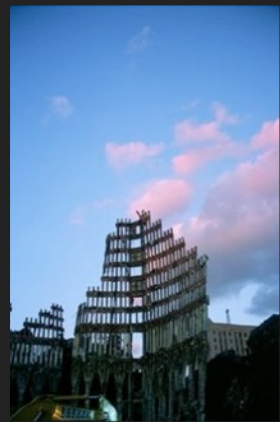


Empire

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Ambivalent Expansion

- Prelude to WWI
- The Great War
- The Great Depression
- A Second World War

Prelude to WWI

- By 1900, the United States had surpassed any other country in terms of its industrial production
 - Bargain between North and West had worked
 - U.S. had toyed with territorial empire
 - Found that it preferred conquering markets
 - The closing of the American frontier really occurs in Manila or Havana
 - U.S. still active abroad (Monroe doctrine, etc.)

Prelude to WWI, cont.

- What explains US “isolationism”?:
 - ALWAYS U.S. policy to stay away from Europe
 - Europe is where the action & U.S. interests are
 - Other principles of U.S. foreign policy are resolved or are abandoned (i.e. territory).
 - In this sense, isolationism is not a new policy, but a narrowing in of previous objectives.

The U.S., Class, and WWI

- The U.S. is divided by demography
 - Elites/city dwellers:
 - Want U.S. to be more engaged in the world.
 - Flexible money (medium of exchange)
 - Masses (farmers):
 - Want high U.S. tariffs
 - Rigid money (store of value)
 - Fight over the gold standard, Federal reserve (William Jennings Bryan)
- Same tensions that existed between North and South economic interests are replaced by urban and rural.

Propaganda

- The United States enters the war late in 1917:
 - Popular view: U.S. “won the war”
 - Reality: U.S. played a marginal role, may have expedited the end of the war.
- Propaganda:
 - War faction in U.S. looks for reasons to join
 - British play an astute game of propaganda
 - Germans do not (Zimmerman telegram)

Versailles

- Coalition that won the war meets to divide Europe
 - Divides itself:
 - U.S. spearheads move not to punish Germany
 - Wilson's 14 points (free trade/navigation, national self-determination, no secret treaties)
 - Allies want pay-back (reparations, territory)
 - Wilson gets League (not much else)
 - Yugoslavia

“Lessons” from WWI

- U.S. public generally turns against the Great War
 - Popular view: War caused by “arms merchants”
 - U.S. Senate rejects the League of Nations
- Isolation:
 - Majority view is that “European war” a mistake
 - Focus on commerce, U.S. economic interests
 - “Low politics” is really high and vice versa.

Great Depression

- U.S. is the only country that can take leadership
 - England weakened, cannot support sterling
 - U.S. not inclined to, free riding on Great Britain
- Lack of global leadership dooms system
 - More connected than directed
 - Weaknesses spread by “selfish” state actions
 - Beggar-thy-neighbor
 - Liquidity trap

Prelude to WWII

- In so many ways, WWII is a repeat of WWI
 - Germany resentful, wants equal status with UK
 - France/UK downplay risk of war, unprepared
 - Germany/USSR (Molotov-von Ribbentrop pact)
- U.S. double dilemma
 - Population is even more determined to stay out
 - Elites see danger but are wary of repeat of WWI
 - Japan saves FDR --> excuse for entry into war.

A Second World War

- Japan attacks US for strategic military reasons
 - Commitment problem:
 - Falling behind, needs access to oil/iron ore
 - Must strike sooner rather than later
 - Europe has opposite problem
 - Germany ascendant
 - UK/France realize they are unprepared
 - Stall for time
 - Both Hitler and FDR recognize commitment problem
 - Autocrat: act without public approval
 - Democrat: get Japanese to force the issue