure-book hunter-naturalist; the dude politician had remade himself into a heroic Western rancher. The 1898 outbreak of the Spanish-American war—for which he had agitated long and hard—let Roosevelt remake himself into Colonel Roosevelt, the fearless Rough Rider.

Reinventing himself as a charismatic war hero allowed Roosevelt to model the manful imperialism about which he had been writing for four years. TR became a walking advertisement for the imperialistic manhood he desired for the American race. Indeed, from the moment of his enlistment until his mustering out four months later, Roosevelt self-consciously publicized himself as a model of strenuous, imperialistic manhood. In late April 1898, against all advice, Roosevelt resigned as assistant secretary of the navy and enlisted to fight in the just-declared war on Spain. Aged thirty-nine, with an important subcabinet post, a sick wife, and six young children, no one but Roosevelt himself imagined he ought to see active service. Roosevelt's decision to enlist was avidly followed by newspapers all over the country....

The press, fascinated by the undertaking, christened [his] regiment "Roosevelt's Rough Riders." Roosevelt's heroic frontiersman identity thus came full circle, as he no doubt intended. As Richard Slotkin has pointed out, the term "Rough Riders" had long been used in adventure novels to describe Western horsemen. Thus, by nicknaming his regiment the "Rough Riders," the nation showed it understood

the historical connections Roosevelt always drew between Indian wars in the American West and virile imperialism in Cuba and the Philippines....

After his mustering out, TR the politician continued to play the role of virile Rough Rider for all he was worth. In November, he was elected governor of New York, campaigning as a war hero and employing ex-Rough Riders to warm up the election crowds. By January 1899, his thrilling memoir, *The Rough Riders,* was appearing serially in *Scribner's Magazine.* And in 1900 his virile popularity convinced Republican party leaders that Roosevelt could counter [Democrat William Jennings] Bryan's populism better than any other vice-presidential candidate. Roosevelt had constructed himself and the Rough Riders as the epitome of civilized, imperialistic manhood, a model for the American race to follow. His success in modeling that imperialistic manhood exceeded even his own expectations and ultimately paved the way for his presidency.

On April 10, 1899, Colonel Roosevelt stood before the men of Chicago's elite, all-male, Hamilton Club and preached the doctrine of "The Strenuous Life." As governor of New York and a fabulously popular ex–Rough Rider, he knew the national press would be in attendance; and though he spoke *at* the Hamilton Club, he spoke *to* men across America. With the cooperation of the press and at the risk of his life, TR had made himself into a national hero—the embodiment of manly virtue, masculine violence, and white American racial supremacy—and the antithesis of over-civilized decadence. Now he urged the men of the American race to live the sort of life he had modeled for them: to be virile, vigorous, and manly, and to reject over-civilized decadence by supporting a strenuously imperialistic foreign policy. When contemporaries ultimately adopted his phrase "the strenuous life" as a synonym for the vigorous, vehement manhood Roosevelt modeled, they showed they correctly understood that his strenuous manhood was inextricably linked to his nationalism, imperialism, and racism.

Ostensibly, "The Strenuous Life" preached the virtues of military preparedness and imperialism, but contemporaries understood it as a speech about manhood. The practical import of the speech was to urge the nation to build up its army, to maintain its strong navy, and to take control of Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines. But underlying these immediate objectives lay the message that American manhood—both the manly race and individual white men—must retain the strength of their Indian-fighter ancestors, or another race would prove itself more manly and overtake America in the Darwinian struggle to be the world's most dominant race.

Roosevelt began by demanding manliness in both the American nation and American men. Slothful men who lacked the "desire and power" to strive in the world were despicable and unmanly. "We do not admire the man of timid peace. We admire the man who embodies victorious effort." If America and its men were not man enough to fight, they would not only lose their place among "the great nations of the world," they would become a decadent and effeminate race. Roosevelt held up the Chinese, whom he despised as the most decadent and unmanly of races, as a cautionary lesson: If we "play the part of China, and be content to rot by inches in ignoble ease within our borders," we will "go down before other nations which have not

lost the manly and adventurous qualities." If American men lacked the manly fortitude to go bravely and willingly to a foreign war, the race would decay, preached TR, the virile war hero.

In stirring tones, the Rough Rider of San Juan Hill ridiculed the overcivilized anti-imperialists who had lost the "great fighting, masterful virtues." Lacking the masculine impulse toward racial aggression and unmoved by virile visions of empire, these men had been sapped of all manhood.

> The timid man, the lazy man, the man who distrusts his country, the over-civilized man, who has lost the great fighting, masterful virtues, the ignorant man, and the man of dull mind, whose soul is incapable of feeling the mighty lift that thrills stern men with empires in their brains—all these, of course shrink from seeing the nation undertake its new duties; shrink from seeing us build a navy and an army adequate to our needs; shrink from seeing us do our share of the world's work. These are the men who fear the strenuous life.... They believe in that cloistered life which saps the hardy virtues in a nation, as it saps them in the individual.

Like "cloistered" monkish celibates, these "over-civilized" men "shrink, shrink, shrink" from carrying the "big stick." Dishonorably, they refused to do their manly duty by the childish Fillipinos. Had the United States followed these anti-imperialists' counsel and refused to undertake "one of the great tasks set modern civilization," Americans would have shown themselves not only unmanly but also racially inferior. "Some stronger, manlier power would have to step in and do the work, and we would have shown ourselves weaklings, unable to carry to successful completion the labors that great and high-spirited nations are eager to undertake." As TR saw it, the man, the race, and the nation were one in their need to possess virile, imperialist manhood.

Then TR got down to brass tacks, dwelling at length on Congress' responsibility to build up the armed forces. After again raising the specter of Chinese decadence, which American men faced if they refused to strengthen their army and navy, Roosevelt stressed America's duty to take up the white man's burden in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. If the American race was "too weak, too selfish, or too foolish" to take on that task, it would be completed by "some stronger and more manful race." He ridiculed anti-imperialists as cowards who "make a pretense of humanitarianism to hide and cover their timidity" and to "excuse themselves for their unwillingness to play the part of men."

"The Strenuous Life" culminates with a Darwinian vision of strife between races for the "dominion of the world," which only the most manful race could win.

> I preach to you then, my countrymen, that our country calls not for the life of ease but for the life of strenuous endeavor.... If we stand idly by...then the bolder and stronger peoples will pass us by, and will win for themselves the domination of the world. Let us therefore boldly face the life of strife, resolute to do our duty well and manfully.

American men must embrace their manly mission to be the race which dominates the world. Struggle for racial supremacy was inevitable, but the most

manful race—the American race—would triumph, if it made the attempt. Its masculine strength was proven by military victories over barbarous brown races. Its manly virtue was evident in its civilized superiority to the primitive childish races it uplifted. White American men must claim their place as the world's most perfect men, the fittest race for the evolutionary struggle toward a perfect civilization. This was the meaning of "The Strenuous Life."

We can now answer the question. "How did the title of an essay calling for American dominance over the brown races become a catchphrase to describe virile masculinity?" Roosevelt's desire for imperial dominance had been, from the first, intrinsically related to his views about male power. As he saw it, the manhood of the American race had been forged in the crucible of frontier race war; and to abandon the virile power of the violence would be to backslide toward effeminate racial mediocrity. Roosevelt wanted American men to be the ultimate in human evolution, the world's most powerful and civilized race. He believed that their victory over the Indians on the frontier proved that the American race possessed the racial superiority and masculine power to overcome any savage race; and he saw a glorious future for the race in the twentieth century, as it pressed on toward international dominance and the perfection of civilization. The only danger which Roosevelt saw menacing this millennial triumph of manly American civilization came from within. Only by surrendering to overcivilized decadence—by embracing unmanly racial sloth instead of virile imperialism—could American men fail. Thus, American men must work strenuously to uphold their civilization. They must refuse a life of ease, embrace their manly task, and take up the white man's burden. Only by living that "strenuous life" could American men prove themselves to be what Roosevelt had no doubt they were—the apex of civilization, evolution's most favored race, masterful men fit to command the barbarous races and the world's "waste spaces"—in short, the most virile and manly of men.

In later years, as Americans came to take international involvement for granted and as imperialism came to seem less controversial, the phrase "the strenuous life" underwent a subtle change of meaning. Always associated with Roosevelt, it came to connote the virile manhood which he modeled for the nation as the imperialistic Western hero and Rough Rider—the peculiar combination of moral manliness and aggressive masculinity which he was able to synthesize so well. As Roosevelt's presidency wore on, Americans grew accustomed to taking up the white man's burden, not only in the Philippines, but also in Cuba, Panama, and the Dominican Republic. The "strenuous life" came to be associated with any virile, manly effort to accomplish great work, whether imperialistic or not. Yet on a basic level, "the strenuous life" retained TR's original associations with the evolutionary struggle of the American race on behalf of civilization. "The strenuous life," as it came to be used, meant the opposite of "overcivilized effeminacy." Or, as Roosevelt summed it up himself in his *Autobiography*, the man who lives the strenuous life regards his life "as a pawn to be promptly hazarded whenever the hazard is warranted by the larger interests of the great game in which we are all engaged." That great game, for Roosevelt, was always the millennial struggle for Americans to perfect civilization by becoming the most manly, civilized, and powerful race in the world.

Racial Imperialism: America's Takeover of the Philippines

PAUL A. KRAMER

On January 9, 1900, Senator Albert Beveridge, Republican of Indiana, stood before the U.S. Senate, defending a war on the other side of the world that refused to end by American command. The previous November, Gen. Elwell Otis had declared victory and an end to major combat operations in the Philippines, where American troops were struggling to impose U.S. sovereignty on the forces of the Philippine Republic. Over the next months, however, much to the frustration of U.S. generals and the McKinley administration, resistance would both vanish and intensify as Filipinos adopted a guerrilla strategy to fight off the invaders. Beveridge was uniquely suited to justify the war before the Senate and "anti-imperialist" critics, having built his early reputation on thundering rhetoric in defense of American empire. Campaigning in Indianapolis on September 19, 1898, for example, he had turned the recent U.S. victory against Spain in the Caribbean into a mandate for global liberation. America's mission-field would be a world contracted by electricity and steam. "Distance and oceans are no arguments," he asserted. The seas did "not separate us from lands of our duty and desire" but bound Americans to them. A half century earlier, California had been "more inaccessible" from the eastern United States than was the present-day Philippines, where U.S. troops had captured the city of Manila from Spanish forces the previous month. For Beveridge, Americans had "world duties" as "a people imperial by virtue of their power, by right of their institutions, by authority of their Heaven-directed purposes." He urged his countrymen to "broaden [the] blessed reign" of freedom "until the empire of our principles is established over the hearts of all mankind." As for criticism that "we ought not to govern a people without their consent," Beveridge asked his audience, "Would not the people of the Philippines prefer the just, humane, civilizing government of this Republic to the savage, bloody rule of pillage and extortion from which we have rescued them?"

Filipinos had not, in fact, greeted the Americans as liberators. When Beveridge addressed the Senate in early 1900, nearly a year into the bloody conquest of the Philippine Islands, he did so as an expert who had himself beaten the oceans argument and traveled through the islands, guided by U.S. military commanders. In this second address, his sense of the Philippines' centrality to the United States' export trade to Asia was heightened, as was his rage at seeing "our mangled boys" on the battlefield, wounded indirectly by "anti-imperialism," or what he called "American assaults on our Government at home." As the war's terrors unfolded and its manifold costs were debated, Beveridge attempted to locate the invasion beyond dissent. Its true meaning, he stated, was "deeper than any question of party politics," than "any question of the isolated policy of our country," deeper even than "any question of constitutional power." "It is elemental," he

---

From Paul A Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p. 1–3, 82–83, 91–95, 97–99, 102, 104, 109–110, 138, 145–146, 151–152.

asserted. "It is racial." Sublimating conquest into liberation meant making race. The American cause was nothing less than that of the "English-speaking and Teutonic peoples" whom God had prepared for "a thousand years" to become "the master organizers of the world," possessors of what he had called, in the 1898 address, "the blood of government." The enemy had also become more focused in Beveridge's imagination as Filipino guerrillas disappeared into villages and forests. He urged his colleagues to "remember that we are not dealing with Americans or Europeans" but with "Malays" corrupted by "hundreds of years of savagery, other hundreds of years of Orientalism, and still other hundreds of years of Spanish character and custom." What "alchemy," he asked, "will change the oriental quality of their blood and set the self-governing currents of the American pouring through their Malay veins?" In a time of empire-building, blood and government were intimately connected. Newly drawn and challenged lines of race would separate and bind those who ruled and those who were ruled....

Among the formerly disparate regions of the world whose histories became permanently inseparable during this period were the Philippines and the United States. Contacts between these two societies had been sporadic before the end of the nineteenth century: with little trade or migration between them, each was virtually, if differently, unknown to the other. The force that ushered in their joint twentieth century pushed from the Caribbean, when U.S. intervention in Cuba against Spain in 1898 was accompanied by the launching of the United States' Asiatic Squadron to Spain's largest Asian colony. The U.S. defeat of the Spanish fleet at Manila Bay and the military occupation of Manila in the middle of that year placed the histories of U.S. empire and Philippine sovereignty on a collision course....

The arrival of that U.S. naval squadron was predicated on three decades of explosive American industrial and imperial growth. Since the end of the Civil War, the United States had expanded and consolidated into a continental empire of conquered subjects, migrant settlers, raw materials, and industrial products. At the center of its architecture were the railroads—linked transcontinentally after 1869, the same year in which the Suez Canal had been opened—which simultaneously pioneered modern corporate organization, made available new natural resources for extraction and development, opened up new consumer markets, and promoted dependent white colonization. By the mid-nineteenth century, white migrants had pushed west toward the Pacific in vast numbers; earlier treaties notwithstanding, the federal government forcibly removed eastern Native American peoples westward and established the reservation system to isolate them in arid and undesirable regions far from white settlements. Nomadic peoples in the West put up the greatest resistance to white encroachment and were conquered through genocidal wars by the U.S. Army in the 1870s and 1880s, a process aided by the telegraph, repeating rifle, and Gatling gun. By the end of the latter decade, Native Americans would find it difficult to maintain possession of the reservations themselves. The railroad, and the industries it gave birth to, in turn attracted diverse, novel working populations from around the globe. On the East Coast and in the Midwest, southern and eastern European migrants poured into the United States by the millions to labor in factories

and mills. The West was still more dramatically altered, seeing the entry of Chinese and Japanese laborers in mines, lumber camps, farms, and on the railroad. Native American genocide and the wrenching social transformations of rapid industrialization were the preconditions of vast economic growth: U.S. resources in minerals, lumber, cattle, petroleum, and agriculture pushed the United States to the front ranks of the global economic powers by the end of the nineteenth century.

The U.S. empire had long burst over its continental limits by the time the U.S. census declared the land frontier closed in 1890....

Tensions of Recognition

The forces that pushed the Asiatic Squadron out to Manila Bay were complex and continue to be debated by historians. As early as late 1897, officers in the Navy Department and Naval War College anticipating war with Spain had drafted war plans that included the temporary occupation of Manila in order to deny Spain revenue, to provide a base of operations, and to gain leverage for a more favorable peace settlement. These war plans were compatible with, if they were apparently developed independently of, a political elite aggressively committed to overseas empire, advocates of a "large policy," such as Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt and Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Republican of Massachusetts. In late 1897 and early 1898, both men pressured President William McKinley to see geopolitical opportunity in the war with Spain: by seizing Spain's largest Asian colony—in whole or in part—the United States would gain a strategic foothold from which to wedge open China's markets, a rationale for building up U.S. naval strength, and the recognition and respect of the world's imperial powers.

February 15, 1898, provided large-policy advocates the opening they had hoped for, when the USS *Maine* exploded mysteriously in Havana harbor, where it had been sent to hold American options open and to protect the property of U.S. citizens. An investigatory commission suspected Spanish weapons of mass destruction, and the *Maine* disaster was assumed to be the work of Spanish treachery by interventionists in the McKinley administration and in the imperialist press. While the advocates of intervention called for the "liberation" of Cuba, just ten days after the disaster, Roosevelt ordered Commodore George Dewey and the Asiatic Squadron to depart San Francisco for Hong Kong to await further instructions. Following a U.S. declaration of war, Dewey was to proceed to Manila Bay to engage Spanish naval forces there....

Exiled revolutionaries were divided and willing to play both sides. The end of April 1898 saw Miguel Malvar in Hong Kong negotiating with Spaniards for autonomy and Emilio Aguinaldo in Singapore negotiating with a U.S. consul for recognition of Philippine independence. From late March to early April, Aguinaldo had a number of meetings with Captain Wood, acting on behalf of Commodore Dewey, who had urged him to return and continue the revolution, assuring him that Americans would supply him with necessary arms. By Aguinaldo's account, Wood had stated that the United States was "a great and

rich nation and neither needs nor desires colonies"; he would not put these commitments in writing without Dewey's approval....

On May 1, the U.S. Asiatic Squadron utterly destroyed the Spanish naval forces at Manila Bay, and the revolutionaries in Hong Kong debated strategy. Aguinaldo wanted a written promise of recognition from Dewey but also felt compelled to establish a revolutionary government quickly before his rivals could. The exiles were deeply suspicious of U.S. intentions, as reflected in a late-April circular sent to Manila with José Alejandrino, who had been allowed to travel with Dewey. The present situation, stated the circular, was "exceedingly dangerous for the Philippines." Having engaged in discussions with the consuls and Dewey, the exiles had "infer[red] that they are trying to make colonies of us, although they said they would give us independence." It was "advisable to simulate belief at the same time equipping ourselves with arms." A part of the revolutionary forces would "aid the Americans by fighting with them in order to conceal our real intentions," while "part will be held in reserve." If the United States "triumphs and proposes a colony we shall reject such offer and rise in arms."

The victorious dewey held Aguinaldo at arm's length until mid-May, sending a cruiser to bring him to Manila. The content of their meetings remains unclear, the controversy hinging on different understandings, and manipulations, of the symbolism of recognition. Aguinaldo claimed Dewey had honored him as a general, urged the lifting of a Philippine flag, and promised U.S. recognition of Philippine independence. Dewey had supplied arms to the revolutionaries upon their landing in Cavite on May 19. On the twenty-sixth, Secretary of the Navy John D. Long cabled Dewey warning him to avoid "political alliances with the insurgents or any faction in the Islands that would incur liability to maintain their cause in the future"; on June 3, Dewey answered that he had complied. At the same time, Dewey had "given [Aguinaldo] to understand that I consider insurgents as friends, being opposed to a common enemy."

Aguinaldo quickly mobilized forces throughout the region to resume the aborted revolution. In doing so, he was extremely aware of the tenuous diplomatic position in which the revolution found itself and urged a "civilized" war on Spanish land forces. The quest for recognition must continue in the context of war. "[I]n respect to our conduct," he wrote in a May 21 proclamation, he had informed Dewey and "other nations" that "we shall carry on a modern war." When a Spaniard surrendered, "he must be pardoned and treated well," so that subsequently "you will see that our reputation will be very good in the eyes of all Europe, which will declare for our independence." If "we do not conduct ourselves thus," he warned, "the Americans will decide to sell us or else divide up our territory, as they will hold us incapable of governing our land."...

Aguinaldo took advantage of his consolidation of revolutionary forces to declare the Philippine Islands independent at a ceremony held on June 12 in Cavite, three weeks after the first U.S. expedition's departure from San Francisco. Such a declaration might galvanize the Filipino populace behind Aguinaldo's leadership and simultaneously raise the stakes in negotiations with the United States and other powers, from the recognition of belligerency to the recognition

of independent statehood. The "Act of the Proclamation of Independence of the Filipino People" was a bold statement of the "independence of our territory" and the "recovery of our sovereignty."...

The ceremony's success in gaining recognition was ambiguous. Commodore Dewey politely declined an invitation but sent a colonel of artillery, J. M. Johnson, who witnessed the ceremonies and signed the declaration as a witness, "the only foreigner" present. Statements of recognition flowed, however, freely from the consuls, Pratt and Wildman. Just days before the declaration, on June 8, a delegation of Filipinos had gone to Pratt's office—decorated simply with a U.S. flag and a portrait of Aguinaldo—and "serenaded" him. Dr. Isidoro de Santos expressed gratitude for Dewey's "moral and material support" through Pratt, "the genuine representative of the great and powerful American Republic." He hoped that "persevering in its humanitarian policy," the United States would "continue to support" Pratt's agreement with Aguinaldo, "that is to say, the independence of the Philippine Islands, under an American protectorate."...

As Aguinaldo and others feared, the arrival of U.S. Army expeditions from late June through late July turned the balance decisively against their recognition. With additional troop strength, U.S. commanders felt less need for Filipino allies against the Spanish and more concern for the question of how to keep the "insurgents" outside of Manila when it fell. This latter preoccupation emerged in secret dialogues between U.S. and Spanish officers who, understanding their desperately weakened position, agreed to surrender in a prearranged battle in mid-August with the assurance that Filipino troops would not be allowed to enter the city. U.S. officers alerted Filipino forces that the coming battle was to be entirely between Spaniards and Americans. On August 13, Anderson sent a telegram to Aguinaldo warning tersely, "Do not let your troops enter Manila. On this side of the Pasig River you will be under fire."...

The exclusion of Filipino troops from Manila was reflected in the first U.S. declaration of sovereignty over the Philippines: the instructions McKinley had given to General Merritt on May 12, which Merritt had translated into Tagalog and Spanish and circulated only on August 14. The instructions, which formally governed Filipino-American relations during the negotiations at Paris, preemptively claimed for the United States a wide degree of sovereignty in the islands. The Philippine Republic, its officers, and its army did not appear in them. In that manufactured vacuum, U.S. commanders were charged with guaranteeing the security of persons and property in the Philippines....

In the tense period between the U.S. occupation of Manila and early the following February, the Philippines found itself between two colliding declarations of sovereignty: Aguinaldo's declaration of June 12 and McKinley's, circulated after August 14. During that period, Manila and its outskirts were characterized by competitive state-building between Filipinos and Americans: both the Philippine Republic and U.S. Army forces in occupied Manila struggled to construct states to fill in the outlines of their respective declarations with political facts on the ground. Philippine state-building had a two-month lead on U.S. imperial state-building. Following the Declaration of Independence, Aguinaldo had moved quickly to build a viable state, formally renaming the "Dictatorial

Government" a "Revolutionary Government," issuing the terms for municipal and provincial governments and courts, establishing an executive cabinet, and providing for a future congress to be elected by an elite male suffrage....

The Philippine Republic took explicit steps to prevent U.S. advances in the game of competitive state-building. Officials passed a law requiring foreign travelers to carry passes signed and secured from high government officials; foreigners engaged in the shipping business would have to have permits to operate; laws prohibited Filipinos from contracting with foreigners without government consent; no laborers but Filipinos could unload cargoes. The new state also prohibited any foreign vessel from landing troops on Philippine soil. At the same time, Aguinaldo and other Filipino leaders strategically invoked American precedents in the interests of winning U.S. recognition. Speaking before the Malolos congress, Aguinaldo dispatched Spain by lamenting that it had once been "a kingdom well-known for goodness like the great North American nation," an "honorable friend" who showed "the greatness of her government to the world," by "aiding the enslaved countries to rise to their feet, and not colonizing them for her advantage." He then declared Philippine independence by borrowing and adapting the Monroe Doctrine against the United States itself. "[N]ow we witness the truth of what the famous President Monroe said, that the 'United States is for the Americans,'" he said. "[N]ow I answer that 'the Philippines is for the Filipinos.'" ...

On the ground, relations between Filipinos and American soldiers were as varied as the questions of recognition they raised. U.S. soldiers in occupied Manila found themselves in an enticing, disturbing, and illegible Filipino urban world; Filipinos unsure of the invading army's status were wary of the Americans in political terms but eager for their business. Most social contacts were commercial in nature, with Filipinos and Americans first meeting each other haggling over food, transport, liquor, and sex. Clashing interests, failed translations, mutual suspicions, and questions of jurisdiction sometimes erupted into animosity and conflict, especially where U.S. soldiers became drunk and disorderly or failed to pay their debts. Soldiers commonly characterized Filipinos on the whole as filthy, diseased, lazy, and treacherous in their business dealings, sometimes applying the term "nigger" to them. One anonymous black soldier, reflecting back on this period, stated that the subsequent war would not have broken out "if the army of occupation would have treated [Filipinos] as people." But shortly after the seizure of Manila, white troops had begun "to apply home treatment for colored peoples: cursed them as damned niggers, steal [from] them and ravish them, rob them on the street of their small change, take from the fruit vendors whatever suited their fancy, and kick the poor unfortunate if he complained."...

As U.S. troops' animosity intensified, Filipinos developed suspicions of the U.S. military presence in the islands in which circulating rumors of race played an important role. Where U.S. forces had deliberately left their ultimate intentions ambiguous, Filipinos filled this gap with their knowledge of the United States' domestic racial history. "One of the stories that received universal acceptance," reported General McReeve, "was that ever since the Americans had liberated their

negro slaves they had been looking around for others and thought they had found them at last in the Philippines." Two naval officers reported that many Filipinos they encountered "have been prejudiced against us by the Spaniards," charges "so severe that what the natives have since learned has not sufficed to disillusion them." Two points in particular had stood out regarding "our policy toward a subject people": "that we have mercilessly slain and finally exterminated the race of Indians that were native to our soil and that we went to war in 1861 to suppress an insurrection of negro slaves, whom we also ended by exterminating. Intelligent and well-informed men have believed these charges. They were rehearsed to us in many towns in different provinces, beginning at Malolos. The Spanish version of our Indian problem in particularly well known."...

...U.S. and Spanish commissioners in France settled the disposition of the Philippine Islands, culminating in the signing of the Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898. McKinley's intentions for the islands from May through October remain difficult to discern... The decisive month appears to have been October, when McKinley stumped for candidates in the Midwest and used the opportunity both to tutor and test political audiences on the Philippines. On October 28, McKinley had cabled the commissioners at Paris that they must press for the entire archipelago, as the cession of Luzon alone would leave the rest of the islands subject to Spanish authority and to potential great-power contention, neither of which could be "justified on political, commercial, or humanitarian grounds."

While the U.S. commissioners at Paris had differed on a proper course, they successfully pushed for what Spanish negotiators bitterly called the "immodest demands of a conqueror." With the United States occupying Manila and the Philippine Revolution spreading, Spanish representatives were left with few options and accepted a U.S. offer of $20 million for "Spanish improvements" to the islands, signing the treaty on December 10. While in Manila and its environs questions of recognition had been ambiguous over the previous months, they had been stark at Paris: no Filipino representatives were recognized in treaty negotiations, and the islands' inhabitants, their rights and aspirations, and the Philippine Republic that acted in their name had played a minimal role in Spanish and U.S. discussions.

McKinley effectively closed the first chapter in the recognition debate in his statement of December 21, with Wilcox and Sargent scarcely out of the woods. Authored by Elihu Root and later known as McKinley's "Benevolent Assimilation" proclamation, it narrated the American destruction of the Spanish fleet and the Treaty of Paris, laid a claim to U.S. sovereignty over the entire archipelago, and sketched a bare-bones military government with improvised ground rules for the maintenance of property rights, taxation, and tariffs....

Most significantly, the proclamation was a formal derecognition of the Philippine Republic and established the relationship between the United States and Filipinos as that of sovereign state to passive, individual subjects. The term "assimilation," by which the address would come to be known, held more than a hint of malice: the very fact that it required the adjective "benevolent" to soften it suggested more or less directly that there were kinds of assimilation that were not....

Race was at the core of the U.S. Army's effort to rethink and redefine the enemy in a context of guerrilla war.... Throughout the colonial world—including the republic's leadership—races were characterized in part by the way they made war. The General Orders No. 100 that [General Arthur] MacArthur had drawn upon had themselves relied on racial historical dichotomies between civilized and savage war. While "barbarous armies" and "uncivilized people," for example, offered no protection to civilians, the "inoffensive citizen" was protected in "modern regular wars of the Europeans, and their descendents in other portions of the globe." While the General Orders authorized retaliation by "civilized nations," when taken too far, this principle quickly devolved into "the internecine wars of savages."

By these lights, those who waged guerrilla war were, by definition, savage: Filipino warfare, therefore, did not take this form out of ignorance or strategy but because of race....

...If racialization encouraged U.S. soldiers to broaden the war toward exterminism, race also legitimated this process from above, undermining moral and legal claims against U.S. soldiers accused of wartime atrocities in the halls of American governance, in press debates, and in courts-martial. Race would not only justify the ends of the war—especially as the necessary response to Filipino savagery and tribal fragmentation—but would be used to justify many of the "marked severities" employed by U.S. soldiers to bring it to its desired conclusion.

Little if anything of the cruelties of the war became known to the U.S. public prior to early 1902, in part due to rigorous censorship of foreign correspondents by the U.S. Army. By mid-1902, however, the American press—particularly Democratic and independent papers—became more emboldened, particularly as editors learned of General Bell's "reconcentration" program in Batangas. Some critical press attention was due to the energetic efforts of anti-imperialists like Herbert Welsh, who resourcefully culled for republication references to the water cure and other atrocities in hometown newspapers and sent agents to interview returning soldiers firsthand. These efforts would culminate in the publication of the pamphlet "*Marked Severities" in Philippine Warfare*, a compilation by Moorfield Storey and Julian Codman of descriptions of U.S. atrocities attributed to U.S. soldier-witnesses, with attempts to connect atrocity to administration policy.

These propaganda efforts coincided with a Senate investigation between January and June 1902, initiated by Senator George Hoar, Republican of Massachusetts, to "examine and report into the conduct of the war in the Philippine Islands, the administration of the government there, and the condition and character of the inhabitants."... In both the press and the Senate hearings, the army's defenders repeatedly held that atrocities were rare; that where they occurred they were swiftly and thoroughly punished; and that testimony to the contrary was exaggerated, partisan, cowardly, and traitorous. But racial arguments, of at least four varieties, were crucial to defending the war's means, just as they had been to the justification of the war's ends. The first variant claimed that the Filipinos' guerrilla war, as "savage" war, was entirely outside the moral and legal

standards and strictures of "civilized" war. Those who adopted guerrilla war, it was argued, surrendered all claims to bounded violence and mercy from their opponent. Capt. John H. Parker employed this line of argument in a November 1900 letter to Theodore Roosevelt complaining that the U.S. Army should not "attempt to meet a half civilized foe... with the same methods devised for civilized warfare against people of our own race, country and blood." The point was made plainly during the Senate hearings, when General Hughes described to Senator Rawlins the burning of entire towns by advancing U.S. troops as a means of "punishment," and Senator Joseph Rawlins inquired, "But is that within the ordinary rules of civilized warfare?" General Hughes replied succinctly, "These people are not civilized."...

The war's second end was declared in a public ceremony in front of the Ayuntamiento in Manila on July 4, 1901, with the formal transfer of all executive governmental functions from the military to the civil government under the Philippine Commission and William Howard Taft, who was inaugurated as the United States' first "civil governor" in the islands. The shift of authority had begun the previous September 1, when the military had handed over legislative and some executive powers to the commission. The capture of Aguinaldo the previous March [by U.S. forces] had been a serious blow to the revolution and led to the surrender of a number of key revolutionary generals. The July 4 transfer marked one of what Taft called the "successive stages in a clearly formulated plan" for making the islands "ripe for permanent civil government on a more or less popular basis." According to the *Manila Times,* the city had "never been decorated so much, and the profusion of flags, bunting, palms, lanterns and pictures in the house decorations was a marked difference from past Fourths." An editorial in the *Manila Times* cheered that "all races" could celebrate the event, which marked a "dividing line" between "the past of war and the future of peace." The choice of Independence Day had been felicitous, as the United States' own anti-imperial revolution had "made it possible to extend the liberties of her stable republicanism to these Eastern peoples in their day." Filipinos would one day recognize that "America's Fourth is their Fourth," once they came to "regard their conquest in a gratiful [*sic*] spirit, as an act necessary for their own good."...

FURTHER READING

César Ayala, *American Sugar Kingdom: The Plantation Economy of the Spanish Caribbean, 1898–1934* (1999).

H. W. Brands, *Bound to Empire: The United States and the Philippines* (1992).

Matthew Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1877–1900* (2000).

H. Paul Jeffers, *Colonel Roosevelt: Theodore Roosevelt Goes to War* (1996).

Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (1989).

Glenn May, *Social Engineering in the Philippines: The Aims, Execution, and Impact of American Colonial Policy* (1980).

Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899–1902* (2000).

John L. Offner, *An Unwanted War: The Diplomacy of the United States and Spain Over Cuba, 1895–1898* (1992).

Louis Perez, Jr., *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography* (1998).

David Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Trade and Investment: American Economic Expansion in the Hemisphere* (1998).

Robert Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876–1916* (1984).

Lars Schoultz, *Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy Towards Latin America* (1999).

Edward Van Zile Scott, *The Unwept: Black American Soldiers and the Spanish-American War* (1996).