# 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.