

## Lecture 2.7: Imperialism Abroad 1890s-1910s

- Considered the “big imperialist era”

Why is US wanting to expand influence: Reasons for imperialism:

- One of the biggest: officials in the US and businessmen are looking for ways to support economic business
  - We want to sell more, we need markets to sell to (only so many people in the US)
  - We need raw materials (US has a lot, but not everything we need) → if we expand, we can have more access to raw materials in different countries as well
- Increasing competitiveness with European countries over territories, resources, and power
  - If you apply social Darwinism to country/state scale → some people believe that states are engaged Darwinian competition of survival of the fittest
  - Therefore, compared to Europe, we are less
  - We need to adapt to this new imperial era that European powers are involved in, we will fall behind
  - Darwinian struggle
  - Also naval power: need places to refuel, need places to dock, etc
- Cultural justifications: Scientific racism
  - White, Anglo-Saxon protestants (WASP) view themselves as racially superior, meaning they have power to conquer racially inferior people around the world
- Gets combined with Christianity and “civilization” to these inferior people around the world
- Anxiety around “manliness”
  - People in US are feeling like there is a lack of opportunity to prove their “manliness” now that war is over
  - Imperialism will give them chance to regain their “manly” honor
  - American men are becoming softer LOL

One of the first places us acts on imperialism is the Annexation of Hawaii:

- Hawaii is convenient location
- Protestant missionaries arrived there in 1819 → most Hawaiians are protestant
- Followed it up with constitutional monarchy
  - Reason to conquer them
- By mid 19<sup>th</sup> century → US has very successful sugar plantations
  - Huge growing commodity, highly profitable
  - Allows them to gain economic power, which means they can gain more power than Hawaiian monarchy
  - US sugar plantation owners (mainly WASPS) force King David Kalakaua to sign the 1887 Bayonet Constitution that gives the planters more power than the Hawaiian government
  - Restricts indigenous people in Hawaii
- Queen Liliuokalani tries really hard to undo this treaty, reinstate Hawaiian power, etc
  - Sugar planters are not happy
  - So, they form the 1893 coup → put her under house arrest

- One of these people was Sanford Dole (head of a pineapple plantation)
- He becomes an interim president essentially
- Then, US planters are like we want Hawaii to be annexed by the US (to get rid of import/export taxes)
- Period of limbo where Hawaii is run by plantation owners, Hawaiians lack power, Cleveland doesn't do anything about it
- Economics playing huge role
- Annexed as the Spanish-American war starts

#### Spanish-American War: causes:

- War with Spain in 1898
- Cuba is fighting for independence against Spain
- As they are fighting, harder Spanish countermeasures garner a lot of sympathy for Cuba in the US
  - Everybody wants Cuba, so they are putting people in concentration camps, starvation, disease, etc
- Already US business investments in Cuba
  - Want to protect their investment there, so they want US to get involved here
  -
- Yellow Journalism
  - Gaining emotional reaction by exaggerating/fabricating information (in this case, Spanish atrocities)
  - Increasing pro-war sentiment, get involved, have sympathy for them
  - Clickbait! Sensational headlines
- Spanish diplomat 's letter → Newspaper in Feb 1898 published a letter insulting McKinley → now it's getting personal
- Then, in 1898, the USS Maine explodes in Cuba (the same month) → nobody knows why, but they blame it on the Spanish
  - US gov after a lot of pushing publishes that it was exploded by a submarine
- So, McKinley (well, Congress) has to declare war on Spain → April 19, 1898

#### Spanish-American War, 1898:

- McKinley and Congress present this as defending rights of Cuban people
  - Going to save Cuba from Spanish
- Congress passes Teller Amendment
  - Once fighting is over, they will give Cuba independence → will ensure this
  - Fighting for liberty and democracy
- Spain has colonies all over, so fighting is not only happening in Cuba, but also in Philippines (also a Spanish colony)
- Most decisive battle is Battle of Manila Bay → where Spanish navy gets demolished
- In Cuba, US army faces lots of difficulty → don't have immunity to tropical diseases, don't have the equipment for the environment, inexperienced, etc
  - Not an easy battle
- Spanish are already tired as they have been fighting for Cuba for a while
  - So, US soldiers are able to push Spain to surrender by mid summer

- Two black regiments go to Cuba as well → people felt that they could gain respect and less discrimination by participating in this war

#### Aftermath: New Territories:

- Philippines is way across the ocean
- Good stopping point for refueling? In Hawaii
- So pretty much as the war starts, McKinley authorizes annexation of Hawaii
- This makes Hawaii a territory (not a state yet)
- Have to end the war → another Treaty of Paris, 1898
  - Grants US control over island of Guam
  - And the annexation of Puerto Rico (also owned by Spain)
  - No residents from either area are consulted → only treaty between US and Spain
  - Puerto Ricans don't get citizenship until 1917 → Spanish-speaking, brown-skinned people
    - Not allowed to elect their own governor until 1947
  - People in Guam are US citizens now and can move freely
    - But they cannot vote in presidential election and they have no representation even now
  - Some people want Puerto Rico to be a state, some want it to be independent, stay how it is, but even people in Puerto Rico can't decide

#### Center of the whole thing: Cuban "independence"

- Said we'd give them independence
- But look at racial and ethnic makeup, don't think they're fit for sovereign rule
- When the US gov has occupied in Cuba → 1892-1902
- Forces Cuba to sign the Platt Amendment, 1901-34
  - Cuba cannot sign a treaty with another country unless the US says so
  - US is allowed to intervene to protect US interests whenever they want
  - Gives Guantanamo Bay as a naval base to the US (which has also become naval prison)
  - 30+ years where Cuba is not really independent (more of a protectorate)

#### Aftermath: Philippine-American War:

- Spanish am war leads directly to this
- Philippines is like hey we want independence too
- But, most US citizens don't believe Filipinos are capable of self government (scientific racism)
- US sees Philippines as good opportunity for weight station for naval fleets and merchant ships to provide easier access to more markets in China
- For these reasons, McKinley decides to annex PS too
  - Protecting US business, protecting US naval power, not really in PS interest
- Immediate backlash

#### Anti-Imperialist League:

- Annexation of PS is one step too far
- Includes Andrew Carnegie, Mark Twain, Samuel Gompers

- We should not exploit colonized people
- Against US values and principals
- People worried about job competition (poor, uneducated people who will steal jobs)
- Cost → have to maintain a big navy, big army, etc → expensive
- Even the best anti-imperialists see them as racially inferior → don't want more racially inferior people in the US
- They don't really have a say

PS-am war, 1899-1901:

- Filipinos don't like this
- Led by Emilio Aguinaldo
  - Lead a 3 year rebellion against US rule
  - US army better equipped, so Filipinos turn to Guerrilla warfare (surprise attacks)
- The US is still big on total war tactics → using same tactics they criticized Spain for in Cuba → concentration camps, torture, etc
  - Fighting ends in 1901 when US troops captured Emilio
  - By the end of the war, there are 4.3k US soldiers, 20k Filipino soldiers, and 200k Filipino civilians
  - Some dying from violence, hunger, disease
- PS remains under US control for next 45 years
- US civilian governor
- In mid-1930s they are allowed to elect their own congress and gov
- Only in 1946 (after WW2) when we give them their independence back

Big Stick Diplomacy:

- Roosevelt (1901-1909) think us gov should play a key role in business affairs
- Foreign policy reflects this: Now called "Big Stick Diplomacy"
  - Based on the proverb "speak softly and carry a big stick"
- Advocates using threat of military intervention to protect US interests
  - Big stick is sitting there threatening
- Best example of this is the Panama Canal
  - Makes it easier to get from one side of the US to the other
  - Roosevelt wants to have a canal in Panama to help with this
  - Trade with Asia easier, place for ships to go through
  - Otherwise have to go around SA/across US
- Speak softly
  - Panama is not independent, it's part of Colombia
  - He goes up to Colombia and tries to negotiate treaty to buy Panama
  - Colombia says no!
- Big stick
  - Under Roosevelt's direction, the US supports Panamanian revolt against Colombia
  - Sends in navy to make sure Colombia doesn't intervene
  - Panama becomes independent!
  - Panama, now independent, grants US rights to build canal in their territory

- Construction lasts from 1903-1914 → this canal (basically a strip of land in the middle of Panama) is just a place that US owns
- The US hired Black laborers instead of Panamanians from the West Indies to build this canal → why Panama has this ethnic/racial diversity now
- US has control of the canal up until 1999 (almost 100 years)
  - US controlled trade in this area up until then
  - Can charge money for it, can regulate who can go through
  - Protecting US interests

#### The Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine:

- Reinforces Big stick diplomacy
- 1823 Monroe doctrine → stay out of western hemisphere (no European intervention)
- 1904 Corollary
  - Not just stay out of western hemisphere
  - But US has the right to intervene in any Latin American or Caribbean country if their interests were threatened (country not acting in accordance to US interests)
  - Can just have their military go and stand there
- US intervenes more than 20 times in different countries in the next 25 years
  - Sending troops (Panama, Nicaragua, Venezuela, etc)
  - Industrialists have control over US gov at this time → if the sugar monopoly guy decides that that country is hurting their interests, they can just have the gov intervene

#### Moral Diplomacy:

- Woodrow Wilson, 1913-21 → denounces the use of force
- Comes up with moral diplomacy
- Wants democratic ideals and morality to be the center of US foreign policy
- He argues that US should aid the development of democracy and human rights in the world
- Promotes idea of self-determination
  - The idea of a people to determine their own form of gov
- Coming from a moral argument
- Wilson still ends up relying on military force to protect US business interest more frequently than Roosevelt or Taft
  - Increased interventions for US businesses
  - Troops in Haiti, 1915-34
  - Troops in Dominican Republic, 1916-28
  - Mexico
    - Sent troops multiple times (smth about oil) multiple times