Expansion

Erik Gartzke POLI 142, Lecture 4a July 13, 2015



Westward Expansion

- "spark" of the American revolution
- "Glue" that binds new nation together
- "Salve" for inconsistencies in U.S. constitution
- Huge territory -- sparsely populated.
 - British had shown way to most effective exploitation of new territory
 - United States follows model (Lewis & Clark)
- The problem of money... and banks

Civil War: Causes

- Not (primarily) about slavery
 - Incompatible interests: Trade
 - North: Finished goods
 - South: Raw Materials (cotton, tobacco)
 - Slavery is a symbol of incompatible interests
 - Worked out a deal on slavery in constitution
 - Deal fell apart when South could no longer pretend that it was going to win peacefully
- Presaged by the closing of Western frontier
- Each side has key advantages (Lee strategy)

Civil War: Consequences

- Resolved a basic tension in the United States over whether the U.S. would be a merchant country, or a resource/commodity exporter
- Shaped dominance of the North over the South
- Seared the minds of two generations of citizens
 - Rise of the state: Social welfare programs
 - Antipathy toward war: anti-imperialism
- Anticipated World War I battlefield conditions

Reconstruction

- After the Civil War, the North controlled the integration of the West into the United States
- North controlled U.S. foreign policy for 40 years
- Where to go next after American frontier?

Empire

- Growing power --> growing ambitions --> growing territory --> growing power.
- The debate over empire
 - What is Empire?
 - Def: The physical control of territory not normally thought of as part of the nation.
 - West?
 - U.S. foreign policy is consistent (expand)

Empire II

- U.S. foreign policy is consistent (expand)
 - What changes is HOW expansion occurs.
 - Transition period of annexation of foreign (Western) territory
 - Spain/Mexico (Texas, California, Arizona)
 - Great Britain (Canada, Yukon, Northwest)

Empire III

- Expansion becomes more commercial (trade, money)
- Less physical
 - Distance
 - Cost
 - Economy

World War I

- The First World War is the beginning of the end for the old world order
 - But not the beginning for the new world order
- Versailles mostly patches up and resurrects the existing system (for the winning side)
 - Does not address decline of UK, France
 - Leads to increasing instability in Cent. Europe
 - U.S. not yet engaged -- "free riding" on UK
 - Interwar system cannot contain tensions of the decline of existing great powers.