

CHAPTER 20

THE IMPERIAL REPUBLIC

Chapter Summary

Turning its interest from the continental United States to the world at large, America in the years after the Civil War fought a war with Spain and acquired a far-flung empire. In 1900, American possessions included Alaska, Hawaii, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and a string of Pacific islands. In addition, Cuba was essentially an American protectorate. The nation was suddenly a world power, with worldwide responsibilities and burdens. The empire had been acquired for economic and philosophical reasons. Expansionism could provide an outlet for a perceived glut of American goods and an arena in which to demonstrate the superiority of Western civilization. To accommodate its new role, the nation had to devise ways to improve its military establishment and govern its overseas territories.

Objectives

A thorough study of Chapter 20 should enable the student to understand

1. The new Manifest Destiny, and how it differed from the old Manifest Destiny.
2. The objectives of American foreign policy at the turn of the century with respect to Europe, Latin America, and Asia.
3. The variety of factors that motivated the United States to become imperialistic.
4. The relationship between American economic interests, especially tariff policy, and developments in Hawaii and Cuba.
5. The causes of the Spanish-American War.
6. The military problems encountered in fighting the Spanish and, subsequently, the Filipinos.
7. The problems involved in developing a colonial administration for America's new empire.
8. The motives behind the Open Door notes and the Boxer intervention.
9. The nature of the military reforms carried out by Elihu Root following the Spanish-American War.

Main Themes

1. Why Americans turned from the old continental concept of Manifest Destiny to a new, worldwide expansionism.

2. How the Spanish-American War served as the catalyst to transform imperialist stirrings into a full-fledged empire.
3. How the nation had to make attitudinal, political, and military adjustments to its new role as a major world power.

Points for Discussion - DETAILED ANSWER

1. Compare and contrast the old and new concepts of Manifest Destiny. Look especially at the economic, philosophical and racial motives for overseas expansion. Were these factors at work in the older continental expansion? (See Document number 1 in the *Study Guide*)
2. The United States has always been an expansionist nation. Explain why you agree or disagree with this statement.
3. What was the extent of American interest and involvement in Latin American and Pacific affairs before the Spanish-American War?
4. What hesitations and doubts about imperialism did Americans evince between 1865 and 1898? How did the Spanish-American War change this? (See Document number 2 in the *Study Guide*)
5. Discuss the personalities, philosophies, and developments that stirred American interest in expansionism during the 1890s. (See Document number 1 in the *Study Guide*)
6. What impact did the Yellow Press have on American opinion on expansionism in the 1890s? What criticism was leveled against the Yellow Press? (See Document number 2 in the *Study Guide*)
7. Was the Spanish-American conflict indeed a "splendid little war"? What was splendid about it? What was sordid, seamy, or ill-conceived?
8. Analyze the positions for and against ratification of the Treaty of Paris (1898). What weaknesses led to ultimate defeat for the anti-imperialists at that time? What problems would a policy of imperialism entail for the American future?
9. The Filipino insurrection against the United States is one of the least remembered of all American wars. Discuss why this is so, as well as the causes and consequences of the war.
10. Discuss the background and results of the Open Door policy in China for the United States. Why did the "Open Door notes" represent little more than a "theoretical victory" for Secretary of State John Hay?

11.

What parallels can be drawn between America's imperial aspirations and the way white Americans dealt with the Native Americans?

Map Exercises

ALL

1.

Locate Japan, the Russian Empire, China, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands.

2.

Identify the major parts of the British Empire: Canada, British Guiana, Egypt-Sudan, the South African colonies, New Zealand, and Australia.

3.

Locate Florida, Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and the major cities in each.

4.

Identify the sites of the most important U.S. victories in the Spanish-American War—Western Hemisphere and the Pacific.

5.

Locate the Philippines, Australia, Hawaii, Samoa, Guam, and Midway.

6.

Which possessions were obtained by the United States in the treaty with Spain? Which possessions were obtained by the United States shortly after the Spanish-American War, but not directly as part of the treaty?

7.

Locate the basic sea route toward the U.S. mainland from the South Pacific.

8.

What were the "Spheres of Influence" in China?

Interpretative Questions Based on Maps and Text

— SHORT ANSWER

1.

Why could it be said that "the sun never sets on the British Empire"?

2.

What European powers other than Great Britain had significant imperial holdings?

3.

How did the American empire compare in size to those of major European powers in 1900?

4.

Why were events in Cuba of such great interest to the United States?

5.

How did the Philippines get involved in a war ostensibly about Cuba?

6.

What developments made Santiago the key point in the Cuban theater of the war? What were the results?

How did the results of the war change American attitudes toward future events in the Caribbean?

Why was the acquisition of Pacific islands so important to American trading and naval interests?

How were the annexation of the Philippines and the pronouncement of the Open Door related?

0. Why did the United States think its interests were at stake in the Venezuelan border controversy?
1. What advantages did American imperialists hope to gain from American possession of the Philippines?
2. How would annexation of the Philippines affect future U.S. relations with China, Japan, and the European powers?
3. What geographic features of the Philippines made it so difficult for the United States, or any central authority, to control the area?
4. How did the freeing of Cuba and the acquisition of Puerto Rico secure American hegemony in the Caribbean Sea?

Essay Questions

These essays are based on the map exercises. They are designed to test students' knowledge of the geography of the area discussed in this chapter and to test their knowledge of its historical development. Careful reading of the text will help them answer these questions.

Describe how political and economic forces combined with geography to determine in which areas of the world the United States would have colonial interests. What regions remained basically free of American influence?

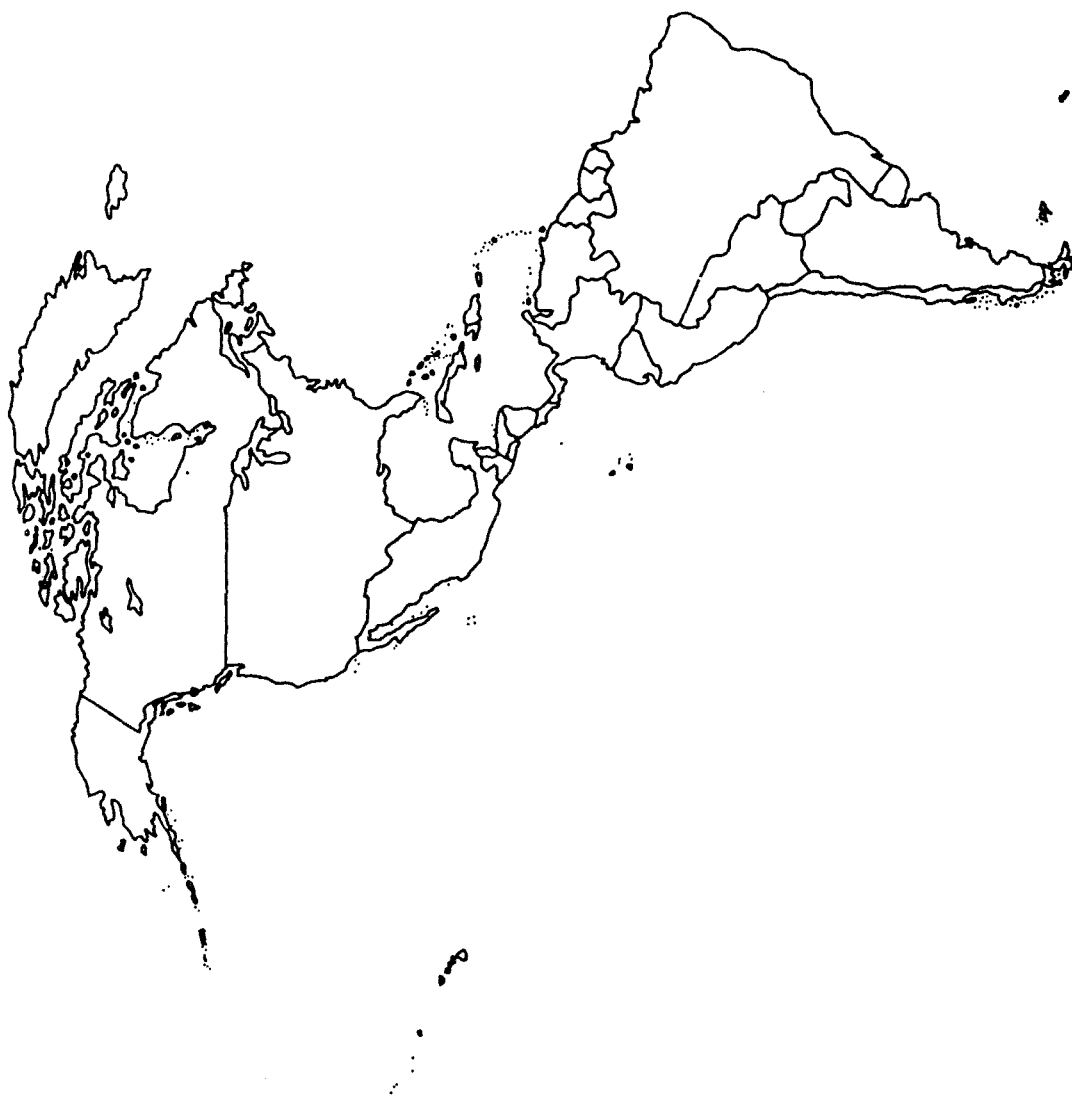
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THE EASTERN HEMISPHERE IN 1900

